**Storytelling: Indian Art**

**Need for this Concept:**

**Rangoli** is derived from the *Sanskrit* word ‘*rangavalli’.* It is a form of art, originated in India, in which patterns are created on the floor in living rooms or courtyards using materials such as colored rice, dry flour, colored sand or flower petals. It is usually made during Diwali or Deepawali, Onam, Pongal and other Indian festivals related to Hinduism. Designs are passed from one generation to the next, keeping both the art form and the tradition alive. The purpose of rangoli is decoration, and it is thought to bring good luck.

Along with the aesthetic and spiritual connotations, the vibrant colors and patterns are supposed to bring psychological calm to anyone looking at the designs, and also bring the same benefit to the creator themselves. The constant movement, fluidity and freedom that creating a good rangoli requires are a great way to release stress and promote an inner calmness. This technique has also been found to be very beneficial for a child’s growth and development of a healthy mind. It helps them learn about different geometric patterns without having to think about its association with Math. It also helps them with motor skill development, eye-hand coordination and improving focus because of the complexity and patience required to draw the free-hand patterns (Cohen et al., 2006; Gueue, et al.., 2009).

It is a well-established fact in neuroscience that the brain actually responds to visual patterns and depending on the shapes & patterns, it can have different effects on the mind. Visual art represents a powerful resource for mental and physical well-being (Bolwerk et al., 2014). Drawing and visual art have also been considered a form of expression of a person’s inner psyche (the Unconscious). Hence, through the use of creative techniques such as any form of art, freehand drawing or stencil templates can help children get through an emotional situation as well as aid in the development of motor and cognitive abilities. My project plan aims to propagate the use of this form of art for children and make a positive contribution towards their socio-emotional health and cognitive development.

**Target Audience:**

Children in the age range of 3 to 15 years will be a good fit for this lesson plan. However, there isn’t any upper limit of the age range to use this creative form of **self-expression**. The drawings or stencil templates can be made more complicated for older kids. The ‘Rangoli’ has its origin in India, but its use isn’t limited to the children living in this country. It can be used by children from any country, culture or ethnicity. No prior experience with the art of drawing is needed to use and implement this plan. This can also be used for children diagnosed with learning disabilities, attentional deficits and who are under behavioral remediation plans or therapies.

**Learning Goals:**

- Familiarize with the concept of ‘Rangoli’

- Use this skill in everyday life to reap its psychological, emotional and cognitive benefits

- Learn a different form of creative art

- Improve the child’s focus and attention abilities

- Become mindful while using their creative energies

- Use narrative/story-telling skills to design a storyline around a pattern

- Encourage team-work and cooperation among students.

**Concept Description:**

Once the children complete their ‘Rangoli’ (examples shown below), they should be encouraged by a parent or teacher to narrate a story or experience that they can associate with a pattern. By narrating a story, they will get a medium to express their thoughts, conflicts, and complexes in a creative and healthy way. The stories needn’t be personal; they can be fun and totally fictional. The key component of this project is to practice this art technique in a therapeutic form. Creating a patterned rangoli stencil, filling the patterns with various colors and narrating a story or experience will facilitate a constructive way of self-expression for children.

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The aim is not so much on the evaluation of children’s work as the focus is on improving their emotional, mental and cognitive well-being. It is basically to empower them with techniques that they could use in their lives whenever they feel too stressed or overwhelmed. Therefore, the facilitator needn’t worry too much about evaluating or grading a child’s work, instead should encourage the child to think beyond grades and use this a medium to express his inner creative energies or thoughts.

Alongside this, the children should be motivated to give constructive feedback to other team-mates so that the activity helps in fostering the feelings of cooperation rather than competition.

**Learning Theories that support this Lesson Plan:**

Ø **Universal Design for Learning**

Ø **Generative Learning Theory**

Ø **Social Constructivist Theory**

Ø **Affective Theory**