



# Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain

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Art teacher Betty Edwards was concerned that so many of her students were apparently unable to see where lines and angles lay in the subjects they were drawing. She eventually realised that the problem was that they were not really looking but making mental assumptions about the shapes – ‘that’s a window’, that’s a nose’, etc. – and then drawing crude versions of these prototypes which are stored in our memories from our earliest days of trying to make sense of the world. She explored this line of thinking and linked it to some of the emerging work on right and left hemispheres being associated with particular modes of thinking, with the right often connected with images and the left with language.

From her research she developed the above approach which offers a series of exercises to help ‘switch off’ the dominant left brain way of thinking about the task of representing the subject of a drawing. Instead she encourages students to draw just what they see – for example, by copying a difficult image by viewing it upside down and gradually revealing it by moving a piece of paper which has been covering it. The result is a series of apparently meaningless squiggles and so the left-brain mode switches off and so the process of short-cut assumptions is disconnected. The results are often powerful; the image can be rendered with a high degree of precision.

Her techniques and the courses which follow from the model are described on the website:

<http://drawright.com/>