

GUIDE FOR TEACHING FLORAL ART



The success of our art form depends largely on the quality of our teachers



1. INTRODUCTION

The dictionary definition of teaching is “the systematic imparting of information or skills about a subject”.

To be effective as floral art teachers, we need to look at a wide range of factors that influence the way we teach and how the students learn.

DEFINITIONS: The following definitions may clarify some of the teaching terminology used in this guide:

- **Class:** A group of students who are taught together.
- **Course:** A prescribed number of lessons in an educational curriculum.
- **Syllabus:** An outline of content to be taught in a course.
- **Lesson:** A single session of instruction on a particular subject in a course.
- **Requirement list:** Details and items needed for a lesson or workshop.
- **Workshop:** In floral art this usually refers to a once off lesson with no direct follow on.
- **Work Schemes:** The systematic listing of subjects covered in a course.
- **Format:** The order or structure of a lesson.
- **Methodology:** A set of practices and principles used by teachers to make the process of teaching and learning highly effective for their students.
- **Evaluation:** The process of looking at the whole course and the individual lessons or workshop in order to see if certain criteria are being met.
- **Assessing:** The reviewing of the work of the individual students.



2. THE TEACHER

Qualities of a good teacher

- Well organised
- Well prepared
- Knowledgeable
- Professional but friendly and relaxed
- Up to date with ideas, trends, techniques etc.
- Tactful and mindful of the fact that we are all different and have varied tastes.
- Respectful
- Flexible
- Good communicator
- Patient
- Punctual
- Observant
- Enthusiastic
- Teaches doesn't dictate

Points to overcome nervousness when teaching

- Know your subject well. Use your own words – don't read your notes.
- Compile your own notes - this will ensure that you are familiar with the subject knowledge of the lesson.
- Use the correct tools and equipment – don't take shortcuts!
- Believe in yourself.
- Create an informal setting. Dress comfortably but neatly.
- Keep eye contact.
- Anticipate probable questions. Practise responses to tough questions.
- Find out the level of expertise of the group in advance.
- Train yourself to relax - breathe deeply.
- Assume the pupils are on your side. Remember if your students did not think you are a good teacher they wouldn't be there.
- Develop your own style.



3. THE STUDENTS

Teaching floral art to adults

The adult students may have a number of different reasons for attending a Floral Art Course or workshop - it could be for any of the following reasons:

- To get out of the house and away from family and business problems.
- To fill a gap in their lives.
- To acquire new skills.
- To acquire a qualification to earn money.
- To extend the left side of the brain.
- To gain some self-confidence.
- To explore a new form of self-expression.

Many may not have embarked on any new venture for a number of years and may have no confidence in their own abilities. Keep this in mind and deal with them sympathetically - remember people learn more easily when they are enjoying themselves.

Points to remember when teaching adults

- They dislike ridicule, harsh criticism or being patronised.
- They feel safer with structured learning and like to be guided - this is why the demonstration method of teaching is popular. They will branch out into more creative work once they have gained confidence.

- They are motivated - they have taken the trouble to find a class and pay for it.
- They have great expectations.
- They vote with their feet and don't come again if the teaching is not up to standard.
- They are encouraged by praise, reward and appreciation.

If the teacher displays enthusiasm and a love for the subject she is teaching, the students will respond.

Points to remember when teaching beginners

- They are afraid of failure, real or perceived.
- They are worried about bringing the wrong things - give clear guidelines in this regard (see requirement list).
- They need to achieve results quickly to reinforce the desire to learn. Try to keep practical exercises well within their capabilities until such time that they have developed sufficient self-confidence to be extended.
- They learn more from hands-on experience.
- They will not take in all the facts first time round - keep repeating the basics such as conditioning, mechanics, names of plant materials etc.
- They will not immediately understand all the specialised terminology - explain everything carefully and never assume they have the necessary knowledge or vocabulary.

Points to remember when teaching children:

- They will probably have no floral knowledge of any sort so keep lessons simple.
- They tend to lose concentration and get bored fairly quickly so don't make lessons too long and involved.
- Most children are uninhibited so allow them to experiment and be creative.
- In most instances, it is more practical to provide containers and material as children may not be able to source the correct requirements.
- Take extra care to ensure safety eg. Young children could use a pair of scissors instead of sharp secateurs.

- Keep good control over the pupils so that they don't start fooling around and end up causing an accident.
- Make use of visual aids to keep interest and make understanding easier.
- Make the lessons fun!



4. THE CLASSROOM

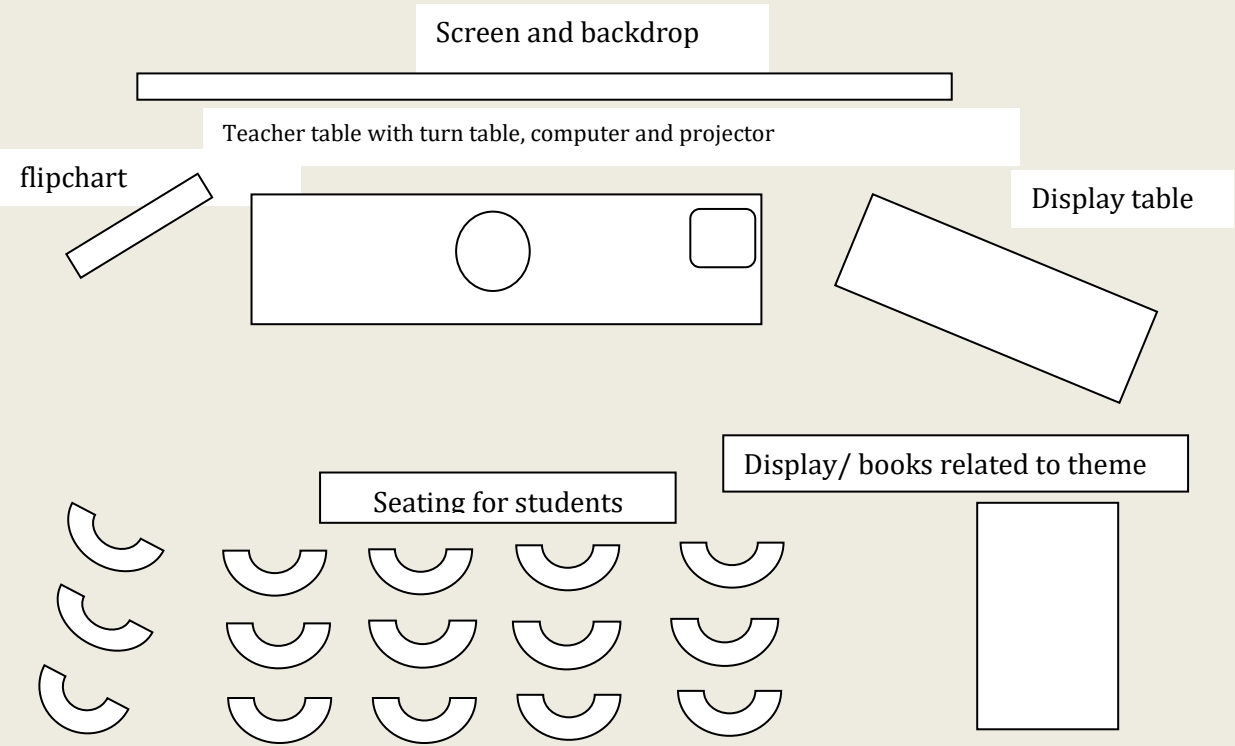
Venue for floral art lesson or workshop

When deciding on a venue for your lessons, consideration should be given to the following:

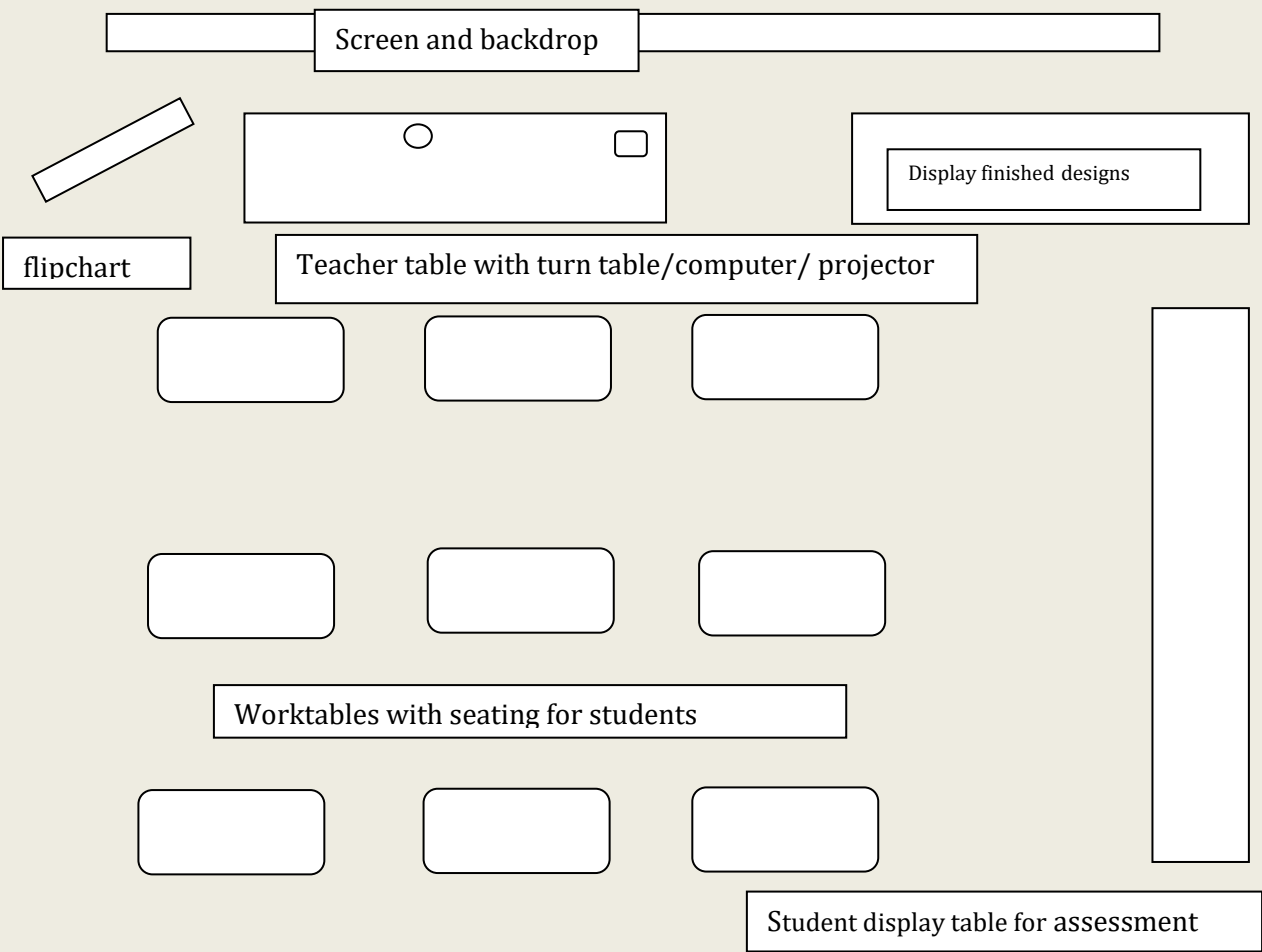
- Parking for cars.
- Proximity to public transport for those who do not have their own transport.
- Easy access to the classroom – stairs are difficult to negotiate with buckets and heavy containers.
- Sufficient space for the plant material and equipment that each student will bring.
- A table or suitable working surface for each student - this should be large enough for their practical exercises. Provide a chair for each person.
- Demonstration table/area for teacher.
- A water source and a bucket or basin for soaking oasis.
- Facilities for refreshments - this does not have to be a kitchen as hot water can be brought in a flask.
- Lighting – even during the day lighting may be necessary if it becomes overcast.
- Niche or suitable area for assessments and photographs.
- Phone facilities – most people have cell phones – make sure one is available in case of emergencies.
- A basic first aid box for containing plasters, headache tablets, antihistamines etc.

Examples of classroom layout

Class set up for a theory lesson and teaching demonstration



Class set up for a workshop and Teaching Demonstration



Good classroom habits

- Establish good habits early on in your lessons - encourage the students to keep their work area clear so that they have plenty of space to see what they are doing. Place buckets, baskets etc. under the table if possible to unclutter the workspace.
- Ensure that they bring a large rubbish bag to throw their left-over material into. This will help keep their work area clear and it is also easier for them to take home.
- Mop up any water spillage immediately and keep the floor clear of pieces of plant material that someone could slip on.
- Get students to clear their tables before assessment starts so their work is seen to the best advantage.
- See that all rubbish is cleared away and the venue is tidy before the students leave.

Health and safety in the classroom

Safe practices should be always observed in the classroom. Do not take risks by careless use of equipment or behaviour.

Safety procedures:

- Electricity: do not overload power points.
Ensure that electric cables are not draped over the floor or tables where they can cause tripping. Ensure that electric cables do not get wet.
- Sharp objects: do not put sharp objects such as knives, scissors or secateurs in your pocket and make sure they don't get mixed up with rubbish.
- Spillage: do not overfill buckets or containers and don't leave them where they can be knocked over. Mop up spills at once.
- Rubbish on the floor: any material dropped on the floor should be picked up immediately.
- Clutter: clutter can cause accidents. Store personal belongings, boxes, buckets etc. away from areas where people are moving about. Do not pile things on top of cupboards or tables where they may topple over and cause injury.

- Lifting: bend knees, keep your back straight, feet apart and hold item with a firm grip close to the body when lifting heavy objects. Do not carry items that are too heavy.
- Aerosols: keep aerosol cans away from heat and do not puncture as they can explode. Do not spray in a confined area – good ventilation is essential. Protect your eyes and wear a mask if necessary. Take care that spray drift does not damage furniture or other nearby objects. Use a large box as a spraying booth.
- Glue gun: turn off when not in use. Keep away from water. When on, make sure it is in a safe place and that everyone is aware of it. It is a good idea to work on something such as a thick piece of cardboard to limit mess and damage.
- Floral foam: dust from foam can cause eye irritation – wash eyes out immediately with cold water.
- Silica gel: this substance looks like sugar so make sure that it is kept out of reach. Use in a well-ventilated area to avoid irritation to nose and throat.
- Poisonous plants: serious cases of poisoning by ingesting plants are rare but one should be aware that there are several plants that are poisonous – eg. Dieffenbachia, Elephant's ear, Arums, Oleander, Delicious Monster, Syringa berries, Moon flower, Philodendron, Clivia, Euphorbia, Larkspur. Make sure not to put any part of poisonous plants near your mouth and wash hands well after handling.
- Irritant plants: There are also many plants that can cause skin or eye irritation as well as breathing problems – eg. milk from Euphorbia, dry Babies Breath, Tulips and Narcissus bulbs, various grasses, pine, cypress, plants that produce large amounts of pollen. Some persons are also very sensitive to heavily scented flowers such as jasmine and stargazer lilies – they may start sneezing or get a runny nose and watery eyes. Take care to wash your hands with soap and water after handling flowers.
- Stains: the sap from many plants can stain cause staining. It is a good idea to wear an apron to protect clothing and cover cloths with plastic.
- First Aid:
 - Insect stings: apply ice pack or antihistamine ointment.

- Allergic reaction: wash skin or eyes with soap and water. Apply antihistamine ointment. If severe reaction such as breathing difficulties or vision problems are experienced, seek medical advice.
 - Burns: Immerse in cold water or apply ice pack. Seek medical opinion if severe.
 - Dust from floral foam: wash eyes out with water.
 - Cuts: disinfect and cover with a plaster if necessary.
 - When in doubt, always call for medical assistance.
- Fire: if using flammable substance such as Styrofoam, PVC, cellophane, nylon, aerosols etc., it is a good idea to have a fire extinguisher or a bucket of sand nearby.
 - General: if working in a public venue such as a hall, shopping centre or theatre, ensure that you are aware of the Health and Safety policy of the venue.



5. TEACHING SKILLS

Motivation

- The reason for the students to attend a Floral Art Course is as varied as their personalities.

- The teachers should be aware of the aim of each student and should vary her approach to individuals so as to be as inclusive as possible of these aims.
- The abilities of the students will also vary greatly – they will most likely be aware of their own level - encourage them to strive for improvement, working from this level, give them praise when they achieve this. Some may never achieve perfection.
- Praise for any success achieved is great motivation. Make them all believe they can do something.
- A negative approach will only inhibit progress.
- Your enthusiasm for floral art should be motivation enough and if this comes through, then it will rub off on the students.

Helping students to gain confidence

- As a teacher of Floral Art you have the ability to nurture confidence in your students.
- The level of the course should be within the capabilities of the student. Work from the known to the unknown.
- Assess their abilities - the starting point of the course should be where the pupils are capable of producing an arrangement that looks good without too much alteration by the teacher.
- Always measure their progress against their own abilities and be very ready with praise for any progress they have made, point out their improvements and let them know that you are not measuring them against the most creative and gifted in the class.
- Praise is good and necessary, but too much praise can actually be negative. Praise good work or an improvement but be realistic about an arrangement that has gone totally wrong.
- If they have had a challenging exercise, alternate it with a lesson that they can handle easily and produce a really good arrangement. If they feel good about themselves they will continue to improve.
- Once the students feel that they have achieved some success, they will have the confidence to move to the next step. The period before

achieving success must not be too long in coming otherwise the pupils lose confidence and interest.

- By watching the body language as well as listening to the comments, you will be able to judge who is able to handle criticism.
- Stress enjoyment, creativity and relaxation!
- Achievement builds confidence, resulting in a good self-image.

Maintaining concentration

- Keeping the students focused is a major factor in presenting a successful lesson.
- Encourage student participation, whether this be by way of asking questions or asking for comments, soliciting their opinions or getting them to help with names of plant material.
- A change of pace or introducing an amusing story can be used to advantage when it becomes evident that, for whatever reason, attention is straying.
- A practical exercise will break up a long session.
- The amount of input in a lesson will also depend on the concentration span of the students. Getting to grips with a new subject involving an unfamiliar vocabulary is tiring. Limit the information that you give them in a lesson - they will not be able to master all the techniques in one session.
- Good preparation and knowledge of the subject being presented will result in a smooth flow of words. A monotonous voice in tone, pace, and pitch (loudness or softness), must also be avoided.
- Keep eye contact with all the students, all the time. If you see someone drifting off ask them a question, using their name and this will immediately bring their attention back to the lesson.

Ensure understanding

- Careful and appropriate use of language is vital - it should be aimed at the correct level for the group. The novice group will need simple explanations while the advanced class will understand the more technical terminology.

- Students need to be constantly reminded to ASK if a process, phrase or explanation is not fully understood.
- Clear, precise definitions must be given. For example, 'balance' is usually related only to physical balance; this idea must be extended by careful explanation to incorporate the idea of visual balance. When explaining that balance is a physical as well as a visual concept, it will help to relate to a familiar everyday activity, making it clearer and also easier to remember. The visual balancing of a single large dark flower with a group of lighter flowers can be related to a large lady on one side of a see-saw needing a number of small children on the other side to balance it.
- Once the concept is understood it will not be forgotten.

Repetition

- Repetition is a fundamental component of effective teaching.
- Whenever a new idea or concept is introduced, it should be explained, illustrated, reviewed, revised, in as many different ways as possible; (pictures, sketches, different words, examples, video clips).
- A good teacher always repeats everything 3 times.
 - Firstly, you tell them what you are going to tell them'.
 - In the body of the lesson 'you tell them'.
 - To sum up 'you tell them what you told them'.

For example: When teaching one of the design elements or principles, you will start off with a brief explanation, and then while demonstrating an arrangement you will show them how you are achieving it by the placement of the plant material accompanied by a verbal explanation of the technique. Afterwards you might show them the effect you have achieved in the finished design, explaining the principle once more. This will be reinforced again when assessing the pupil's designs.

Communication

Importance of good communication:

- Effective communication between the teacher and students is extremely important. It allows you to perform your job well, with positive results.

- In your role as teacher, you are responsible for comprehending and breaking down complex information, conveying this information clearly to your students (both verbally and in written resources), presenting it in a manner that sustains their attention and listening to and resolving their questions or problems.
- You are required to motivate students to learn giving encouragement and feedback. You also need to make your classroom a safe and supportive learning environment. All of these things require good communication skills.
- The better your communication skills, the more effectively you can perform your teaching tasks. In turn, your students will make more progress.
- The way that you communicate with your students can positively affect their perceptions of the lessons, their abilities and their motivation to succeed.

Effective communication

- Speak clearly so that all students can hear what is being said. Position yourself where they can see you.
- Good communication involves body language, as well as verbal communication. You should ensure that the signals you are giving out through your body language are positive, confident and engaging.
- A physical barrier such as a table can become a psychological barrier between the student and the teacher. When working behind a table try to come forward whenever possible. Where it is not possible to come forward, have your students sit as close as possible to create contact.
- Making eye contact with students when you are talking to them shows that you are being supportive and attentive. Eye contact is also important when you are presenting to the whole class – it motivates everyone to pay attention, which helps them to learn, as well as making them feel involved.
- In order to make more eye contact, you may have to learn your lesson content more thoroughly in advance, so that you don't have to look away to read your notes.

- Don't only keep looking at the person in the front row who nods every time you make a point - move your eyes from one side of the class to the other, catching the eye of each student.
- Learn all your students' names. Name tags will help you communicate with your students and will also help the students to get to know each other. Addressing them by name when talking to them makes them feel that they belong, and also shows that you are interested in them as an individual.
- Listening is also an important part of communication – listening attentively helps build positive relationships.
- To listen, we need to make a conscious effort not to just hear what people are saying but to take it in, digest it and understand. Not only does listening enhance your ability to understand better and make you a better communicator, it also makes the experience of speaking to you more enjoyable to other people.
- Draw the quieter pupils into the lesson by directing a question to them, using their name.
- If you are asked a question to which you do not know the answer, don't try to bluff them. Be honest and promise to find the answer and give it to them at the next session - in this way you will earn their respect. They will realise that you are not the oracle who has all the answers, will feel more comfortable with you and find easier to relate to.

Supervision

- Move around while students are working and give each one attention.
- Watch for signs of stress and give assistance where needed.
- Make suggestions, give guidance, reassure and encourage.
- If using assistants, brief them beforehand and ensure that they give guidance according to the input of the teacher. Do the work for students must be discouraged.

Assessment

This is one of the most valuable skills when teaching Floral Art and is often the part of the lesson where the students learn the most!

- Assessment must be done with the utmost sensitivity and discretion, particularly when working with beginners.
- Vary ways of assessing work – teacher input, group assessment or self-assessment by students.
- When working with novices, try to suggest corrections to designs before the final assessment. With intermediate or advanced arrangers, only correct beforehand if you can see the arrangement is becoming a total disaster.
- Use the person's name, make eye contact with that person and direct any questions or suggestions to them first.
- Use the 3C's when assessing the work of your students:
COMPLIMENT... CRITICISE... CONSTRUCT...
- Give positive, constructive criticism.
- Assess according to the exercise and to the student's own goal requirement. The students do not want general praise if they have failed to achieve the object of the lesson. This can be done by pointing out that the arrangement produced was pleasing but that it did not conform to what was asked for.
- Explain how to apply the principles and elements in your correction, using technical terminology suitable for the level of the students.
- Acknowledge the achievement with PRAISE but remember too much praise can be negative.
- Involve your students when making any changes to their arrangements - rather lead them to make the correction than tell them what to do or doing it for them.
- In a beginners' class assessment is usually done by the teacher but she may ask the more outgoing members of the class to comment on their own arrangements. As the lessons progress, more of the students should be encouraged to start assessing their own work and to join in discussions about ways of correcting faults in each other's work.
- Helping students to assess their own and other students' arrangements, as a constructive exercise, will help establish positive attitudes and encourage them to go on experimenting and practising.
- At the end of the sessions both the students and the teacher should feel satisfied.

Setting up the classroom for the assessment session

This will depend on the space allowed and the position of the tables:

- If the tables are arranged around in a circle, the teacher and students can stand in the middle of the space with the arrangement turned to the centre. At times the backdrop could be a problem, e.g. if there are large windows behind, it is difficult to see an arrangement against light.
- If there is time and space, it is a good idea to have a portable backdrop (niche) and to get the students to move the arrangements in front of this so they are all seen in the best situation.
- Low designs could be viewed on the floor if the students are sitting.



6. VISUAL AIDS

It is a proven fact that during a lesson or lecture the student will take in information as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----|
| ○ Listen only | 12% |
| ○ Listen and see | 23% |
| ○ Listen, see and do | 65% |

The more senses that are involved in the learning process, the greater the intake of knowledge. Floral Art is in itself a visual process and visual aids are an integral part of any lesson.

The following are some visual aids that will help the pupils to get the most out of a lesson.

Pictures, diagrams and illustrations

- Pictures make facts easier to remember - our brain 'thinks' in pictures. Use this tendency of the brain to make your lesson easier to remember. Pictures could be sourced from books/magazines or photographs.
- Make use of coloured pictures to show variations of styles - these are also useful for revising the lesson at a later stage.
- Pictures of different types of flowers and foliage are also very useful.
- It is easier to explain a process by using a diagram or illustration, e.g. the ratio of height to container. This can be done on a black/white board or flipchart.

Charts

- It is very useful to have a set of prepared charts up in the classroom so that they can be referred to when necessary during a lesson.
- Make charts of the elements and principles of design, colour wheel, colour schemes, characteristics of different styles, types of foliage and flowers etc. to display in the classroom.

Flipcharts/blackboards/whiteboards

- The use of a flipchart, or blackboard takes time - make sure you have time in your lesson to use this aid.
- Make sure the visual aid is in the correct position so you don't waste time moving it into place.
- If using a flipchart, make sure a clean white sheet is ready for use and you have enough sheets for the lesson.
- A right handed person will find it easier to stand on the right hand side of the flipchart as she faces the audience. The left hander should stand on the left side.
- When you have to refer to the flipchart regularly, stand next to it - if it is too far behind, you are forced to turn your back on the audience.
- Don't try to write or draw too much at a time. If you have a lot to present, rather prepare beforehand and have charts ready.
- If using pre-prepared flip chart, ensure that the sheets are in the correct order.

- Don't scribble. Try to ensure that your lines are straight and the letters don't end up being half the size of the first ones.
- Don't talk and write at the same time.
- Take time when drawing - as you draw the class will be involved in what you are doing, think and anticipate what will come next.
- Don't talk to the visual aid. Make sure you are facing the students when you talk.
- Wherever possible use more than one colour, but never more than three. When explaining the position of various forms of plant material, it is useful to denote line, form or filler material in a different colour.

Data projector

- A data projector is a very useful and effective visual aid.
- A short presentation, video or slide show will give students a good visual picture of what you are going to teach or what is expected of them.
- Theoretical knowledge such as the elements and principles of design can be presented in a meaningful manner with a data projector.
- Images can be projected onto a screen or white wall.
- Ensure that the classroom can be darkened so that the images are clear.
- Get students to sit where they can view the presentation with ease.

Photographs

- Digital cameras and cell phones are a marvellous invention and can be a useful aid when teaching.
- Photographs are an ideal way to introduce styles, show variations of a theme or record the work done in a Floral Art class.
- Encourage pupils to take photos of their completed designs as a record of their progress.

Books and magazines

- Providing students access to a selection of books and magazines about floral art can help to improve their knowledge and stimulate new ideas.

Notes and hand-outs

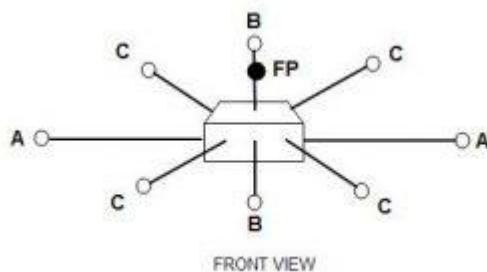
- No matter how good a teacher you the average human brain can only take in a certain amount of knowledge at one time.
 - After 1 day a student will remember 80%.
 - After 7 days a student will remember 50%.
 - After 6 weeks a student will remember 25%.
- Only those blessed with an exceptional memory can absorb and retain every aspect of a lesson. Notes to take home are the best way of enabling the student to reinforce what has been learned in class.
- It is a good idea to have comprehensive notes which the student can turn to when she is preparing for the following week's session, or even to pick up and use for revision after a couple of years.
- Include as many diagrams as possible in your notes to clarify points.
- Your notes should be written using simple clear language and terminology. Do not use long sentences when you can get the idea across in 3 words. It is an idea to get a friend to read your notes to see if you have got the facts across clearly.
- Use an easy-to-read font and set them out in a logical order using heading for easy reference.
- When setting up your notes on the computer, leave spaces to paste in diagrams, sketches or photographs where necessary - these master copies can then be printed or photocopied.
- Encourage pupils to start a file with the hand-out notes and to include extra paper for their own additional notes and sketches. A space for plant identification and diagrams of these is also very useful. Getting the students take their own notes helps them to remember the lesson better.

Example of notes to be handed out to students

HORIZONTAL DESIGN

- **Containers:** Low shallow containers are very suitable for this style as the container is usually not seen. This low container may then be placed on a larger mat, tray and base.

- **Mechanics:** Cut floral foam to fit the container and allow the foam to come 6 -8cm above the rim. This allows stems to be inserted into the side. The foam may be secured with thin strips of potting tape.
- **Plant material:**
 - **Line material** is used to create the outline of the arrangement - the length, height and width. Line material moves the eye along in a specific direction. Choose material with varying sized leaves to give good transition with smaller material on the outer edges to the larger material in the middle. Examples: abelia, penny gum, small ivy, fern, rosemary, ruscus, murraya, nandina.
 - **Form flowers** give the arrangement balance and interest. Use buds towards the outer edges and the more open flowers in the centre. Examples: roses, irises, tulips, chrysanthemums, lisianthus, zinnias.
 - **Filler materials** bridge the gap between the line material and the forms of the single flowers. Examples: golden rod, duranta berries, Michaelmas daisies, lavender.
- **Placements: (include a diagram or placements)**



- **Students notes/diagrams**

Example of Requirement list

DATE: SATURDAY 26 JUNE
TIME: 8:45

DESIGN: HORIZONTAL
VENUE: SAN FRANCISCO CATHOLIC CHURCH
LESSON FEE: R50

1. CONTAINER: 1 BLOCK PLASTIC OASIS TRAY (OR SIMILAR)
2. MECHANICS: 1 BLOCK OF OASIS (I WILL HAVE OASIS ON SALE)
3. FOLIAGE: TWO OR THREE KINDS OF FOLIAGE SUCH AS SEVEN WEEKS FERN*, ABELIA, IVY, PENNY GUM*, RUSCUS*, NANDINA, MURRAYA, **(YOU WILL NEED APPROXIMATELY 20 SMALLISH PIECES OF EACH FOLIAGE YOU CHOOSE TO USE, VARYING IN LENGTH FROM APPROXIMATELY 8-25CM) – IF YOU ARE BUYING FOLIAGE, A SMALL BUNCH WILL BE SUFFICIENT. NB. DON'T CUT YOUR FOLIAGE BEFORE THE LESSON.**

Have marked material with *stars that you should be able to buy if you are not able to pick in a garden.

NB. REMEMBER TO RATHER BRING ENOUGH OF 2 OR 3 KINDS OF FOLIAGE THAN A FEW PIECES OF MANY DIFFERENT ONES.

4. FLOWERS: 10 ROSES OR BUNCH OF LISIANTHUS AND A BUNCH OF CHRYSANTHEMUMS (REMEMBER TO LOOK FOR A BUNCH WITH FLOWERS ON LONG INDIVIDUAL STEMS)
OPTIONAL: 2 STEMS OF UMBILATUM LILIES OR SIMILAR LARGER FORM
5. FILLER: SMALL AMOUNT OF ONE KIND OF MATERIAL SUCH AS LAVENDER, JOHANNESBURG GOLD, BERRIES SUCH AS DURANTA, MICHAELMAS DAISY, VIROGREEN, GOLDEN ROD, GRASSES (**TRY TO FIND SOMETHING LIKE THIS IS THE GARDEN SO YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BUY EXTRA MATERIAL**)

6. SECATEURS, BLACK BAG FOR RUBBISH, TOWEL/CLOTH FOR CLEANING

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you are not sure about anything.
Looking forward to seeing you.

Tip: WOOLWORTHS OR CHECKERS USUALLY HAVE GOOD BUNCHES OF 10 ROSES FOR A REASONABLE PRICE



One block oasis tray, ivy



Seven weeks fern, Abelia, Penny gum, ruscus
Nandina, Murraya, Pittosporum



Lavender, Johannesburg Gold, Duranta berries
Virogreen

7. SYLLABUS FOR A COURSE OF LESSONS

Goals

- It is important for the teacher to set specific goals to satisfy the needs of different groups as well as individuals within the group.
- The students will measure their success or failure in relation to their personal aim.
- The students who merely wish to be able to do arrangements for dinner parties will have reached their goal after the first course of 4 -6 low key lessons.
- Those who are looking at entering shows will see the first group of lessons as a steppingstone towards their bigger goal.

- The first group of pupils will be satisfied with mere flower arranging techniques while the second will want to start familiarising themselves with principles and elements.
- Teachers should get to know their students; ascertain the level they are at and what their aspirations are.

Points to remember when compiling a syllabus

- Each course needs to have a syllabus, set out according to the aim or objective of the course that is designed with the needs and expectations of the students in mind.
- It is easier to restrict the class to students of more or less the same level of floral art experience.
- Each lesson in the course will be a steppingstone, taking the students from the basic knowledge that they may have at the beginning of the course, to a realistic goal at the termination of the course. NB. This point would not apply if doing a once off workshop.
- The aim of the course should be within the reach of all students so that at the end of the course you will have a group of very satisfied, motivated people who will be keen to continue.
- When setting up the scheme of work, where possible alternate or include a fun arrangement or easier design in between more complicated techniques that need to be mastered. The 'break' will give the student a chance to regroup, feel that they are still on top and are able to produce something good. This will produce 'a positive image cycle', giving the student courage to tackle the next challenge.
- The length of a course may vary but a four-to-six-week course is recommended.
- The content of a course should include information about sourcing and buying plant material and flowers, names of foliage and flowers, conditioning, containers, mechanics, tools and equipment and the systematic introduction to elements and principles of design.
- **Syllabi should be continually reviewed as the needs of students change as well as popular styles and new trends.**

8. IDEAS OF DESIGNS THAT COULD BE INCLUDED IN A SYLLABUS

- As individual teachers like to approach their teaching in different ways, the following are **suggested ideas** that could be included in courses for beginners, intermediate or advanced designers.
- The selection of lessons for a course should be suitable for the level of the students and there should be a logical progression from one lesson to the next, systematically building up knowledge and skills.
- The needs and interests of the students should also be taken into account e.g. Some may not be interested at all in learning traditional work but would prefer simple, modern ideas for use in the home.

Traditional

Posy
Vertical
Horizontal
Crescent
Hogarth
Diagonal
Cascade
Mass (small/medium, pedestal)

Modern

Vertical line
Horizontal line
Diagonal line
Crescent
Hogarth
Modern mass
Free form

Extensions of traditional

Topiary
Tied bunch
Wreath
Biedermeier
Garland
Swag
Hanging basket
Asymmetrical mass
Elevated - candlestick
Petite/miniature

Extensions of modern

Parallel
Transparent
French cushion
Abstract
Landscape/seascape/cityscape
Vegetative
Sculptural
Buffet – including fruit/vegetables
Pavé/tapestry

Ideas for workshops/Specific designs

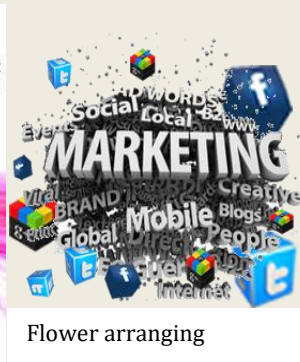
Working in glass	Mothers' Day – hat box
Two/more containers – bridging	Easter basket
Frames	Pot-et-fleur
Collage/wall hanging	Valentine – woven heart
Mobiles/hanging designs	Christmas design for candle
Bridal bouquet	Drying/preserving plant material
Wiring and taping – corsages	Plant manipulation techniques
Still life	Decorative techniques
Structures and grids	Structural techniques
Land Art	Floral bags
Period designs	Floral jewellery
Church flowers	Interpretive work
Designs incorporating Elements and Principles of design eg. Colour, texture, balance, dominance, scale, proportion, rhythm etc.	

Additional information to include in workshops/lessons (where applicable)

Suitable containers and where to source them
 Using oasis
 Alternate mechanics
 Equipment for toolbox
 Wiring
 Taping
 Picking and Conditioning
 Elements and Principles of design
 Selecting suitable plant material
 Growing material for floral work
 “Tricks of the trade”

9. PLANNING FOR A WORKSHOP OR COURSE OF LESSONS





Advertising/marketing

- Evaluate your target market, i.e. who do you want to reach. Analyse the best way of reaching them - what newspapers/magazines do they read or do they make use of social media? You are looking for people who love flowers so advertise in places that they frequent eg. Flower wholesalers, florists, nurseries, flower clubs.
- Budget: how much do you have to spend? You must get a return for the amount you spend. Keep a record and find out where your prospective pupils found out about you. If you get no come backs that avenue is not worth using.
- Long term: advertising once may not be enough, you need to keep reminding people you are around to pass on your name to other interested persons. Follow up with your contacts by sending circulars advertising your new courses or workshops.
- Some means of easy identification, either a logo, a picture or a name that is easy to remember is a good way to attract attention. Make sure that these are simple, colourful and clear.
- Colour attracts the eye and encourages people to read the adverts.
- Different ways of advertising
 - Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. are very popular platforms for spreading the word these days.
 - Posters in appropriate places.
 - Word of mouth - a satisfied customer is your best advert.
 - Flyers - big enough for people to pick up and keep.
 - Business cards are easy to hand out or leave at places such as flower suppliers where they can be picked up.

- In some instances, magazines or newspaper advertisements could be an option but remember to send in information in good time for printing.

Information to include in advertising

NB. The information may vary according to the type of advertisement you use:

- Who you are
- What you are going to present or teach
- Where lesson or workshop is going to be held
- When – date, time and duration of course
- Cost
- How to book or get information about what to bring etc.



Budget: Guideline to structuring fees for a lesson or workshop

Take into account the following:

- Cost of venue
- Printing and stationery
- Plant material, containers and accessories required by the teacher
- Additional plant material, containers and accessories for students.
- Teas and refreshments

- Transport for teacher
- Advertising
- Number of students in the class

Do not settle for doing classes at your own expense, you need to make a profit to teach sustainability.



10. PREPARATION FOR A LESSON

- To ensure success, it is very important to be thoroughly prepared for the lesson or workshop that you are going to present.
- Remember the saying “Failing to plan is planning to fail”.
- Try out the design that you are going to teach to make sure that it works out the way you want it to.
- Work out your mechanics and prepare/condition your plant material ahead of time. If possible, take some extra material and containers in case what the students bring is not suitable. Also have a supply of things such as skewers, cable ties, paper covered wire, wire, tape etc. for use by students if needed.
- Make sure you have all your notes or hand-outs prepared as well as any other visual aids that you will be using during the lesson.

- Arrive at the venue before your students and make sure everything is set up and ready for the class.
- Make name tags if necessary.



11. SETTING UP WORKSHOP

Preparations for a workshop are very similar to those for a lesson. However, workshops usually require extra careful preparation on the part of the teacher as participant won't necessarily have any previous knowledge to build on and the teacher does not have time to get to know the strengths and weaknesses of the students. A comprehensive requirement list is vital.

If you are going to be working away from home, some extra planning is required. It is important to ascertain the following:

- What costs will be paid by the organisers.
- If there is enough space for the expected number of participants to work comfortably and to allow the teacher to move freely between tables to give help.

- Is there is a good background against which to assess the arrangements.
- The level of experience of the participants.

Send the following information to the organisers.

- Programme that you intend to follow.
- Lists of requirements and notes if necessary. If clarification is needed, include diagrams of containers, stands etc. that are suitable.
- Timing - work out the time schedule of the workshop and stick to it. It is essential to communicate with the organisers on all levels of timing when working away from home and you are not in control of the overall planning.

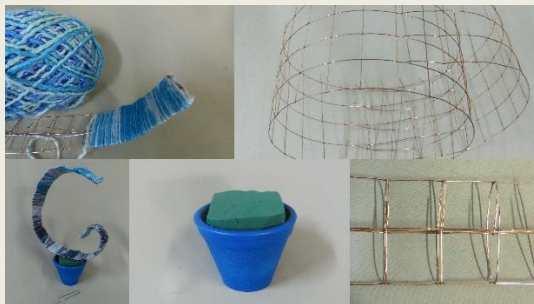
Containers

- Suggest suitable containers in the requirement list, with pictures or diagrams if necessary. Make sure that suggested containers are readily available and give information about where they can be purchased.
- Demonstrate the design that you are teaching in a container that was suggested on the requirement list – students may feel intimidated if the teacher uses a different type of container. However, the teacher can show different containers and how they can alter the look of the design.
- If containers are being supplied, ensure that the costs are included in the lesson fee.

Plant material

- Not all your students will have gardens of their own where they can pick plant material so make use of foliage that is available from local suppliers or can be sourced with ease. Be sure to include this material in your demonstration arrangement.
- It is a good idea to provide a list of suitable plant material and flowers that are available in your area. This could also include suggestions of good plants to grow for use in floral designs.

- Students may not have been exposed to the flowers and or foliage that is used. This makes it essential to include plant identification as an integral part of every lesson.
- Each student should keep a personal record of plant materials they have found especially appealing or useful. Details of possible colours, seasonal availability and any special conditioning requirements should also be noted.
- Give tips on what to look for and what to avoid when buying flowers – eg. Leaves must be fresh and green, not brown and limp.
Stems must be clean and fresh smelling, not brown and slimy.
Flowers with dark yellow pollen showing are past their best.
- If the participants are providing their own plant material, then have a backup supply to supplement any short falls or incorrect material. Keep all extra supplies out of sight
- If plant material is to be provided for the practical sessions, planning is vital. Give out the allocated plant material and keep the extra plant material out of sight and do **NOT** make it freely available as this will be inclined to lead to deviation from the given exercise. Extra material should only be given out IF NEEDED.
- If it is necessary to provide all the plant material that is the same, try to get variation by providing different colours.
- Plant material must be suitable for the exercise, e.g. do not supply Liatris or other rigid plant material if a cascade type arrangement is asked for.
- All the provided plant material needs to be cleaned and well-conditioned as the participants might not have time to do this in the workshop.



Conditioning

- Explain why conditioning is not a waste of time and that it is important to get the longest life out of garden material as well as bought flowers.

- Each lesson must include a general discussion on conditioning, why it is necessary, as well as any more specific requirements of particular plant material being used.
- Include information regarding the use of commercial and home-made floral foods and preservatives.
- Information on cutting of plant material – cut in cool of the day (early morning or evening) and preferably the day before the lesson so that material has time to “drink”, strip lower leaves off stems, condition, if necessary, then place in water.

Mechanics

- Demonstrate the setting up of mechanics from scratch at the beginning of each lesson. If you have pre-done part of your demonstration arrangement, show your pupils the basic mechanics in a separate container.
- When introducing floral foam, ensure that everyone recognises the different types and knows when and how to use them – it is soul-destroying for the student who arrives with “dry” oasis by mistake.
- Give simple, step by step instructions on the use of foam and how to soak it. Securing oasis by means of a plastic “frog”, floral tape or netting wire should also be explained and demonstrated.
- As there is a move towards using more sustainable mechanics, it is important to introduce other ways of supporting material - eg. Scrunched netting wire, pin holders (Kenzan), armatures, grids, test tubes, natural water sources such as pieces of bamboo etc.

Tools and equipment

- To start out, the students will only need very basic tools such as a knife, scissors and secateurs as well as a bag for rubbish and a small towel.
- As they progress to more challenging designs, the need for more tools and equipment will grow – eg. A toolbox with wire, cable ties, glue, double sided tape, thorn strippers, mossing pins, floral tape and floral fix, pliers, side cutters and so on.

- Stocking up on all these items can be costly – don't expect students to buy everything at the same time. Sometimes items can be bought in bulk to bring down the price.

12. OUTLINE OF FORMAT AND TIMING OF A LESSON OR WORKSHOP

NB. These are guidelines only as the requirements and timing may vary from lesson to lesson depending on what is being taught.

Introduction: 15 minutes

- Call students together, greet them, introduce any visitors or newcomers and make any required announcements.
- Briefly recap information from previous lesson if necessary (probably not necessary if doing a once off workshop).
- Introduce the theme/subject and style of arrangement (make use of visual aids).
- Give timeframe of programme.

Teacher input: 30 minutes

- Show the types of containers and how to set up the mechanics.
- Demonstrate the arrangement – this may be broken up into different steps to make it easier for the students to grasp.
- Vary the way you present your lesson to maintain interest and make sure that students play an active part.
- Give alternative plant material that may be used.
- Show variations of the style, if applicable - some may be pre-done or visual aids can be used.
- Give the uses and appropriate position of the arrangement in the home or function.
- Deal with questions.

Tea time

It is best to have tea available during the practical work period. If a student needs extra time, she/he can continue working while the rest of the class are having tea.

Practical work by students: 60 minutes

- During this period the teacher should circulate to encourage and give the students any help they may require.
- Beginners may require individual assessment during this period so that there are no large adjustments needed during the class assessment session.

Assessment: 30 minutes

- This is when the teacher gives an assessment of the designs produced during the lesson.
- Students should be encouraged to actively participate during this time. In this way they get to see the use of different types of plant material, containers and application of the style.

Preparation for next lesson: 15-30 minutes

If there is going to be a follow-up lesson (not applicable for a once off workshop), prepare the students:

- Give a description of the design.
- Show suitable containers
- Give examples of suitable plant material and flowers that can be used.
- Demonstrate design if necessary.
- Answer questions.

Conclusion: 15 minutes

- Sum up
- Clean up the venue and pack up.

13. TEACHING METHODOLOGY

There are different types of teaching methods which can be categorised into four broad types:

- Teacher centred methods: the teacher functions in the role as lecturer, instructing or presenting information to the students.
- Learner-centred methods: the focus of activity shifts from the teacher to the students or learners.
- Content focused methods: generally, this means that the information and skills to be taught are regarded as sacrosanct or very important.
- Interactive/participative methods: this is a means of instructing whereby the teachers actively involve the students in the learning process by way of teacher-student interaction, student-student interaction, the utilization of audio-visual aids, demonstrations and hands-on practical activities. The students are constantly encouraged to be active participants.

Although the teacher giving a floral art lesson or workshop may touch on the first three above mentioned methods, it is the interactive/participative method that is most successful for floral art purposes.

Demonstration during a lesson or workshop

As with all forms of activities, the basics have to be learnt before some form of self-expression can take place. Floral Art is a practical subject and the best way to pass this knowledge on is by demonstrating:

- The level of the design being demonstrated should be suitable for the students in the class or workshop.
- Always start from what is known and build on this knowledge.
- Prepare the demonstration in stages that can be easily understood.
- Make sure the students can see exactly what you are doing, (it may be an idea to raise the container on a low box).
- Use a turn-table where possible.
- Start from the mechanics and build up the design in logical sequence.
- Explain each stage carefully, giving a detailed verbal explanation as you go along.
- Talk about the types of plant material used and how to condition this material. The classification of line, form or filler material can also be explained.

- Pre-done variations of the design may be shown once the teacher has completed the arrangement.
- The aim of the demonstration segment of the lesson is to pass on knowledge that the student can understand and utilise. Make the demonstration exciting but within the reach of the participants.

Teaching live on camera

A few tips on teaching using digital media like Zoom, Skype or YouTube:

- Apply all demonstrating and teaching skills you would have used at a face to face lesson.
- Keep the background as neutral as possible and avoid standing in front of a window unless you have control over the background light.
- Use your recording device in landscape mode for better audience viewing.
- Rehearse your presentation before you go live. Use recordings for self-improvement.
- Speak clearly and don't drop your voice.
- Place a lesson scheme on a white board behind the camera so that you can keep track of what you are presenting.
- Check your framing - positioning for yourself and your arrangement.
- Camera position is important - always consider the best way to show your design.
- Use a turntable if possible and raise it, making sure you can turn it without disturbing your design.
- Have everything at hand - don't disappear from the screen to locate material as the audience is focused on what you are doing.
- Try not to bang scissors or pots - place a folded towel on the surface to muffle the noise.
- Make sure you won't be interrupted by telephone, doorbell, dogs
- For a Teaching lesson, focus on one design only and don't go beyond 40 minutes.
- You can send a worksheet and notes in advance.
- Mute your audience during the demonstration and then unmute for a question-and-answer session.

- When doing a complicated technique repeat it and also be prepared to repeat it in the question-and-answer session to check if they have grasped it.
- Use a third party as go-between to relay and answer questions the audience has typed in the chat function.
- Assess your own design and encourage them to do an assessment of their own (if applicable).
- At the end of the demonstration, display the design, show details and leave the design in full view for the audience to take a screenshot.



14. EVALUATION

Evaluation is considered to be the process of looking at a course as a whole or an individual lesson or workshop to see if certain criteria are being met.

- Evaluation is an ongoing process - the teacher needs to monitor each lesson as a unit as well at the course as a whole. If difficulties and problem areas are identified, they should be rectified immediately.
- The teacher needs to have the input of the students to help evaluate his/her own teaching, as well as the course content. The teacher could ask for verbal comments or hand out a form to be completed anonymously.
- If one person does not produce a vital item and the rest of the class have brought it, then it is obvious that the pupil is at fault, but if half the class failed to produced what was asked, for then the problem lies with the

teacher. Either they did not understand what was asked for, or maybe half the class was not paying attention at that time. Take note of these incidents and endeavour to improve in that area.

- Your pupils are the measure of the success of your teaching skills. If they are mastering the basic floral art techniques and producing good arrangements at the completion of the course then you, as a teacher, have done a good job.
- The most important part is not to sit back and become complacent - you need to continually evaluate your courses and the effectiveness of your teaching methods.
- Don't be afraid to try new methods of teaching - remember if you do not change, you do not grow.
- Teach the basic skills then encourage experimentation, do not become a GURU. Encourage them to get input from other sources and develop their own style.
- Constantly revise your lessons/courses to keep up with latest trends as well as the aspirations of students.

