

ANALYSIS OF INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT DRAWINGS

Reference: The Extra Lesson, and Reading Children's Drawings by A. McAllen.

For analyzing an individual person-house-tree drawing, done *after the clapping-jumping-counting sequence* (see The Extra Lesson, p 77), Joep Eikenboom with his colleague Lia Breman has developed the following general approach. Please note that this analysis is meant to give an impression of the child's bodily and soul development. (The drawing is not to be used as a psychological assessment tool; this would be beyond the task of the educational support teacher.) Please also note other observations in these texts.

Begin by looking at the drawing with the following in mind:

I. The first impression

which it gives: harmonious or disharmonious, too ordered or chaotic, age appropriate or not?

Observe in general:

use of space, presence (or lack of) house, person, tree, use of color, any added aspects.

Now look more closely at the different archetypes (copy the different elements yourself if necessary):

II. Spatial orientation:

balance of left-right (ideally the house is in the middle with the tree on *its* left and the person on *its* right, i.e., looking at the page one sees, from left to right: the figure, the house, the tree), above-below (sky and earth represented, touching if age-appropriate), in front and behind (something drawn in front of house, something else behind), house and tree fully on page

III. Are there any signs of aberrations of the archetypes of the person, house, and tree?

1. **Person**—representing threefold human being, body schema/geography, structural situation, constitutional element, how physical body is experienced:

placement, posture, size, gender, clothing, age-appropriateness, threefold, feet, hands, facial features, colors, posture of whole figure, neck, legs, arms.

2. **House**—representing soul and body, structural aspect, relation to sense impression (windows) and to sleep (door):

shape of roof and body of house (triangle and square/rectangle, L-shape, roof divided L/R), colored in, on the ground, size & placement on page, door with handle, windows with crosses & curtains, chimney with smoke, line separating triangle and square, colors.

3. **Tree**—representing rhythmical system, breathing in the widest sense of the word, gifts from the past (apples/fruit):

type of tree, placement, rooted/floating, leaves, sizing: whole tree/trunk in relation to branches, fruit in branches/on ground, hole in trunk/animals in tree, shape: lollipop/woolly ball/many tiny branches/line between trunk and branches.

IV. Colors used:

please refer to Chapters 4 and 5 in Reading Children's Drawings.

V. Note any added elements:

sun, clouds, rain, lightning, fire, snow, rainbow, birds/butterflies, animals, geometric forms, hills/mountains, technical elements: cars, airplanes, tractors, machinery, violent theme, excessive use of one color.

VI. Any confirmation of difficulties when comparing the different aspects of the drawing?

VII. Questions to ask teachers, parents, (school) doctor, others involved in child's care: about birth, early development, any falls/accidents, diet, sleep, daily activities, behavior in different settings, socialization/relationships, favorite activities, other aspects arising from person-house-tree drawing.

VIII. Compare, carefully, your observations of child, information from child's care-givers, and drawing.

IX. Step back and attempt to build a total picture of child's level of development and needs for supportive activities/therapies.

NOTE: In *drawing* the soul makes a statement about itself in relation to movement, perception & feelings: working of Ego on physical = structural aspect.

In *painting* (especially in working with watercolor on moist paper) colors call on the soul activity to merge with their different movements qualities, and become active: working of the personal astral body on the etheric body = constitutional aspect.)

ANALYSIS WHILE looking at a group of drawings, e.g., done in ‘Spotcheck’:

1. Three groups:

a: Drawings that show completed birth to seven development.

b: Drawings where one or other stage has not been fully completed, e.g., house with blank windows, no chimney, no door, roof/attic w/o line separating fr rest of house), the figure drawn without hands or without feet, a figure with no waist and no neck, the legs protruding from the chest area, a figure with a circular body and stick limbs.

(Children whose drawings show some of these discrepancies can, on a regular basis (during main lessons or practice periods), carefully and correctly do the Move-in-Time bean bag classroom exercises given in Jean Hunt’s and Mary Nash-Wortham’s Take Time, pp 44-60. (REF#10) When the class is doing such exercises these children should be carefully watched to see that the movements are made with the whole body fully engaged: arms gracefully stretched, feet well placed. It is good to bring these children to the front of the class to do the exercises—remember to acknowledge and show appreciation for the child’s efforts and improvements.)

c: Drawings which show no spatial orientation, have immature houses, or have the person or tree, even a house, missing; or which show distorted drawings of human figures or figures showing an earlier stage of the development sequence, e.g., no threefolding, like a three- or four-year old’s drawing of a figure. These children are held in an earlier developmental stage or have more than a few gaps in the sensory and movement development of their first seven years. Many drawings will have the motifs drawn in outline using a single color; green is a common choice. One or more of the three archetypes may be missing; if the teacher verbally repeats the motif sequence it will be ignored. Children in this category would benefit from a full assessment by the educational support (remedial) teacher to determine the best way to support them in their developmental tasks and how to give them the opportunity to recapitulate the development of the first seven years.

2. Determining which group each drawing belongs to:

a: Is **spatial orientation** achieved, e.g., does the house stand back in the picture so that there is a foreground? Is the house colored in? (These show us the child’s relationship to the *forward-backward* directions of space.) Is there a sky? Does the sky touch the earth? (These show *above-below* spatial orientation.) Is the house central with the tree and figure on either side? (This shows the establishment of symmetry and of *left-right* orientation.) Is the drawing sequential—person (left), house (center), tree (right), i.e., does the child draw in the order given?

b: Is the drawing of the **person** threefolded, i.e., does it have a clear head, neck, waist, and trunk structure with hands and feet? (This shows that the child has completed the last phase of the first seven years, the growth into the limbs and metabolic system, and that **body geography** has been established.)

c: Does the **house** have windows? Do the windows have crosses, curtains, both cross and curtains? (These show us a healthy relationship to sensory impressions.) Is there a chimney with smoke coming from it? (=The child’s metabolic system is activated.) Is there a door with a knob, is there a pathway to the house? (=Is there a way in and out of the house?) Does the house consist of the square or rectangle with a triangle roof/attic with a line separating them? (=The archetypal house.)