

# ORIGAMI AT SCHOOL: IMAGINATION, EMOTION AND GEOMETRY

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We want to talk to you about children and how origami, in a context of absolute respect to paper figures they elaborate, guarantees the development not only of their manual skills, but also of their geometric intuition, artistic sense and creative potential.

Froebel said that authentic education helps children to understand their own nature as creative beings. Schools should guarantee contexts of respect, teach them to handle trial and error and use their knowledge, understanding that each child is different and therefore will produce particular objects.

Origami is an ideal tool for the study of geometry. It allows children to visualize geometric shapes, to relate the shapes to their environment, with art and sciences, and to learn geometric words: square, diagonal, angle, etc., in a natural way. With origami children learn how to follow a process by doing sequences of steps and how to manipulate shapes and with them practice mirror symmetries, rotations and proportions, while improving their fine psychomotricity.

Since 2003 we have been working on geometry with children over 3 years old. They make up paper figures folding paper squares and telling us what that figure represents, for example a glass on the table (fig.1, Radha, 5 years old), a springboard to jump into the swimming pool, a spaceship, a table... Children also make paper figures step by step and, meanwhile, teachers analyse the activities to be sure that they are pleasant and have the appropriate difficulty.

The previous step for the introduction of origami at school is training the trainer. *Didàctica de la Geometria* is the subject where future teachers are introduced to origami and improve their manual skills (fig. 2). There is also a school program: 12 nursery and primary groups practice by the hand of our students, using this tool as a global method to teach geometry. It provides the feed-back which is necessary for the development of our research and project.

We would like to show you part of their work and share their talent with you!

Fig.1

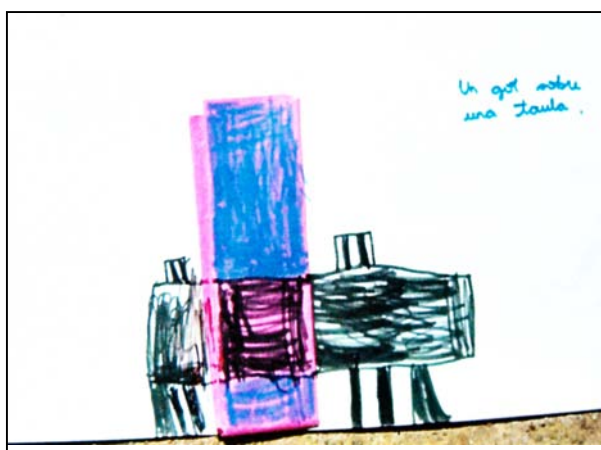


Fig.2

