

a fine **FACTA**



NEWSJOURNAL OF THE FINE ARTS COUNCIL
THE ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Volume 15, Number 1
Fall 2015



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A Fine Facta is published for the Fine Arts Council by The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) to help the council achieve its objective of improved education in and through the fine arts. Articles of general interest or on theoretical, experimental or methodological topics are invited.

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From the Fine Arts Council

Message from the Editor

Renee Dowling



One word describes this year perfectly, and that word is *change*. Professionally, I took the plunge and changed from teaching Grade 6 to Grade 1 students. Teaching young people who are excited to learn, grow, explore, create and reflect is such a pleasure. Each day I am treated

to innocent laughter, hugs and appreciation. What a change from teaching tweens—one day they love you and the next they don't!

I have become the lone editor of this publication, and Shannon Roy, the previous coeditor, is now the art representative. Her article, about the power of art and a reflection of an art exhibition where she successfully showcased student and teacher art, will touch your heart and remind you that the arts must be sustained in schools.

The people of Alberta have spoken, and this has resulted in a major change in government, leaving us to wonder what will happen next. What will happen to all of the work we have done on curriculum redesign? What will become of the fine arts programs? What will happen to the economy?

There is a sense of change in the atmosphere. Fine arts teachers are speaking up so administrators will realize that it is unacceptable to use fine arts teachers as prep givers and to have class sizes of 40 or more students in inadequate classrooms without enough tables and chairs, and space to create. In some schools, fine arts teachers are putting in additional hours after the regular school day and are speaking up about being overworked and burned out. Fine arts teachers are

asked to teach social studies, math and science, and their special skills and training are not utilized to help students grow in the arts. What a tragedy! Classroom teachers without training are asked to teach the arts and to integrate the arts into the core subjects. Generalist teachers are doing their best, but with an art curriculum that is decades old and language that is difficult for them to understand, it is not an easy task.

This year a change occurred in my school. We instituted an options program for K-6 students, which allowed them to choose an option, then attend the program once a week for five weeks with K-6 students. The first session was spent exploring the topic. Some programs explored making pictures with Plasticine, visual journalling, puppetry, scrapbooking and drama games. The next two sessions were dedicated to creating. The fourth session focused on reflecting on the process, the outcome and the learning. The final session was for showcasing and sharing with the rest of the school. Students took turns visiting each classroom to see what students did in other programs. Students were encouraged to use statements such as: "I like the way you ... because..." "I wonder ... because..." "I suggest that ... because..." "I noticed that..."

With this publication, our intent is to provide you with ideas for change, inform you and encourage you to reflect on, speak up and promote the arts. In the article, "Technology and the Fine Arts: Are They a Good Fit?" Patricia Krumins will ask you to pause and reflect on change and the use of technology in the arts. We would love to hear your opinions. Write a letter to the editor, and you could be published in our next publication.

Change is here and more is around the corner, so we need you all to be strong and fight for the arts.

From the Fine Arts Council

The best way to predict the future is to create it.

—Abraham Lincoln

Be the change you wish to see in the world.

—Mahatma Gandhi

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

—Margaret Mead

Renee Dowling teaches Grade 1 at River Heights Elementary School, in the Medicine Hat School District. She participates in the Inspiring Education Curriculum Redesign Committee and is on the district's technology committee. She is taking piano and guitar lessons and online art courses. She creates art using acrylic paint, mixed media, watercolour and clay. She loves photography, art journalling, dancing and kayaking. Dowling has her own blog (reneelovesart.blogspot.com). Contact her at renee.dowling@sd76.ab.ca.

These rainbows appeared after a Fine Arts Council meeting on the way home from Calgary to Medicine Hat.



How Do the Arts Inspire Me?

Shannon Roy

On April 16, 2015, students, teachers and parents gathered to celebrate the art and inquiry of young and experienced artists alike. One reason the Fine Arts Council hosts the night is to communicate the importance of the arts in schools. As we hear about the education funding cuts, it is imperative that we speak out to communicate the difference that art makes in the lives of students. This event was one way to get the message out.

The artists focused on the question, “How Do the Arts Inspire Me?” as they went through the process of art making for the show. It could be easily seen through the narratives that accompanied students’ work that art has a profound impact on the lives of these youth.

Grade 8 student Anil stated, “The arts inspire me because of the unlimited possibilities of what to create. When I look at a famous painting, I see the opportunity to create something unique like the artist.”

Chloe, who’s in Grade 7, wrote, “This painting represents me because of all my rough edges but also my beautiful insides. The colours used are analogous colours; they also have complementary colours in the flower and background. This painting has white and black to add shades. Nature and the process of shading with paint inspired me, which was new to me when I made this painting.”

Grade 8 student, Jaiden, explained, “This tree inspired me because of the abstract feel of the twisting and turning of the branches that pop out and catch your eye against the pale blue sky above. It gives me the feeling of moving upward through the maze of life.”

Even from this small sample of student anecdotes we can see the impression art makes and the learning that has transpired within our students when creating. It is unfortunate that as a society we still often see art as an add-on to the core subjects. As a junior high art



Jaiden O.—Grade 8



Anil M.—Grade 8

From the Fine Arts Council

teacher, I am lucky enough every day to see the effect that art has on the growth of students. I have seen the smile of a student because he feels proud for the first time in weeks when he realizes he can shade to create depth. I have observed a student's self-esteem blossom as she finds herself passionate about sculpting, when once feeling awkward and lost among the junior high crowd. I have watched a 15-year-old refugee boy mix paint colours for the first time in his life and apply it to a canvas with awe and amazement. I have seen the transformative gift of self-expression give a painfully shy student a voice to communicate her innermost thoughts and emotions. I feel so grateful that these students have had the experience of art to open up their world. What a gift it is to watch these miracles happen daily.

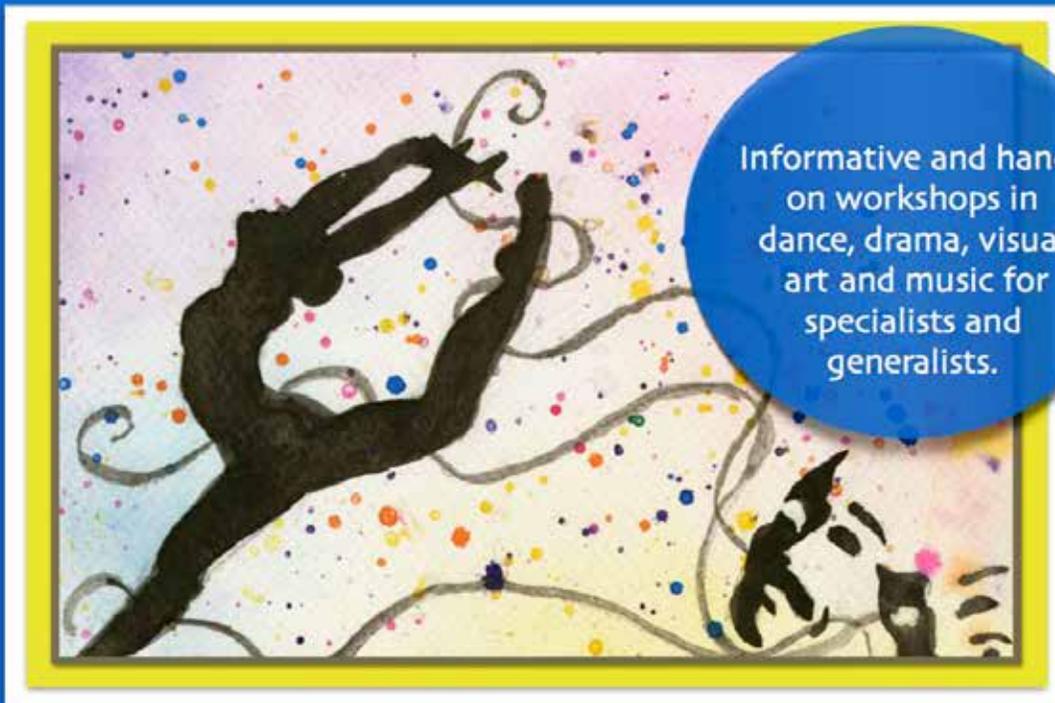
Multiple studies show that art practice improves performance in reading, writing and mathematics. As I read this I had mixed feelings. While not surprised that art has such a profound effect on the academics, I also feel that its connection to improving core subjects is not

necessarily its primary function. Art is significant, compelling and important in and of itself. In our world art builds economic vitality, makes community connections, communicates ideas and creates vibrant spaces. In schools art makes our hallways look great, art can spruce up the cover of a dull book report or give a frustrated student an outlet to calm. What we need to realize is that art is so much more than this. The skills that the arts build are invaluable. Studies show that art practice builds fine motor skills, improves focus and concentration, advances problem-solving skills, enhances communication, develops critical thinking, enriches creativity, teaches perseverance and above all gives students the confidence to move forward.

As the Fine Arts Council, our hope for the art exhibition is that it gave students the authentic experience of art sharing. That evening, students enjoyed the celebration of their skills, hard work and dedication to the arts. We hope that the experience will encourage students to move forth in their artistic and creative practice.

Fine Arts Council Conference

Refresh, Renew, Rejuvenate A Mind for Creativity



Informative and hands-on workshops in dance, drama, visual art and music for specialists and generalists.

October 22nd - 24th, 2015
Radisson Hotel and Conference Centre
Canmore, Alberta



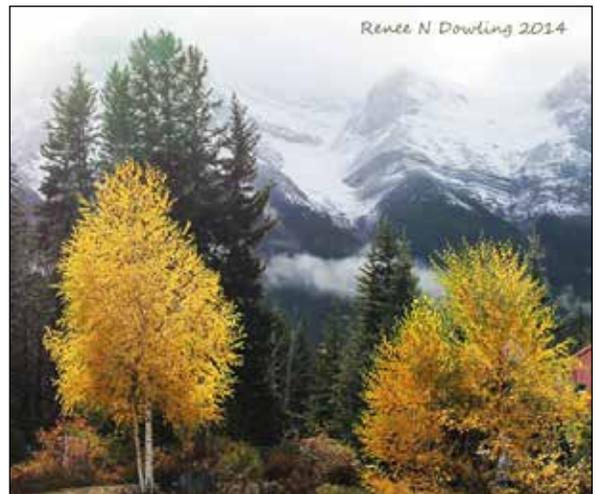
**For more information please
visit:
<http://fac.teachers.ab.ca>**



Conference 2014

Renee Dowling

A beautiful autumn setting for a wonderful conference for fine arts specialists and generalists.



Dance Session

Renee Dowling

Teachers explored different dances from around the world.



From the Fine Arts Council



Music, Drama and Visual Art Sessions

Renee Dowling and Sherri Ross

Diane O'Rourke, FAC secretary, dives into her clay work.



Hand Bells



Collage



Tammy Watt (l) enjoys the abstract painting session at her last conference as art representative.

From the Fine Arts Council



Foam pieces, yarn and cardboard printmaking.

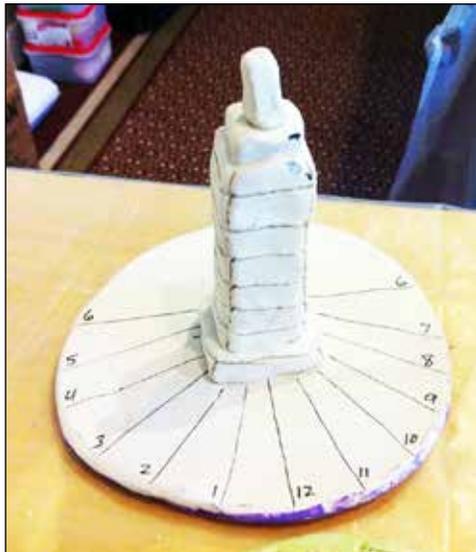


Printmaking with foam pieces.



Printmaking on glass from an old picture frame.

*Grade 6
science
sculpture—
a sundial.*



*FAC president
David Fettes
exploring
movement in
drama.*



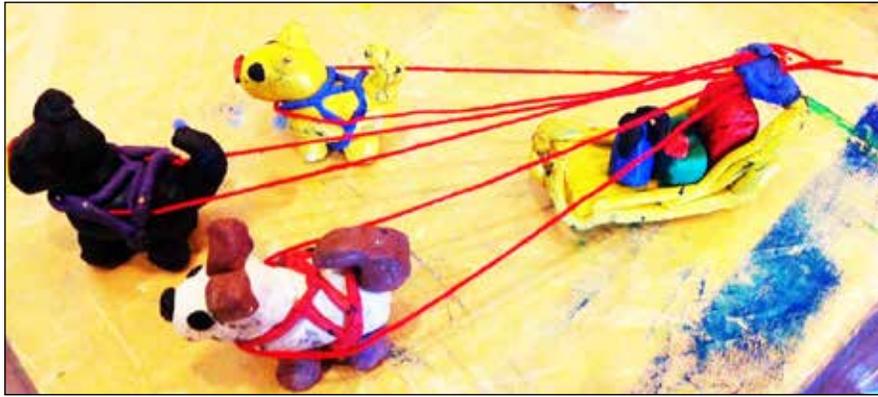
From the Fine Arts Council



Clay sculpture techniques.



Integrating art into social studies—study of the North.



Plasticine sculpture integrated into the study of the North.

Aluminum foil sculpture session



Reggio Session

Renee Dowling

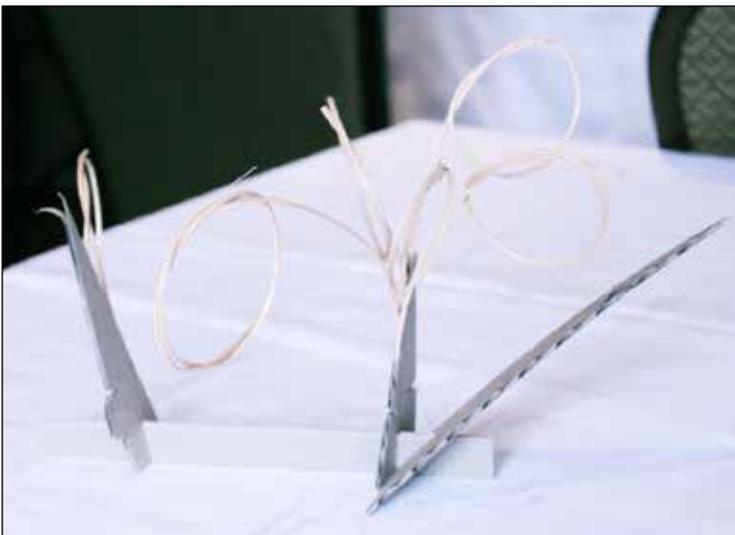
The Reggio session taught us how to create challenges and use reusable materials.



Mike Wheeler (l), drama representative, and Andreas Berko (r), webmaster, explore and create trees the Reggio way.



Students create a plan, then select materials. Natural items, such as tree cookies (wooden pieces) and reusable items, such as buttons, are materials from which students can choose to create. A photograph is taken of the final piece of art. Students reflect on the process, key learnings and the project. Materials are returned for others to use.



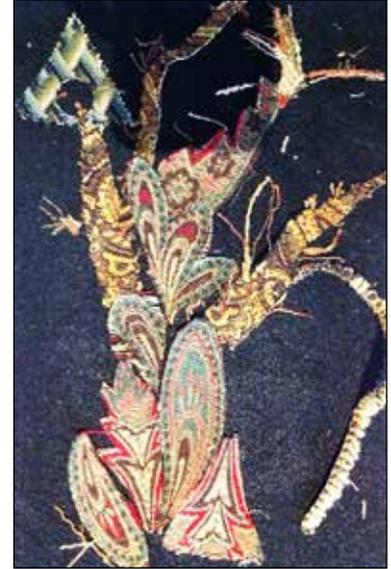
Cardboard trees.



Wooden trees.



Button trees.



Fabric pieces are used to create this textured tree.



Organization of materials is important. All materials must be at the students' fingertips.



A variety of materials and textures are provided as choices for art medium.



Felt and jean squares are provided for backgrounds for the art.

Steampunk Peter Pan

Mike Wheeler

This year my school's fine arts department produced a steampunk version of Peter Pan. The process started in April of 2014. I was working closely with our art teacher and her fashion class for a variety of concepts for costumes. I wanted to stray as far away from the Disney aesthetic as possible. My original understanding of steampunk was very rudimentary; I just enjoy the look. With some brief Internet research and a few lectures from students, I was able to grasp what steampunk was. Steampunk is built on a reality that steam power is still relevant. After everything was said and done I would say that our show was not technically steampunk but steampunk inspired.

For the most part, our costumes were originals scraped together. We did rent a few pieces (hats and Nana's costume) from Theatre Garage in Edmonton.



Photo 1

The pictures in the article are not too detailed or in-depth, and in some, the entire costume is not shown. Therefore, I will discuss some of the details and concepts for each photo.

The first picture was our Peter Pan design. Green was used more as an

accent colour compared with the character Peter Pan, which is more punk than steampunk. Peter was originally designed more like the Lost Boys, but the costume and design came together organically. Our Peter wore vibrant leggings with a denim vest ensemble. The back of the vest had a rooster patch across the back.

This photo depicts all of the Lost Boys and two of the three Darling children (Michael and John). The Lost Boys wore greens and browns. Each Lost Boy was associated with a particular animal. Those accents were added into the head wear. In photo 2, the Lost Boys were given a raccoon-coloured mohawk. Michael and John, fourth and fifth from the left, wore their base pajama costumes. Steampunk accents were added during one of the songs.



Photo 2

From the Fine Arts Council

In photos 3 and 4, the Indians had a brown colour scheme with gear accent pieces.

Headdresses



Photo 3



Photo 5



Photo 4



Photo 6

From the Fine Arts Council

The original vision for the pirates was a coal miner. I really just wanted them to look dirty, like they were working in the bowels of a steam ship for days on end. What started out as a bunch of miners evolved into the more traditional steampunk style (photos 5 and 6). Like Peter Pan, we tried to avoid the look associated with Disney.

Originally Captain Hook wore a leather jacket and fit the arm piece over top. One day during rehearsal, the actor was too hot, so he took his coat off and wore his costume as pictured in photos 7-9. The contrast between the pristine white shirt and the arm piece made him look larger than life. I had him lose the jacket for the play. Photo 7 is a close-up of the top half of the arm piece. Photo 8 is the bottom half of the arm. Photo 9 is the entire arm.

Photo 7



Photo 8

Originally, a student constructed Captain Hook's arm for his own steampunk costume. He used hockey pads and metal accents and designed it to look like a flame thrower. We removed the flame thrower apparatus and replaced it with the base of a light fixture and the top of a plastic cane.

Most of the gears used in the costumes came from old printers. (We even made a printer-smashing video to promote the show, which you can see here: <https://youtu.be/oCuCIITmQsk>.)



Photo 9

From the Fine Arts Council

The highlight of the costumes was the goggles, which were made from Mason jars and large orange juice caps. They were constructed, then painted. See photo 10.



Photo 10

We based the rest of the look and feel of the pirate costumes on the arms, and the rest is history. Smee is the pirate pictured in the red-striped top and red beany in photo 11. Smee has one of the few homages to the Disney version. For added effect she drove her car over her costume to stain it with dirt.



Photo 11

Photo 12 shows two pieces from the Smee costume. The one on the left is a tool belt with leather, denim and metal paper fasteners. The wrist piece on the right is made of a lamp piece and leather coat attached to a wrist guard.



Photo 12

We had a leather workshop for the students. We had the ability to make moccasins, bags and belts. We took those ideas and techniques and applied them to some of the costumes, especially Tinker Bell's belt (photos 13 and 14).



Photo 13



Photo 14

The most difficult costumes to design were the animals of Neverland. Photo 15 is of an ostrich on her cellphone backstage. The papier mâché mask was painted, then Mason-jar eyelids and metal paper fasteners were attached. To make the feet, we used handmade moccasins, patchwork leather and painted papier-mâché talons.



Photo 15



Photo 16

From the Fine Arts Council



Photo 17

The crocodile (photo 18) was made of motherboards, and the body was painted papier mâché. The motherboards were connected to a wood frame and wrapped in wire mesh. The student wore red welding gloves to operate the mouth. This was the most unpleasant costume to wear; however, the kids in attendance did love her. The motherboards were gathered from the smashed printers.



Photo 18

In summation it was an exciting concept that our art and fashion teacher pulled off well. I can only take credit for saying, “Hey, let’s do steampunk.” She was the one who made it all happen; the success of the costumes was solely hers and her design team’s.



Photo 19

Mike Wheeler teaches drama and math at Frank Maddock High School, in Drayton Valley. He currently sits on the Fine Arts Council as the drama representative. Follow him on twitter @OhThatMrWheeler.

School Art Exhibition

Renee Dowling

Each year teachers from Medicine Hat and the surrounding areas are asked to set aside student art from kindergarten to Grade 12. February finds art judges visiting each school to select art that will be displayed for a month by grades in the Esplanade, Medicine Hat's museum and art gallery. Students

and parents are invited to an opening reception, then the art is open for the public and schools to tour. This is a wonderful way of promoting visual art for young artists. What an honour to have one's art selected and exhibited alongside professional artists' exhibitions.



For the Classroom

The Fine Arts in the 21st Century: Websites, QR Codes, Apps and Books

Renee Dowling

Library of Congress

www.loc.gov/pictures



Here you will have access to historical posters, art, photography (for example, Ansel Adams), great reference pictures, old baseball cards and so on.

Alberta Foundation for the Arts

<http://alberta.emuseum.com>



Alberta artists and lesson plans are provided.

Deep Space Sparkle

www.deepspacesparkle.com/art-and-literature



This site has links to literature and art.

Art Smudge

www.artsmudge.com



Art ideas for small fingers and alternative ideas for clay glazing.

Hearts and Bones Studio

www.heartsandbones.com/markwagnernews/markwagner26reasons.html



This site gives reasons why art is important to kids.

Teaching Channel

www.teachingchannel.org

This site offers free subscription, high-quality videos on how to integrate the arts, including students in establishing a rubric. Questions help teachers reflect on videos, and teachers can save videos into a workspace. Appropriate for all grade levels and generalists!

Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA)

www.affta.ab.ca



Here you will find Alberta art, a user guide and lessons plans (one for each division). We have submitted 13 lesson plans in total and covered all four divisions.

Follow the Fine Arts Council on Twitter and Facebook. Each fine arts specialist has a blog.

Art

<http://art-fac.blogspot.ca>



Drama

www.facdrama.blogspot.ca



Dance

<http://albertadancespecialists.blogspot.ca>



Generalist Art

<http://generalistfac.blogspot.ca>



Music

Being constructed.



Other Sites

Matt B Gomez

[http://mattbgomez.com/
33-great-apps-for-storytelling-and-creativity](http://mattbgomez.com/33-great-apps-for-storytelling-and-creativity)



A list of apps to use for storytelling.

Arts Alive

<http://artsalive.ca/en>



Alberta and Saskatchewan program.
www.artsalive.ca/en/mus/activitiesgames



Visit all kinds of composers, integrate into the core subjects—pdfs.
www.artsalive.ca/pdf/mus/tour2004/vivaldi2004_en.pdf



Vivaldi information and ideas.
www.artsalive.ca/en/dan/dance101/index.asp



Dance information and links.

Decidedly Jazz Danceworks

www.djdinschools.com/in-schools/index.html



www.djdinschools.com/in-schools/student-reading-list



Jazz books for kids.
www.djdinschools.com/in-schools/physical-activities



[www.djdinschools.com/in-schools/
improv-and-music-connection](http://www.djdinschools.com/in-schools/improv-and-music-connection)



www.djdinschools.com/in-schools/other-activities



Drama activities.

The Kennedy Center Arts Edge

http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-5/Trees_In_Nature_And_Art#



http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-k-2/Butterfly_Dance



Express the cycle of a butterfly through dance. Videos are included.

<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/how-to/tipsheets/five-easy-drama-games>



Drama games for early elementary students.

Art Teacher Recommendations

“This was the best project of the year, I did it with Grade 1 students. Our administrative assistant still talks about this. I used liquid tempera in the background and markers for the giraffe. Each student had a whole poster sheet, folded in half. Half is for the background and half is for the giraffe.” (Rosemary Lee)

Deep Space Sparkle

www.deepspacesparkle.com/2015/06/06/giraffes-cant-dance



The Smart Teacher

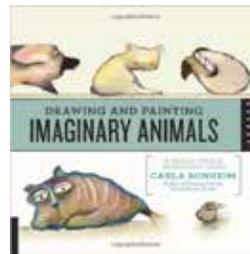
www.thesmartteacher.com/exchange/resource/949/Kindergarten-APPR-Assessment



Check out this site about art assessment for kindergarteners.

Books

Drawing and Painting Imaginary Animals: A Mixed-Media Workshop, by Carla Sonheim, 2012. Minneapolis, Minn: Quarry Books.



This book is very good for using creative thinking skills and imagination. I used this book to help teach my Grade 1 students. We were studying fall and plants. They all began by watercolour painting leaves and turning them into animals. We created all sorts of animals and made bookmarks for our book boxes.

Let's Make Some Great Art, by Marion Deuchars, 2011. London, UK: Laurence King.

For artists of all ages, this book is filled with drawings and activities that let you discover artists throughout history and their techniques.



For the Classroom

Draw Paint Print like the Great Artists, by Marion Deuchars, 2014. London, UK: Laurence King.



Discover new ways of making art by being introduced to 18 great artists, learning about the methods, materials and ideas that made up their masterpieces and how these can be applied to one's own creations.

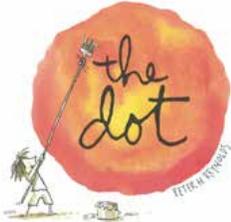
Let's Make Some Great Fingerprint Art, by Marion Deuchars, 2012. London, UK: Laurence King.

Create art using finger and palm prints.



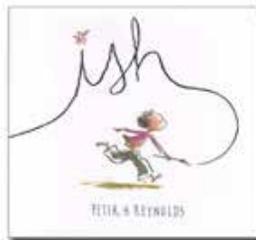
The Dot, by Peter H Reynolds, 2004. New York: Walker.

This is a book about making one's own mark. It is a really good book to read to the class at the beginning of the year, especially to reluctant artists.

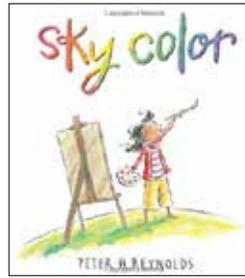


Ish, by Peter H Reynolds, 2004. Somerville, Mass: Walker.

This book is about thinking and believing in one's own ability and developing one's own style. Again, this is a good book to read to students at the beginning of the year.



Sky Colour, by Peter H Reynolds, 2012. Somerville, Mass: Walker.

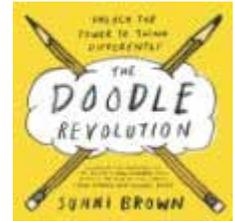


In the book, the class is challenged to create a mural for the library. Marisol agrees to paint the sky but cannot find any blue paint. She asks, "How am I going to make the sky without blue paint?" A good lesson on using observational skills and problem solving.

This website provides activities to go with *Sky Colour*: http://static1.squarespace.com/static/54a08126e4b038053fec29c3/t/5508715ee4b0e10fa9085b18/1426616670694/fablevision_skycolor_guide.pdf.

The Doodle Revolution, by Sunni Brown, 2014. New York: Portfolio.

Research showing the value of doodling to assist creative and critical thinking.



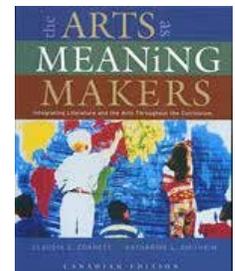
What Do You Do With an Idea? written by Kobi Yamada and illustrated by Mae Besom, 2014. New York: Compendium.

A book about believing in our own ideas, what it feels like to believe in one's own ideas and the impact an idea can have on the world.



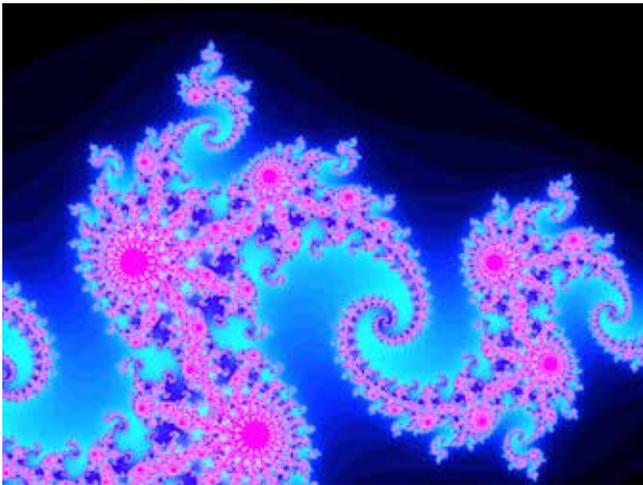
The Arts as Meaning Makers: Integrating Literature and the Arts Through the Curriculum, Canadian Edition, by Claudia E Cornett and Katharine Smithrim, 2000. Don Mills, Ont: Pearson Canada.

Integrate literature, art, drama, dance and music throughout the curriculum.



Technology and the Fine Arts: Are They a Good Fit?

Patricia Krumins



Many artists today are excited about the possibilities for creating digital imagery whether it is using algorithms to create fractal patterns or tablets for animated films. Like any new development, practitioners in the field are skeptical of losing the craft in allowing tools to take over more of the process.

It is easy for us to disdain the use of technology as cheating or taking shortcuts. However, artists have developed new tools and media for the past ten thousand years. From the time they scraped ochre images of animals on cave walls, artists have been seeking and inventing technologies to improve their ability to communicate visually. Every tool and medium used for art making has been designed or refined through creative invention. Art, even using the most basic tools,

is evidence of the human ability to use technology. We have gone from charcoal sticks and stone chisels to computer styli and 3-D pens.

Many artists and educators have concerns about focusing too heavily on digital art making. We want students to develop motor skills by manipulating a wide variety of tools and media that go far beyond using a mouse and a keyboard. It is valuable for students to explore making and manipulating images digitally. After all, art is communication and our world is saturated with digital imagery. Understanding the process of creating digital images allows a viewer to better appreciate them.

Digital technology does have some undeniable benefits in an art program. Students have instant access to the world of contemporary art and art history. Gone are the old slide carousels with a few expensive examples to show students a unit of study. Images of artworks can be shared instantaneously online to enjoy and learn from someone else's work and for students to get feedback on their own. A teacher can see a student working and instantly call up an image of another artist who works in that media or style to help inform the student's learning. Students can keep track of their work and submit digital portfolios to apply for schools or even to simplify the marking process for teachers. In studying the relative values of colours a digital camera can display an instant grey scale image for comparison. In Reggio style art lessons students are happy to explore constructing with temporary materials because they are

For the Classroom

able to photograph their work before disassembling it. Photography classes are enjoying a renaissance due to the ability to take volumes of photographs without the expense and time delay of film developing. In addition students can easily see an array of their images to reflect and compare.

The downside of computers in the art room relates to the limited sensory feedback for the artist and the question of artistic ownership. The learning value and potential for individual expression in using a computer drawing or painting program is questionable. These programs put an expensive electronic device between students and their canvases. Instead of using a stylus on a pad while watching a disconnected line appear in colour on a screen, students should pick up a real crayon and enjoy the sensory experience of the friction on the paper surface and the stickiness of the crayon and even the smell of the wax or oil. While making their own distinct marks they may discover the difference in the line when they alter the speed or pressure as

they draw. There is instant visual and tactile feedback for a student using art materials and tools. Digital drawing programs remove most of the rich sensory details that help students learn about the physical world. Another downside of digital art is that it so often involves sampling and altering the work of other artists. Where is the development of personally meaningful imagery in a process of manipulating another artist's work? Warhol did it and made an effective statement, but it is important for students to find their own voice first.

New technology is here and always has been. Artists and art teachers need to explore the potential and the pitfalls of technology and determine how it might fit for their own practice.

Patricia Krumins is an art consultant with the Edmonton Catholic Separate School District.

This article previously appeared in Bits and Bytes, Volume 7, Number 3, April 2015, a publication of the Educational Technology Council.

Storytelling Through Technology

Jessica Lysak

When a digital communication is finished ... it should be remembered for its soul not the bells and whistles of technology.

—*Benjamin Porter*

A digital story is a creative way to use technology to tell a story. A digital story has many different components to it that need to be done before it is complete. A digital story can be interactive and enjoyable for an audience to watch.

—*Grade 6 student*

In the fall of 2014, Division II students had the opportunity to experience writing a curriculum-based story using technology, music and digital images. The themes chosen for the stories are what sparked the interest of the children's masterpieces. Grade 4 students wrote about one of six Albertan highlights that stemmed from the past, such as the Calgary Stampede or the Royal Tyrrell Museum. Grade 5 students wrote a story based on one of the regions of Canada, such as the Arctic or the cordillera. Grade 6 students wrote a story based on the children's United Nations rights to freedom, such as the right to an education or the right to choose your own religion or belief.

I liked how we got to choose what to write about for our digital stories. By having a choice, it allowed me to choose a topic that I was interested in and wanted to learn more about.

—*Grade 6 student*

The first step of this project was to expose the children to the different possibilities they had to choose from for their writing piece. Then they were responsible to choose one specific topic. Once the topics were chosen, the students were asked to create a web. The web had to include things they knew about and wanted to learn about, and why they chose their specific topic.

Choosing my topic helped bring my interest up because I got to choose a topic that I liked and not just a random topic. When I was told we were doing digital storytelling, I wasn't looking forward to it because I am not very good with the computer. I liked creating a web with all of my ideas because it helped me stay organized.

—*Grade 4 student*

Step two had three different parts to it. The children started researching their specific topics, created storyboards for their stories and started writing. Some students found this process easy, whereas other students didn't.

This was hard for me to do because I couldn't think of a lot of ideas for my story and had a hard time finding ideas that I wanted to include in my story when doing my research.

—*Grade 4 student*

Before the students started writing their stories, they created storyboards with six to eight frames. They used diagrams and simple sentences on their storyboards. Once the students' storyboards were complete,

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they started to write their stories. As the students were writing, they were required to think about their audience and how to captivate their interest. Did they want to include beginning or ending messages about their stories or include sound effects to represent specific parts of their stories?

Step three was to allow for peer and teacher feedback. As the stories were read, descriptive words were added to the stories to allow for more detail and excitement throughout. Once the students completed their final drafts, they recorded their stories on the computer using GarageBand or Audacity. It was interesting to watch the students record their stories. Some students recorded their voice once and were happy, whereas other students tried numerous times until they were satisfied.

Recording my voice was my favourite part of the project because I got to add expression in my voice and different sound effects.

—Grade 5 student

Step four gave the students time to explore and experiment with the program GarageBand. Before the students were allowed to add music to their stories, they were required to think about “What kind of musical instruments might enhance my story?” “Is it necessary for me to have music playing throughout my entire story or just certain parts?” “How am I going to incorporate flow with my story and music?” Some students decided to have music playing only at the beginning of the story, whereas other students decided to have music playing throughout their entire story. This part of the project was a lot of fun for the students because they experimented with different musical instruments and enhanced their stories with a musical component.

GarageBand was my favourite part of the project because it allowed me to have a different meaning to my story by adding the music. My family liked

the music I chose to add to my story and felt it played an important part of my digital story because of how I changed my instruments as the story was being told.

—Grade 6 student

Step five was to look for images that related to the students’ stories. This was a difficult step for a lot of the students as they wanted to add cartoon images or just couldn’t find the right image to represent specific parts of their story. A lot of teacher guidance was used during this time.

I found this step to be the most difficult because I couldn’t find the right images for my story. I knew what kind of images I wanted to use, but just couldn’t find the right image to make my story make sense. I asked my friend for a lot of help during this part of the project.

—Grade 6 student

Students were asked to incorporate a minimum of 10 images in their stories, and the images had to reflect their stories.

The final step was using iMovie to piece everything together. Most students found this process easy, as they were familiar with iMovie from previous years. During this step, the students needed to include their voice recordings, images and music in their digital stories.

The most difficult part of iMovie was trying to get my images to match up with the story. Some of my sentences were longer than I thought they would be, and that made me have to make my images longer. Sometimes I had to change the timing of my images lots of times before I was actually happy with the way it looked and sounded.

—Grade 5 student

As a concluding activity, the Division II students hosted a film festival for their families to celebrate their amazing work.

Differentiated Teaching: Tools for Instructing Various Groupings: Which Me Should I Be?

John Poulsen, Rita Abou Gharib, Ian Cooke, Danielle Funk, Megan Hewko, Bret Jesse, Michele Martyn, Brittany Miller, Keith Miller, Cole Olson and Geordan Olson

This article examines the concept of using specific and distinct teaching modes with different group sizes of children. Students in the University of Lethbridge teacher education program conclude their studies in a 15-week practicum called Professional Semester III (PSIII), where they function much like a half-time teacher. They are referred to as interns, in recognition of this increased responsibility compared to previous practica. This is the culmination of the bachelor of education program during which interns are given the opportunity to hone their skills in such areas as learner engagement, classroom management and assessment, while encountering a myriad of unique learning experiences.

Ten University of Lethbridge interns from the 2014 fine arts (drama) cohort examined the concept of using specific and distinct teaching modes with different group sizes of students. The question that they were asked to reflect on in essence became: Can examination, reflection and implementation of differentiated teaching modes to various size student groups increase

teaching efficacy? The interns were asked to examine teaching from the perspective of teaching the whole class, small groups and individuals. Further they were asked about the most effective method of teaching each of the three groupings. The interns defined the concept, then gave examples of how this concept increased their teaching efficacy. This article is a distillation of their thoughts.

Rational

The first question the interns examined was why differing instruction to match group size was important. Danielle indicates that her perception of teaching altered during her practicum: "I used to believe that the way a teacher approached students in large groups, small groups and individually were all relatively similar. However, as I progress further into my Professional Semester III internship, I have found that this could not be further from the truth. The way that I interact

with students at a one-on-one level is immensely different from the way I relate to an entire class. The differences between these interactions do not mean that one aspect of teaching is any better or worse than another. There are no masks, no tricks and no insincerities. Rather, I like to think of each of these differing scenarios as wearing a different hat. The teacher underneath the hat is the same, but the way that teacher is presented may be a tiny bit different.”

Rita indicates that there is a reason for examining how to teach various groups of students: “There are many different aspects to classroom management that lead to establishing a positive learning environment.” Bret explains the importance of having instruction that matches the group size: “It is important as a teacher to have differing levels of instruction prepared for students. Every student is in need of different styles of teaching and we must be prepared to meet those needs.” Geordan continues, “I believe that a combination of whole-class, small-group and one-on-one instruction is vital to building classroom communities and interpersonal relationships with students. Within a given class the teacher should organically move between the three forms of instruction.” Brittany adds, “In my own teaching practice, whole, small and individual instruction is similar, however, with the slightest and most powerful variations.”

Ian continues, “Whole-group, small-group and individual instruction all have their merits; it just depends on the circumstance for which one of these is the best fit. I like to think a lesson is a massive puzzle and these three are all tools that you can utilize to make the lesson successful.” Keith clarifies the need for differing forms of instruction, “Each is important and none can exist without the others.”

Cole suggests that through his practicum he has found that, “When I started I leaned very heavily on entire class instruction, as I thought it was the best and most efficient method to get all students in the class on task and educated about a topic, but now I find that it may not be the most practical teaching method for me.”

Whole-Group Instruction

The following definitions are influenced by the interns’ own teaching and their reflection on their teaching. Brittany defines whole-group instruction as,

“addressing and/or giving the class instruction as a whole.” Bret continues, “Fundamentally, whole-class instruction deals with being the teacher in front of the class and having a full class engage in what you are talking about.” Ian elaborates, “Whole-class instruction is when the teacher teaches the entire class the same lesson without differentiating for specific individual students. The lessons are typically designed to hit the average student, and the teacher may decide to reteach a specific lesson if they feel that a majority of the class didn’t understand the main concepts.” Geordan states, “Whole-class instruction is important for bringing the entire class together to think and talk about things that matter.”

Cole indicates, “A common example of this type of teaching method could be a lecture or presentation that is given to an entire class. I think class teaching is best reserved for the introduction of new concepts and ideas, and to give an exploration of how those ideas can be used. Because the group being taught has numerous members that are all going to understand the material at different rates, I believe class teaching offers an effective solution for introducing the topic and giving students the materials and resources they need to find success.”

Keith states that, “The easiest to define and often the first that comes to mind when instructing is that of whole-classroom instruction: a set of instructions given to the entire class. Often these are given with the teacher standing in front of the class. Materials might be used to help with the instructions, such as a presentation on the Smart Board or example. It still comes back to students receiving the same set of instructions and expected to go about their work.”

Rita offers a practical warning, “As a teacher, the challenge with whole-group instruction is waiting for everyone to quiet down and focus, including the teacher.” Danielle adds that with regard to whole-group instruction, “it is important to be to-the-point and factual. The amount of information given at one time should be neither vague nor long-winded; there is a fine line between too much and too little speaking, and it can take a great deal of trial and error to find the right balance.”

Megan cautions that whole-group instruction, though powerful, must be used thoughtfully, “Whole-group instruction is best used to get the entire class going on projects and assignments. This type of

instruction is intended to be direct, quick and concise. Whole-group instruction can also be successfully used as a side-coaching tool during a whole-class activity. It is important for the teacher to eliminate any unnecessary information in order to refrain from losing student engagement while delivering whole-group instruction. This type of teaching also needs to be efficient due to the fact that it contains less differentiation when compared to small-group or individual instruction. Using whole-class instruction as the only form of teaching during a lesson can be wasteful to the students' time and should be used sparingly in order to get the students up and moving as soon as possible."

Small Group

Small-group instruction can be a very powerful teaching tool for creating community, allowing for specific explanation and encouraging creativity. Ian defines small-group instruction as, "Essentially when a teacher works with a small group of students on a specific concept. These groups consist of two to six students and provide these students with a reduced student-teacher ratio. This benefits teachers and students because it allows the opportunity to solidify relationships. Small-group instruction usually follows whole-group instruction. Teachers can work more closely with each student, reinforce skills learned in the whole-group instruction, and check for student understanding. It allows students the chance to ask more about what they have been taught."

Bret defined small-group instruction as, "Lending itself to assisting groups of three to six students who are working on similar assignments. Small-group instruction should be primarily led by the students, and the teacher should take the role of 'guide on the side.' This will allow students to experiment with the ideas of building cognitive and social skills within an assigned project." Danielle defines small groups as between two and nine students.

Geordan offers, "Small-group instruction is an important way for the teacher to build relationships with students. It's more personal than teaching to the entire class as it's a smaller group of people, therefore, a more informal environment. For this reason students feel more relaxed, and I find that because of this,

students in these situations ask more questions and are less afraid to express themselves. This is beneficial because when a student feels more comfortable to talk and ask questions the teacher is able to streamline instructions to suit the needs of the specific learners he or she is instructing."

Brittany states, "Compared to whole-class instruction where generally I am standing up at the front of the room and addressing the class as one unit, small-group instruction can take place while students are working on assignments, having a meeting or getting together in the hallway. Small-group instruction is one of my greatest strengths. It is my time where I can truly connect with students and understand them."

Keith says with regard to small-group instruction, "I believe this is my most used instructing type. Small-group instruction can occur when clarification of an objective is needed for just a few students, not enough to involve stopping the entire class. If the rest of the class is busy, the time can be taken to help a smaller group either by giving even more instruction or by allowing for examples to be used with the teacher taking an active role. It's nice because there can be a more relaxed feeling and opportunity to joke back and forth with students."

Megan states, "Small-group instruction can be more amiable and does not need to be as quick and direct as whole-class instruction. Small-group instruction can be helpful to clarify content to the students who have questions, allowing for students to work at different rates in the classroom. For example, if a few students are unclear on an assignment, why waste the time of the students who understand the task by explaining it again using whole-group instruction? This way the teacher can help students in smaller groups and allow differentiation to happen in the classroom." Rita offers insight with regard to assessment, "As you roam around you can evaluate students' progress and assist them as necessary without having to interrupt the other students."

Cole concludes, "I believe teaching in small groups is a great method for helping students to come up with their own original and creative ideas as opposed to teaching concrete facts to them. When students are given the chance to be a part of a small group, they have the motivation to explore new concepts on their own in a way that they wouldn't feel as comfortable with individually or with the whole class."

Individual

Interacting with individual students is important. Finding time to interact with each student can be difficult but the rewards can be great. Brittany defines individual instruction as, “The instruction that occurs between you and a student. Often this is extremely personal and is the time where the student and you gain a trustworthy and respectful relationship.” Ian states simply that, “For individualized instruction I’ve used this in specific areas where I felt I would modify my lesson objective to a specific student in order for him or her to succeed.” Keith states, “Individual instruction is instruction that is needed for only one student, without disrupting the entire class.”

Cole expands, “I believe that this method of teaching is an extremely effective way to help students work on their mastery of a skill set or concept. Because of the individual attention and one-on-one interaction, this method of teaching allows for teachers to help students fine-tune their skills in a particular area and go above and beyond in their understanding of the subject matter.”

Rita explains that, “Individual instruction is your opportunity, as a teacher, to be you.” Geordan maintains that one-on-one instruction has affective as well as cognitive benefits, “One-on-one instruction is crucial. There are three main benefits: (1) You can repair any damage you have caused the teacher-student relationship by having to discipline the student in any way. Repairing damage is vital and not possible without one-on-one time. (2) You can streamline your instruction to suit the specific needs of the student. There is no other form of teaching where being this specific to a child’s needs is possible. (3) It is a slow relationship builder. One-on-one instruction is an indispensable way of showing students they matter and that you are listening. Personalizing comments and questions once you start to know more about your students is important to deepen the relationship you have with them.”

Bret gives some suggestions for how to effectively teach individuals, “Individual instruction differs in that you must go to the student’s level and assist one on one. I believe this is where the most learning occurs because students are no longer distracted by the people or actions around them; they are focused on the one person who is talking to them. As a teacher, the most important part of the one-on-one teaching has to be

your body language and your voice. This is the time to take yourself to the student’s level, be that sitting down or kneeling down near their desk. While standing, we are setting the unconscious feeling of dominance or power over the student. The environment we are trying to set is that we are cooperating in learning, not demanding them to learn. The next important step to the individual learning is your voice. This is where you can really pull back from your classroom voice down to a calmer more understanding tone to really help this student.”

Megan continues on how to effectively teach in this mode, “While delivering this type of instruction, posture is just as important as your posture in whole-group instruction. It is essential when delivering individual instruction to bring your body down to the students’ level and talk one-on-one with a softer voice. The reason posture and voice are crucial in this type of instruction is because as a teacher you need to create a relationship with your students and bringing yourself down to a personal level can make students feel more comfortable in your classroom.” Danielle elaborates, “A calm, collected manner is just as important to have when you are only speaking with one student—especially if that student is one who may be a behavioural concern or have a tendency to question the teacher. One thing that is important to remember is that many students aren’t comfortable speaking with a teacher one-on-one for any length of time—they may feel that they are being reprimanded.”

Keith suggests that individual instruction can give a teacher insight from the viewpoint of assessment, “The most honest assessment can be completing a one-word (at a time) story with a student, when it is just the two of you and there are no external pressures.”

Discussion

When to use each form of teaching can be difficult to ascertain. Rita explains, “There is a time, a place and techniques for each strategy. For example, it is important to wait for every student to focus before giving whole-class instruction. If you have asked students to quiet down, you cannot turn and answer individual questions.”

Brittany cautions that using differing forms of instruction, “does not always look the same for each

teacher. I find the students begin to get extremely restless when there is a lot of whole-class instruction. Individual instruction should always be taken under caution however. Do not address certain topics alone and be smart in your delivery. When having a private conversation with a student, make sure that you are visible to other staff.”

Cole explains the shortcomings of teaching in the various modes, “One problem with individual teaching is it takes a lot of time to ensure each individual student is up to speed, and other students may suffer due to the lack of attention they receive. Small-group instruction does have a disadvantage. As I can only talk to one or two groups at a time, I have to ensure that all students still remain engaged as they wait for me to instruct them.”

Ian explains a downside to whole-group instruction, “Teachers can check on students’ learning through specific questioning; students might pay more attention because they might get called out to answer a question. This can also be a massive negative because students might not be comfortable being put on the spot, and if they are weak listeners the whole lesson might be lost on them.”

Michele indicates that for her, “The lines and categories that dictate how I interact with students during those types of instruction blur as the students get older. With younger students, it is important to have your ‘teacher pants’ on nice and tight. When you address an entire class of seven year olds, you need to show that you are the grown-up, you are the teacher and really ‘play the character.’ That strict, old-fashioned teacher role can become less so as you begin interacting with small groups and individuals, as the situation calls for it. Sometimes a small group or an individual will need you to continue with a strict, no-nonsense attitude. But sometimes, a small group or an individual needs to see your human side in order to be successful.

With older students, I believe that there is a danger in having your teacher pants on too tight. Older students are more likely to see when you are playing a role, and if you take yourself too seriously, they will just sit and wait for you to make a mistake. If you are quick to show older students that you, like everyone else, are human, those students are more likely to give you grace for mistakes. That is not to say that you should not be an authority in the classroom, or that you should not

exercise discipline with older students. But I think that, too often, adults are nervous that teenaged students will disrespect them and cause anarchy in the classroom, so they overcorrect to be completely formal during whole-group instruction. What this does is make it really difficult for students to wish to develop a relationship with their teacher. Relationships between student and teacher are imperative to a positive learning environment.”

Conclusion

The essence of this article has been to examine how to be more efficacious as a teacher. That is, we wanted to know how to be more effective at helping students learn. Every classroom is unique and teachers must be able to respond to the distinctive challenges and opportunities with vigour and creativity. Teaching is a complex and complicated activity that must constantly adapt to the realities of the classroom. One reality is the different groupings that teachers can place students in. It is the opinion of this group of interns that instruction of specific group sizes using different teaching techniques that is implemented after research and reflection can be effective in increasing teacher effectiveness.

John Poulsen is an associate professor at the University of Lethbridge, Faculty of Education. His research interests include drama as a subject with its own rigour and history as well as drama as a tool for teaching and learning.

Rita Abou Gharib completed her combined bachelor of fine arts (drama)/bachelor of education degree in December 2014. She has worked as a theatre technician at the University of Lethbridge on a number of productions including Red, Hamlet, The Rocky Horror Picture Show, The Lion in Winter and The Neverending Story. She also participated in the Chinook Regional One-Act Festival as assistant director, actor and coauthor of Crayons in a Desk.

Ian Cooke completed his bachelor of education in December 2014. He has a passion for coaching, which is shown through his experiences including his recent coaching tenure at Tom Baines Junior High School as well as coaching for the Southwest United Sports Club soccer teams for two years and encouraging youth to express themselves through activity.

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Danielle Funk completed her bachelor of arts/bachelor of education (dramatic arts) from the University of Lethbridge in December 2014. She is passionate about integrating performance and theatre into her future classrooms, no matter what age or subject she may teach. She has been seen in a number of University of Lethbridge productions, including *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *The Madonna Painter*, *A Moveable Feast* and *Uncommon Women and Others*. Danielle is looking forward to her career as an educator and can't wait to introduce theatre to young minds.

Megan Hewko completed her combined bachelor of arts/bachelor of education degree in December 2014. Megan is specifically interested in dancing and movement-based acting. She acted, danced and choreographed in the University of Lethbridge production *A Movable Feast*. Megan also enjoys performing in Theatre for Young Audiences productions and has performed at multiple elementary schools in the Lethbridge area.

Bret Jesse completed his bachelor of arts/bachelor of education program in April 2015. Bret has worked on a number of theatrical productions including multiple Theatre for Young Audiences pieces and Theatre Xtra's *The Love List*. Bret has also worked as a technical assistant in many main stage shows. Bret's primary drama education work has been at Fort MacLeod's *Empress Theatre* where he taught drama to a new group of students each week of a six-week program over the summer of 2013/14.

Michele Martyn completed her bachelor of arts/bachelor of education degree in April 2015. Her passion for working with children began through her work as a staff member at Gull Lake Centre, where she worked as a summer camp counsellor. She was able to combine her love for camp and her love for drama when she became the first drama coordinator at Gull Lake Centre in the summer of 2013.

Brittany Miller completed her bachelor of fine arts (drama)/bachelor of education in December 2014. Brittany is passionate about theatre and music; this stems from lifelong experiences of performing in her small rural community. Through the university she has found a passion for directing. Brittany created an original play with 26 Grade 6/7s.

Keith Miller completed a combined degree of bachelor of arts/bachelor of education in December 2014. He has worked on stage at the University of Lethbridge as an actor on a number of productions including *Hamlet*, by William Shakespeare; *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, by Richard O'Brien; and *The Neverending Story*, by Michael Ende, adapted by David S Craig. Keith is also a budding fight choreographer having worked on Lethbridge's *Shakespeare in the Park* as well as U of L Productions.

Cole Olson completed his combined bachelor of fine arts/bachelor of education degree in December 2014. Cole has a great interest in performance and acting and has taken part in the University of Lethbridge's productions of *Spring Awakening*, *The Madonna Painter* and *The Normal Heart*. He also has helped to work with younger students' exploration in theatre through his Theatre for Young Audience performances through the university and worked with Theatre Alberta's summer camp *Artstrek*.

Geordan Olson (Coupland) is a choreographer, dance artist, teacher and cofounder of *Alias Dance Project* (www.aliasdanceproject.com). She graduated in 2005 with a bachelor of fine arts in dance performance from Ryerson University. In December 2014 Geordan graduated with honours with great distinction with a bachelor of education majoring in drama.

Small Percussions Unit, Division 1

Julie Herman

Small percussion instruments can greatly enhance any performance, and children love to experiment with them, but how can teachers incorporate them into daily classroom activities? This mini unit explores an assortment of small percussion instruments and provides instructions for students to create their own.

Materials Required

- Shakers
- Rhythm sticks
- Sand blocks
- Bell bracelets
- Wooden spoons
- Materials for shaker experiment (see below)



Rules and Expectations

Students must understand when to use an instrument and when to listen to instruction. Establishing a routine and sticking to it is crucial.

1. Explain that instruments are similar to tools; for example, a hammer has a specific purpose and works in a particular way.
2. Hand out small shakers.
3. Practise the routine below:
 - a. "Ready." (Pick up instrument.)
 - b. "Hands free, eyes on me." (Put instrument down and listen.)
 - c. "Five, six, seven, eight." (Lead in to play.)
 - d. "And stop." (Stop.)

Shakers

Egg shakers work the best, but any type will do. If you do not have enough for the whole class, pass out enough for half the class.

1. Ask students to sit close to each other in a circle.
2. Hand out the shakers to each student in the circle.
3. Practise the rules and expectations.
4. Go through a follow-me activity whereby students mimic the teacher shaking the shaker; for example:
 - a. Tap shaker into the palm of your hand.
 - b. Rub shaker on the floor.

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- c. Shake shaker high in the air.
 - d. Rub shaker on your arm.
 - e. Hold shaker horizontally in both hands and shake.
 - f. Shake out and in (hold arm straight out in front, then bring it back in).
 - g. Make circles in the air with the shaker.
 - h. Shake up and down.
 - i. Shake side to side.
 - j. Shake behind your back.
 - k. Rub shaker on your tummy.
 - l. Salsa shake.
5. The next game is called Shake and Pass, emphasizing on passing.
 6. Practise passing an egg shaker back and forth with a partner, demonstrating that egg shakers are not tossed or thrown.
 7. To the tune of “Are You Sleeping?” or “Frère Jacques,” sing the words:
Shake and pass it,
Shake and pass it,
All around,
All around,
Shake and pass it,
Shake and pass it,
Don’t let it touch the ground,
Don’t let it touch the ground.
 8. Once students are familiar with the melody, have students face a partner again. Begin by passing one egg back and forth to the beat of the song, then add the other egg.
 9. Ask students to sit in a circle and place the shakers behind their backs.
 10. Adding a couple of shakers at a time, have students pass the eggs around the entire circle, making sure they pass on the word *pass* and to the beat.
 11. As more shakers get involved, students will need to pay attention to using both hands.
 12. For fun, increase the tempo of the song.
3. When all students have a pair of sticks, practise the rules and expectations.
 4. Go through a follow-me activity whereby students mimic the teacher. See below:
 - a. Tap the beat against the sticks.
 - b. Tap on the floor.
 - c. Create a variety of rhythms using taps and strokes.
 5. Sing “this is the way we tap our sticks” to the tune of “Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush.” Tap sticks to the beat while singing:
This is the way we tap our sticks
Tap our sticks, tap our sticks
This is the way we tap our sticks
So early in the morning
Other verses:
This is the way we scrape our sticks...
This is way we tap them soft...
This is the way we scrape them soft...
This is the way we tap the floor...
 6. Create a rainstorm sound composition with this story:
One day I was sitting in my house. It was very quiet. All of a sudden, I heard some light raindrops on my roof. They sounded like this:
(Tap very lightly and slowly. Have children join in.)
After a while the rain got a little heavier.
(Tap a bit louder and faster.)
And then a little heavier and then it turned into a rainstorm!
(Tap very fast for a while.)
And then it stopped.
(Lay sticks on the floor.)
When the students know this activity well, have them take turns leading it.
 7. Combine different rhythms.
 - a. Have students develop some creative rhythms and see how well they can play the rhythm repeatedly while another group begins a new rhythm.
 8. Bonus: try combining groups of students using shakers as the beat and students making rhythms with the sticks.

Rhythm Sticks

1. Ask students to sit close to each other in a circle.
2. Distribute one smooth and one rippled stick to each student. Encourage students to hold the

Sand Blocks

Sand blocks are simple instruments that make a delightful sound. I taught the students the song “Brush Your Teeth,” by Raffi, and used the sand blocks during the teeth brushing section.

1. Teach the song for memorization by looking at rhyming words. Each verse has a word that rhymes with a number. List words on the board, students think of that rhyme with the number, then at the end reveal the actual word for the song. You can rewrite the song as well.
2. This is also a great opportunity for students to practise learning how to snap to the beat of the song as they sing. Most students need instruction on how to snap.
3. Practise the brushing rhythm without the song.
4. Add the song, snapping and sand blocks together. Because we were short on instruments, students alternated instrument and voice, passing the instrument to their neighbour at the start of each new verse.
5. Bonus: Add shakers and/or sticks when students are comfortable.
6. Bonus: Have students take turns acting out walking around the room dramatically. Those with sand blocks have to move them each time the person takes a step.

Bells at the Circus

It’s circus time! Put on some lively music. I found a children’s instrumental circus mix on YouTube. It will get loud, so stick to your routines. Between each activity, pause the instrument to do a quieter act, such as balancing or lion taming. Try these amazing bells feats:

1. Juggling
 - a. Give each child a bell bracelet.
 - b. With hands close together, gently toss bells from one hand to the other.
 - c. Gradually increase the distance between your hands.
 - d. If students are ready, try tossing bells up.
2. Spinning Plates
 - a. Spin the bell bracelet on your finger.
 - b. Try moving your hand up and down while spinning.

- c. Try moving your hand out to arm’s length and back while spinning.
3. Bells Tightrope Challenge
 - a. Put a long strip of masking tape on the floor to act as the tightrope.
 - b. Put the bell bracelet on top of your head, and try to walk along the tightrope without the bells falling off. Add a broomstick for a balancing rod for added effect.
 - c. Each student takes a turn. When a student gets to the end, have the group call out oohs and ahs for fun.
4. Performance Day
Students can partner up or form small groups and put on a small performance. They may choose one instrument each, considering which one will keep the beat and which one can develop a rhythm. After some practice and exploration, students can share their creations with the class.

Shaker Experiment

Name: _____

Shaker Experiment

Problem:
What material makes the best sound inside the shaker?

Hypothesis:
I predict _____ will sound the best because _____

Diagram:
Draw a picture of the experiment! Label it if you like ☺

Observations:
Rice: _____
Popcorn: _____
Seeds: _____
Big beads: _____
Small beads: _____
Pebbles: _____

Conclusion:
The _____ works the best because _____

Materials Required

- * Shaker experiment handout
- * Rice
- * Popcorn seeds
- * Big beads
- * Small beads
- * Pebbles
- * Sunflower seeds
- * Plastic Easter eggs
- * Tape
- * Papier mâché supplies (This can be the real deal or white glue mixed with water.)
- * Acrylic paint
- * Paint supplies

1. Students will be excited about making their own shaker.
2. Set out each type of filler material and use each one to fill two eggs: one with a lot of the materials and one with a little.
3. Discuss with students the concept of a science experiment and making a hypothesis, an observation and a conclusion. This experiment is necessary for choosing the best material to fill their shaker. (It is also great science assessment for the homeroom teacher.)
4. Have students observe the six materials by looking at and touching them, but not the shakers.
5. They can then create a hypothesis for which material will make the best sound.



6. Break out the prefilled shakers and have them make observations and sketches of their experiment.
7. They can complete their conclusion by deciding which material is the best for them.
8. Have students fill their egg shaker with their desired material.
9. Students then tape the seal of the egg and begin adding papier mâché. A couple of layers should do.
10. When the papier mâché is dry, students can prime their egg with white acrylic, then paint the egg in any design or pattern of their choice.
11. What you and the class choose to do with the shakers once they are complete is up to you.

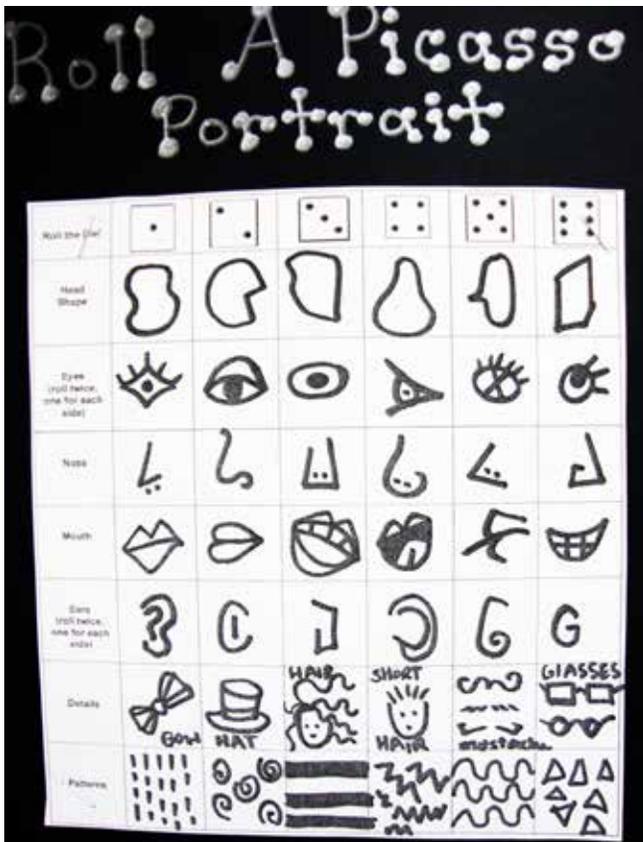
Pleasing Self-Portraits

Julie Herman

Self-portraits can seem difficult, especially for the beginning artist, but they are a wonderful way of practising sketching the human form. Any teacher who has observed a student evolving from the basic stick figure drawings to the composition of a recognizable face can attest to the pride in seeing their reflection in a work of art. The following are examples of how self-portraiture was integrated in a variety of different ways at Elbow Park School in Calgary.

Mathematical Mystery Picasso Self-Portraits

By Ms Montanero's Grade 1 Class



Materials Required

- Dice
- Roll a Picasso Portrait handout
- Sketch paper and pencil
- Watercolour paper
- Watercolour pencils
- Brushes and water
- Markers for outlining and texture

1. Students have a discussion about the famous artist Picasso and the types of art he created. They observe several examples of his work.
2. From there, students are provided with a sheet of paper that contains a grid of different ways to draw facial features. They are also provided with a die to roll.
3. Students must keep track of the facial features they draw on the grid along with the number they roll on their die.
4. A rough sketch is created as students complete the die rolling activity.
5. A good copy is developed, emphasizing a large size for the head and any creative arrangement of the facial features that they desire in the style of Picasso.
6. The good copy is completed with watercolour pencils and felt outlining. The benefit of watercolour pencils is that younger students can choose to have solid colours or a blend of colours without going overboard.

Each portrait is an original as the number of combinations seems endless. For this project, the artwork can be complemented by an “I Am” poem to describe students through thoughts, feelings and dreams.

Colourful Oil Pastel Self-Portraits

By Grade 4



Materials Required

- Camera
- Photo editing program—available Windows programs, Photobucket or PicMonkey
- Printed photos of students
- Sketch paper and pencils
- Heavier paper with some tooth to hold the layers of pastel
- Oil pastels

This project was developed through a year-long inquiry about what it means to be an agent of change. The self-portraits were created to help enhance a stop-motion animation film, each being several frames long. The effect was amazing, as multitudes of different faces in all colours flashed across the screen.

1. Take a couple of classes to introduce the concept of facial balance and proportion. Step-by-step, go through drawing a basic head shape, the grid lines vertically and horizontally, then adding each facial feature. For more information on this process, see www.craftsy.com/blog/2013/05/drawing-a-head.
2. Have students practise this process independently. The repetition will give them more confidence in their drawing ability.
3. Next, have them experiment with pastel blending. The students will naturally be drawn to colours they



connect with. Emphasize blending the colours together, not with tissue or fingers. Oil pastels blend best by adding more pastel. Encourage the use of white pastel, as this will add to the dimension of the drawing and help show a light source.

4. At this point students should choose a key colour and two to four other colours for blending.
5. It's photo time! Have a fun day simply taking close-up pictures of each other. It is important to create a comfortable environment that will allow students to give genuine expressions. After many discussions about being agents of change, their expression should reflect a sense of pride and taking action.
6. Once students have selected their preferred image, the photo is edited by changing the contrast. By making the photo more high contrast (more black and white, less grey), students can more easily see areas where the light hits their face.
7. Have students do several practice sketches of themselves. They might want to start by directly drawing on their printout to get the general outline of their personal facial features. They can then complete additional sketches freehand in their sketchbook.
8. Lightly sketch onto the heavy paper for the good copy.
9. Demonstrate for students how to start colouring in the darker shaded areas of the face, such as between the eyes and around the chin, and work their way to the highlights, such as their cheeks and forehead.
10. Students will need to constantly blend different colours in with their key colour to get the layered effect, depth in their self-portrait and unity of the entire face. Remember to lighten the face where the light source hits it.
11. Complete the piece with a complimenting colour for the background. Keep it bright, but ensure that it does not take away from the self-portrait.

Painted Pop Art Self-Portraits: Transformed

By Grade 6

These portraits were done at the beginning of the year. The intention is, as the students grow as citizens throughout the year, the artwork will change as well. Students will revisit these self-portraits in June to enhance them with a variety of multi-media.



Materials Required

- Camera
- Photo editing program—available Windows programs, Photobucket or PicMonkey
- Printed photos of students
- Sketch paper and pencils
- Canvas board 8 x 10
- Acrylic paint
- Multimedia collage projects for phase 2

Phase 1

1. If students need practice with drawing the face, please use steps 1 and 2 from the above activity.
2. Have students observe Andy Warhol style paintings and his use of minimal lines and strong colours.
3. It's photo time! Encourage students to bring out their personalities in their photo. Are they outgoing? Shy? Thoughtful? Just go with it!
4. Once students have selected their preferred image, the photo is edited by changing the contrast. Change the photo to black and white, and reduce the photo to the minimal lines by adjusting the contrast. The photo should be almost all black and white. Increase the saturation to bring back some texture.
5. Students should practise several sketches of their face before they begin their good copy, paying attention to thin lines, thick lines and texture.



6. You may want to have them prime the canvas board with white before beginning their piece.
7. Ensure when the students draw their image on the canvas that their body is grounded. This means the bottom of their drawing meets the bottom of the canvas.
8. The painting is completed with black acrylic and fairly small brushes.
9. Give students the choice of adding a feature colour on their piece for added effect, emphasis or as a background colour.

5. Explore different kinds of media including pastel, magazines, tissue paper, 3-D materials, photos, maps and so on. Give them a class to practise doing some collaging: cutting out letters or phrases, creating a Wordle, developing a pattern or searching in their notebooks for doodles and sketches they made.
6. Students need to create a plan for their transformed piece, in which they sketch their original painting and decide where the changes will be made. Will it be in the background, in their clothing or on their face? The possibilities are endless.
7. Complete the transformation.

Phase 2

1. Have students revisit their art to reflect on what they liked and disliked about it. Do they feel the same about the art? Different?
2. Pose the question: If you could change your self-portrait, what would you do?
3. Pose the question: How could changes to your artwork reflect the changes and growth in yourself throughout the year? This could be their personality, experiences, friendships, field trips, productions or something memorable. Have students make a list of these thoughts.
4. Show some examples of collage portraits with a simple Google search. It will fuel the creativity.



Integrating Art Through a Reggio Approach

Patricia Krumins

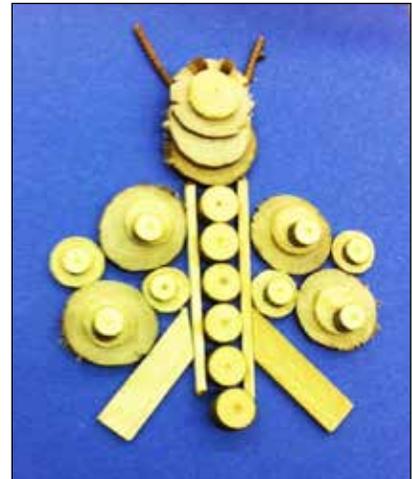
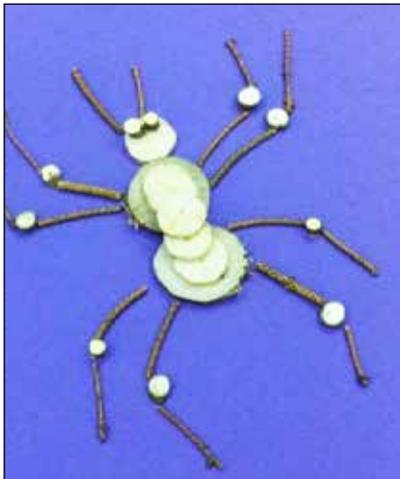
What is it about? How can we use the Reggio approach to teach other curriculum content with art?

Extracted from a 2014 Fine Arts Council Conference PowerPoint presentation.

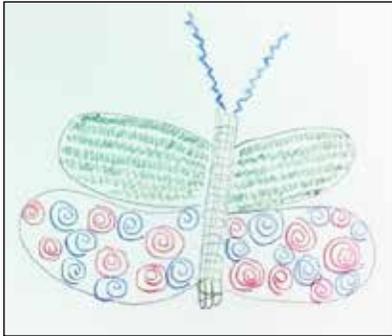
Patricia Krumins has an interest in the Reggio movement through her district's early learning team. This article focuses on making art through deep play, an expression borrowed from expressive arts therapy—great moments in art really do come from deep play. This article will show how this process can be applied to learning in other areas.

The photos below are examples of insect explorations. As you can see a variety of materials allows plenty of opportunities for student choice, but before selecting a particular material students must solve problems and explore the expressive qualities and limitations of the medium.

In the photo below, a student is beginning to sketch an image.



What is Reggio? These pictures show you one space in an early learning atelier. Materials are usually left out for easy access, but they are arranged neatly to make them attractive and interesting for students to use. Here is a short video to introduce the history and philosophy: www.youtube.com/watch?v=J1rIdpb8xhs.



Examples of Materials and Storage

Materials are contained in bins that students can access.



Documentation and Display of Student Work

A big focus of the presentation of student work is on student voice in their reflections on the process. These documentations of learning are wonderful to see because they tell a much bigger story than just the finished work alone.



Environment is important; it is the third teacher in the room.

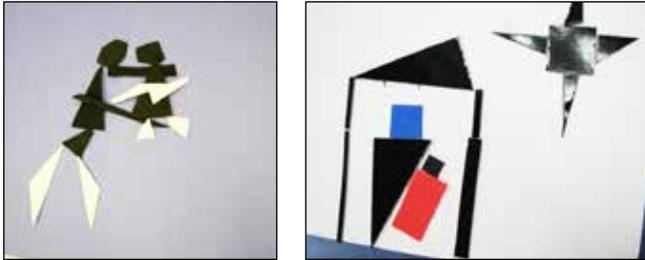
- * Reggio atelier is a space designed to promote active creation.
- * It is a place of research.
- * It provides stimuli for artist researchers of all ages.
- * Learners encounter a wide variety of materials, expressive language and different points of view.

For the Classroom

Hands, mind, eyes, senses and emotions operate at the same time.

- * Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi describes this as “flow, the secret to happiness.” Check out the TED talk.
- * This aspect of learning is a brilliant piece of the Reggio process. How many of us decorate our classrooms? The Reggio approach suggests that anything displayed in a classroom should have a specific purpose that enables and assists learning.

Students in Grade 3 explore and record their ideas about images of mothers (Madonnas).



These pictures depict an exploration of the human form through a Christmas narrative. I teach in the Catholic school system in Edmonton.

- Students look at stories, photographs and art images related to a theme.
- They represent their own interpretation using materials they select.
- Students draw or paint their constructions as part of the documentation.
- Constructions and students at work are often photographed for display later.
- Students reflect verbally and in writing on their choices, process and discoveries.

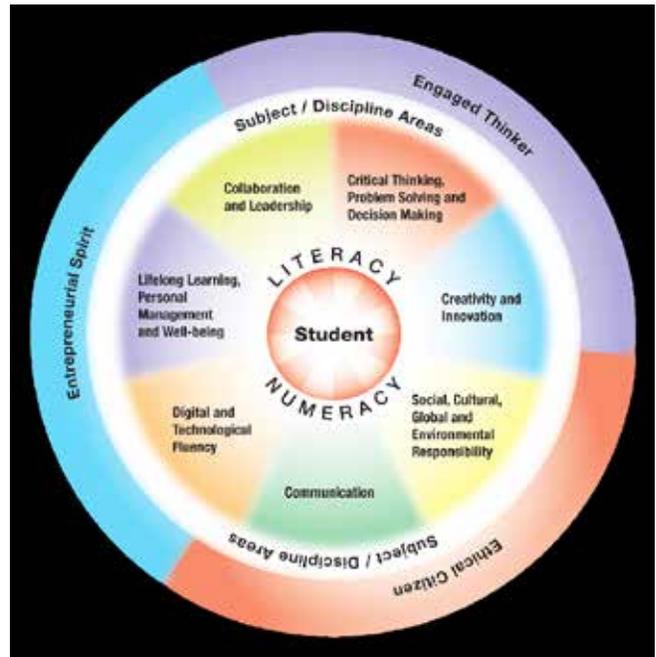


This is a wool version of the Madonna. Students were shown photographs of mother with infant from a

variety of cultures, then many different artists’ views of the Madonna, some highly realistic, others stylized and some very abstract. The images included paintings drawings, sculptures, collages and prints. This is a process that a teacher I know calls uploading the students.

Reggio is self-expression, imagination, exploration, problem solving—art.

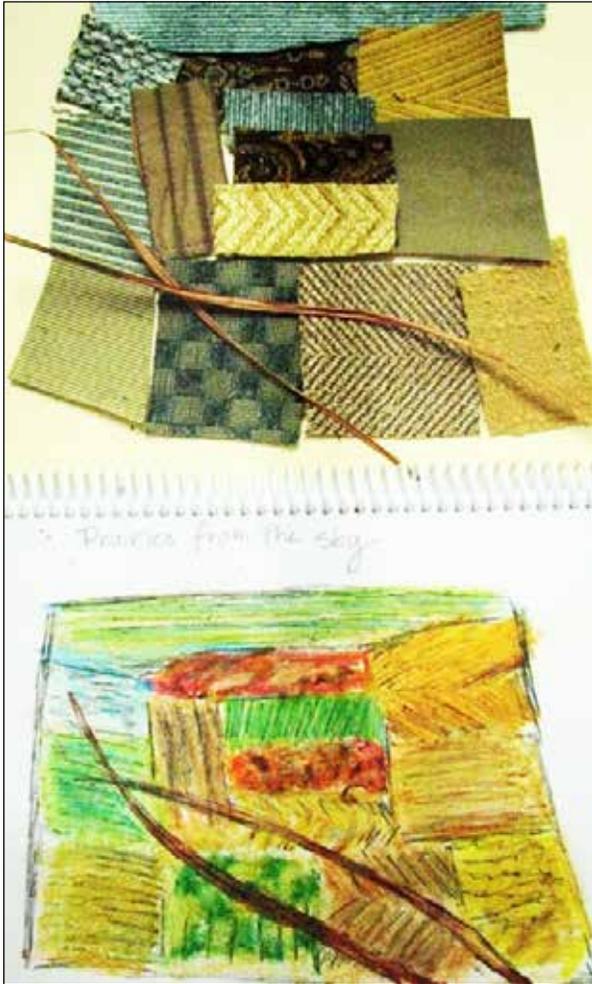
This is a competency wheel. It describes the competencies Alberta Education wants to see our students develop. The Reggio process relates to each of these.



Source: Alberta Education (<https://education.alberta.ca/media/6581166/framework.pdf>)

The Reggio Emilia philosophy is an approach to teaching, learning and advocacy for children. In its most basic form, it is a way of observing what children know, are curious about and what challenges them. Teachers record these observations to reflect on developmentally appropriate ways to help children expand their academic and social potentials. Long-term projects connect core academic areas in and out of the classroom.

Students are “uploaded” with numerous images to think about. Then they select an idea, choose their materials and set to work creating an image or a construction of their idea. After they’ve finished, they draw the work and write or dictate a reflection as part of the documentation.



Exploring Reggio in Grade 4 Social

Curricular Tie-Ins Beyond Early Learning

Social: General Outcomes by Grade

Dimensions of thinking: creative thinking, critical thinking, historic thinking, geographical thinking, decision making, problem solving, metacognition

Grade 1: A. I am Unique

Grade 4: A. Alberta: A Sense of the Land

Grade 5: A. Physical Geography of Canada

Grade 6: B. Historical Models of Democracy: Ancient Athens and the Iroquois Confederacy

Science: Topics by Grade—Emphasis:

Science Inquiry

Science Inquiry

Problem Solving Through Technology Science Inquiry

Science Inquiry

Grade 1: A. Creating Colour

Grade 2: E. Small Crawling and Flying Animals

Grade 4: D. Light and Shadows

Grade 5: D. Weather Watch

E. Wetland Ecosystems

Grade 6: E. Trees and Forests

Science: Topics by Grade—Skills

Initiating and planning, performing and recording,

analyzing and interpreting, communication and teamwork.

Attitudes: Interest in science, mutual respect, scientific inquiry, collaboration and stewardship

Grade 7: B. Plants

Grade 8: B. Cells and Systems

Grade 9: E. Space Exploration

Think of the creative energy you use with your Reggio materials, and when the construction is put away imagine the next person using these materials being inspired by that creative energy.

Art is when you hear a knocking from your soul—and you answer.

—Terri Guillemets

Patricia (PJ) Krumins is an art and drama consultant (K–12) for Learning Services and Innovation, Edmonton Catholic Schools, St Peter Centre.

Provocations

- * A Reggio-inspired inquiry begins with a question or something to wonder about.
- * If the activity primarily focuses on art, the question will be art based:
 - What do trees really look like?
 - Are all snakes the same?
 - What are the best materials for me to use to show my idea?
 - How can I use visual patterns to help me understand numbers?

Messy Play

Tiffany Arnold

My name is Tiffany Arnold, and I am a first-year teacher. I teach an early learning program (ELP), which is designed for children from 2.5 to 5 years old. We follow a Reggio approach in our classroom. This influences what our materials and furniture are made of, the design and layout of the space, and the way we integrate learning through art, nature and music. We believe in playful learning, emergent curriculum, nature, getting messy, and following the interests and cues of young learners.

Messy play is so important for young children. Early learning experiences should be full of hands-on, tactile learning opportunities. Kinesthetic learning engages the brain, making things more concrete.

In our ELP class, we like to be messy. Here I will outline one specific art exploration.

Many different materials were laid out for the kids to use as they wished; for example, cornstarch, coffee filters, shaving cream, water, spray bottles, eyedroppers, bowls, jars and food colouring in red, yellow and blue.

The children knew they could use the materials how they liked and that mess is allowed, so they jumped right in! They loved the textures and mess.

Kids love dropping food colouring with eyedroppers, and when they mix two colours and a new colour is created, watch out! It is so exciting! “Look! Green!” “I made brown!”

All they need are more opportunities to repeat the same kind of mixing process to cement that understanding of how primary colours mix to create other colours.

Enjoy getting messy!



Poinsettias in Watercolour

Rosemary Lee

This is where we are going:



Here's where we share. Trace three interesting leaves around the centre; they don't have to be yours. They can be flipped over to make one image useful as two.

Draw with the pencil and draw over with the candle, resist; the pencil markings are in the final presentation.



The Drawing

- * Make the poinsettia in small groups.
- * Everyone has a template with three circles.
- * Draw interesting leaves in the circles where each touches both ends of the circle.
- * Cut out the three leaves.
- * It's time to share.

Count Your Leaves

- * The flower is that pretty part in the centre; the rest are leaves.
- * Draw the centre the size of a toonie; make it loose and light.

After the centre and first leaves are drawn, here are the next steps:

- * Draw five medium leaves around the first small ones. Draw light. If they overlap, awesome, just don't include the marking.
- * Draw eight large leaves. The centre point remains the same. They will overlap. Avoid drawing within the smaller leaves. Remember to share your tracers.

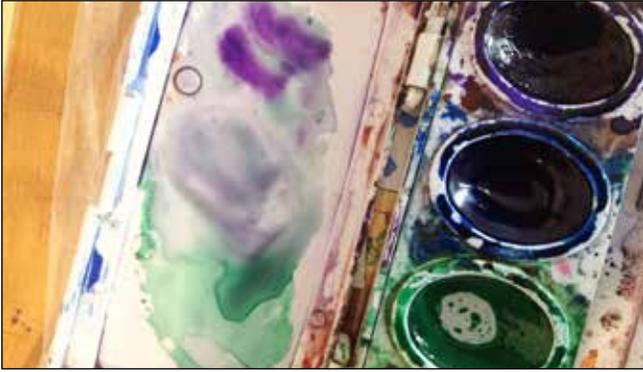
Trace the pencil lines with a white birthday candle or piece of wax. It's a resist and will add to your painting as well as help control the paint later on.

For the Classroom

You may skip the candle, resist; there will not be a border between the leaves.

Paint with water.

Play with the colour. The lid is for mixing your colour. Make a red with the red, yellow and purple mixed in the lid, or use the red provided.



Having painted the leaves with water first, outline the leaf before painting.



Wow! It is time to clean your water and take a short break so this part dries.



The background is better if you paint with water, then premix some paint in the palette before you begin. Purple close to the leaves makes an interesting complement.



For the Classroom

Purple makes the green look more interesting, but the blue will be interesting, too.



Drop a little coarse salt on the wet spots while they are still shiny. Once the salt is down, don't paint in that area.



Note the dark purple close to the leaves. The centre is green, yellow and red. It wasn't wet with water first, so it looks more intense.

Remove the salt as soon as it's dry, but be careful to not push it across the poinsettia.

It's yours. It's beautiful. Enjoy.



Submitting to A Fine Facta

Add the goal of being published to your teacher professional growth plan and submit something to *A Fine Facta*! Submissions may include the following:

- Practical classroom tips, lesson plans and rubrics
- Resource reviews
- Movie and book reviews
- Personal reflections on classroom experiences
- Stories and poems by teachers, students and student teachers
- Student artwork

Please include a short (three- to five-sentence) biography and your address so that a copy of the issue in which your work appears can be sent to you.

Submit signed permission forms for student work or photographs of students.

E-mail submissions to Renee Dowling at renee.dowling@sd76.ab.ca.

Permission to Print Photograph/Student Work

Your child has submitted a piece of work or appears in a photograph that we would like to print in the next issue of *A Fine Facta*. *A Fine Facta* is a journal that goes to teachers across Alberta who are members of the Fine Arts Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association.

By signing below, I give permission for my child's work or photograph to be considered for publication in an upcoming issue of *A Fine Facta*. This permission form will be forwarded to the journal editor.

Parent/guardian name _____ Signature _____

Student name _____ Signature _____

Teacher _____ Signature _____

School _____ School location _____

Notes to teachers:

- Send the student work/photograph and the permission form to the editor of *A Fine Facta*, Renee Dowling, 7130 Highway 523, Cypress County AB T1B 0L3, e-mail renee.dowling@sd76.ab.ca.
- Work may be submitted electronically to renee.dowling@sd76.ab.ca.

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*The 2015/16 Fine Arts Council executive will be elected at the 2015 conference.

ISSN 1480-932X

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