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Including the Arts in the Generalist Classroom

Camille Hone

A thesis submitted to the faculty of  
Brigham Young University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Mark Graham, Chair  
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July 2015

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## ABSTRACT

### Including the Arts in the Generalist Classroom

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*Including the Arts in the Generalist Classroom* is an integrated arts curriculum within a 6<sup>th</sup> grade classroom in Eagle Mountain Utah. This project describes the process of putting an art curriculum into an elementary 6<sup>th</sup> grade where there is no art specialist and no means of getting one. This project focuses on four lessons that have been written using the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Science and Social Studies Utah Core. Each lesson is written to ensure that a teacher and/or a parent volunteer can give instruction without any prior knowledge of content and/or technique in art.

The Appendices describe the curriculum and more fully include essential information for proper lesson instruction. They include background information, websites, vocabulary, studio techniques, ect. are all there for the convenience of the teacher.

The ultimate goal in creating these lessons is to help create an art curriculum for a school without an art specialist and have the instruction be not only art based, but also integrated with other core subjects in ways that enrich student learning through art instruction.

*Keywords:* integrated, arts curriculum, Utah Core

## Acknowledgments

I want to give thanks to those involved in supporting me through this challenging process. Dr. Gray for her love of art and of the museum, and opening my eyes to so many ways to integrate arts into my own classroom. You have inspired a lot of the ideas formed in this thesis. Dr. Barney who breathes life into art practices. I have a huge amount of respect for you. Dr. Graham for his perseverance and constant reassurance.

There are many others behind the scenes of this work that deserve a huge thank you. My life-long friends Molly Neves and Malia Andres. As a generalist I valued their comments and suggestions the whole way through this process. They both have been total rocks in this Masters program.

I would like to give a special thank you to my editor and friend Lynette Lamb. She is amazing.

I give a special thanks to my parents, Alton and Sharon Hone. They have guided me and supported me through this whole process.

Lastly, I must thank my husband. He has been so patient, kind and supportive. I love you!

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## Introduction

Each year the district that I work for has to limit more and more art specialist jobs for various reasons. The sad thing about this is that children learn through art. It helps them understand and remember the things they learn. This master's project is based on the premise that arts integration is imperative to the elementary classroom. It will investigate how I came to the question, "How could I create a curriculum within my 6<sup>th</sup> grade class that would not only teach authentic art processes but would be valuable for other teachers?" The challenges and results of implementing this curriculum are also described.

One year I had a class that was unbelievably hard to manage. They were talkers and doers. They could hardly sit still during ordinary classroom instruction. After talking to the music teacher at the school about my problem she shed some light on how to help my situation. My class needed more dramatized instruction and practice. They needed more of the arts. After our talk I incorporated art into nearly every aspect of my teaching that year and watched as my class went from disruptive and chaotic to excited and involved. They loved learning. We had great discussions about topics within the Core. I saw a huge change in a class that could be attributed to how the arts helped them understand the curriculum. I thought if they did this well with art integrated into their regular lessons, what could be done within any classroom setting by adding more integrated arts?

Too many times I have seen various crafts hung up in the hallways that are labeled as art. Every project looks the same and is an almost exact replica of the teacher's artwork. I believe art should show more of a child's individuality and creativity within his or her own art. Artwork

should have variation. Art should be an extension of the individual who is making it and have a personal flair. When this happens learning becomes personal and students are more engaged. The curriculum I designed for this project incorporates authentic art-making projects.

According to Elliot Eisner, “The aim of the educational process inside schools is not to finish something, but to start something. It is not to cover the curriculum, but to uncover it.” (Eisner 2002 p.90). What better way to do just that than with art? Art has a way of creating connections for children that would not normally be there. Art helps create an inviting learning environment and helps develop a better understanding of other subjects and curricula. A possible response to the lack of an art teacher specialist is to integrate art with other subjects in the class. Through the arts, teachers can help students make connections with many ideas and subjects through their own art practices. The George Lucas Educational Foundation website Edutopia’s producer, Mariko Nobori (2012), gives a great definition of arts integration. She states, “Arts integration goes beyond including art projects in class; it is a teaching strategy that seamlessly merges arts standards with core curricula to build connections and provide engaging context.” This master’s project will explore the idea of making connections with art curricula that is integrated into the elementary classroom without an art specialist.

## **Background**

In my school district elementary schools usually have four different specialty subjects: computers, physical education, music, and visual art. In my school district public schools are granted specialty teachers based upon the number of students at their respective schools. Regular classroom teachers send their students to this specialty teacher for about a half an hour a day four days a week. A larger student population means greater funding to hire more teachers who might be specialists. However, the need to perform on standardized tests, funding, and number of

schools within my school district can outweigh the needs of the children when it comes to these specialty classes.

This problem helped to guide a discussion I had with my sisters. Their respective schools rely solely on the PTA to run their art program. As parents, they were both required to sign up and teach an art activity. In our discussions I asked if the lessons were related to the art core for Utah. They said they were not sure. As an educator I could not help but think that these activities should have been directly related to the state core.

What they said intrigued me and I wondered why I had not thought of it before. The PTA ran their entire art program. Parent volunteers came in once a week to teach art to the students, and the PTA took care of scheduling and problems that arose. I knew that asking my PTA to run such a program was not an option. However, it started me thinking of ways I could implement an idea within my school and within my master's project. I could create an integrated curriculum that could instruct art practices and processes. As I talked more with my sisters and mixed ideas, our conversation eventually lead me to my master's question, "How could I create a curriculum within my 6<sup>th</sup> grade that would not only teach authentic art processes but would be worthwhile to the other teachers at my school, and simple enough so they would feel comfortable teaching, even if they have no prior art knowledge?"

I was very excited about this idea. I chose to have a small focus but wanted it to be more inclusive than just my classroom alone. With total determination I convinced the other 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers at my school to be part of this investigation of art integration.

As a generalist, I know that art is one of those subjects that is put on the back burner or into a category of a craft done within the classroom. By a craft, I mean an activity that is done with a precise formula and without much artistic thinking on the part of the students. Without an



art specialist at our school I can only envision that this will occur more often. I did not want this to happen to our school. I want to introduce contemporary artists along with traditional artists to our 6<sup>th</sup> graders and make our curriculum more engaging and thought provoking. My response to the problem of the lack of an art specialist was to work with other 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers at my school and with parent volunteers to integrate an art lesson into their curriculum. This master's project describes my own exploration of these ideas, both within the art education research literature and within my own school.

### **The Problem**

The lack of an art specialist in my school is a problem because many of the fundamental processes of art making are profoundly cognitive (Rabkin & Hedberg 2011, p.42). Teaching art along with other subjects will only increase student learning because it incorporates all the senses reaching to all types of learners. Art is not only a way of expression but also a way of problem solving and a way in which students find problems. These two aspects of problem solving and finding problems is what I consider to be the most important skill we can teach our students. As educators we are always looking for better ways of teaching. We are constantly searching Google, blogging, going to conferences, and asking other professionals what they have done that seems to help our students learn. Teachers are resourceful and are constantly looking and gathering ideas for great teaching practices. These ideas are usually integrated into the existing school curriculum because of the enormous amount of time required of teachers within the current school program. Amazingly, art is an excellent catalyst for curricular integration.

However, teaching while integrating the arts takes a lot of preparation. This is one of the reasons I initiated this master's project. Other difficulties with doing this program in my school include: 1. Not being able to get enough parent volunteers. 2. Teachers unwilling to spend the

time it takes. 3. Teachers not understanding the value in doing the kind of art projects envisioned. 4. Student's unwillingness to participate because they do not think they are capable. My research is highly dependent on others, which makes it difficult to control what happens, and in turn, makes it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about my data. Although I would like to consider the question of how art integration increases student understanding within other subjects, this topic is beyond the scope of this study. Instead, I will focus primarily on a description and interpretation of the implementation of integrated art lessons within a 6<sup>th</sup> grade classroom.

### **Why this Problem Matters**

We should care about the lack of an art specialist or the lack of art in the classroom because the thinking involved with viewing and making art should be part of our everyday lives. It can be an important part of the learning process. Our brains are wired to think creatively, but we need to train them to do so. Art, in all its forms, has a way of changing and influencing children in profound ways. The elementary classroom is a place for students to feel heard and it is here that they finally start to become who they eventually will be. If I could help lead my school down a path that involves art teaching practices in the general education classroom, these students will be more willing to take some kind of art classes in the future, instilling in them the skills to a better, well-rounded life.

I believe art in all its forms is fundamental in a student's learning process. Art is the one thing that can reach every child. It immediately engages their attention. It motivates them to learn more. My sisters and I spent the next couple of hours talking ideas; what kinds of art they valued as parents and wish they saw more of in the elementary schools, what I valued not just as

an educator but as an art educator, and how to put this into lessons that I thought my teachers and volunteers would feel comfortable teaching.

### **My Response to the Problem**

So the question remains, “Why are not more educators teaching through the arts?” As a 6<sup>th</sup> grade educator I wanted to put this idea into practice, not only my own classroom, but with the entire 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Teaching art is fundamental even if educators feel inadequate to do it. I developed lessons that were easy to follow and are integrated into what the educator already felt comfortable teaching. While the students were a big part of my research I was primarily concerned with how teachers would implement the lessons and what their response to being asked to teach art would be.

- Do they think the lessons are easy to teach?
- How could I have done anything differently that would have made it better?
- What kinds of things did they adapt into the lesson(s)?

These kinds of questions guided me with the research that I would conduct.

Sixth grade is an important year for the students’ development and for their future participation in art. As educators we can instill in them a desire to learn, and to cultivate an interest in art. When faced with deciding what extra curricular classes they will be taking, art will be something that they have had successful experiences with. Like many other elementary schools, there is an ongoing decline of art being taught because we are facing an increase of test taking. By teaching art I hope to increase their understanding of other subjects as well as increase their skills and appreciation for art.

## Chapter 2

### Notes from the Field

The notes from the field will describe research literature that explores why art education can be an important and a fundamental part of a child's learning process. It also describes the stages of artistic development in children to better understand how to teach art to elementary students, particularly 6<sup>th</sup> graders. This chapter also describes and explains the benefits of and reasons for arts integration. This section also includes a description of the methodologies that supported this project and are valuable to art teaching.

#### Why Art Education is Important

Let's first explore why art is fundamentally important in a child's learning process. Art can help at certain ages of a child's growth and development (Kohl, 2010). According to MaryAnn Kohl, children express themselves through art on a fundamental level. Art can go beyond verbal communication (Kohl, 2010). Art creates synapses in the brain to better hold information (Eisner, 2002, p.107), especially for visual learners. Art has a way of triggering emotional experiences creating deeper connections within us. Arts integration will help students explore different outlets within subjects that they may never have experienced. Elliot Eisner (2002) explains it this way:

Consciousness is the product of attention, and attention is guided by past experience and moderated by current need or purpose. Consciousness is also a form of awareness, and awareness is fed initially by sensibility. Thus, sensibility is the mother of consciousness and provides the content for reflection, analysis, and the making of connections. Because consciousness depends initially on sensibility, the refinement of the senses is of prime importance. We cannot write or paint about what we have not noticed, if "only" imaginatively. Arts education

has a major role to play in creating situations through which the senses can be refined. (Eisner, 2002, p.108)

The arts, when a central part of the general curriculum and taught in meaningful ways, can develop deep thinkers (Resnick, 2010).

I want my students to be able to better understand art, to find an artistic outlet. Art promotes higher level thinking skills as well as rigor and relevance in the curriculum. I value higher-level thinking in my classroom as does the district I work for and our Nation. The state of Utah adopted the National Core Curriculum in math and language arts in 2010 and started implementation in 2012. These standards are much more in-depth and thought provoking. They are intended to promote higher-level thinking. According to Resnick the arts empower children to communicate ideas that are difficult to express with words. It is an outlet for creativity and self-expression, a way for children to be heard and continue searching for meaning and understanding (Resnick, 2010).

Art also helps develop and teach other areas of curriculum through higher-level thinking. Sandra Rupert (2006), Director of Arts Education Partnership, supports this idea in *Critical Link*, a research compendium. This compendium is a diverse collection of studies that show how art-learning experiences affect academic achievement and social development of children. According to their research there are six major ways that the study of arts is associated with student achievement. These include: development of: Reading and Language Skills, Mathematical Skills, Thinking Skills, Social Skills, Motivation to Learn, and promoting a Positive School Environment. It is amazing how much the arts can affect learning. Yet the benefits of arts are often ignored and in some places, art is slowly leaving the elementary classroom.

Putting the arts back into the classroom is important even though many would argue otherwise. In “Why our Schools need the Arts” Jessica Hoffman Davis (2008) writes seven objections to featuring the arts and education and her rebuttal to them all (p. 25). They are:

1. Value: the arts are nice but not necessary.
2. Talent: arts’ learning really is only useful to students who have the gifts to make a career in the arts.
3. Time: there isn’t time within the school day for including the arts. We barely have time to teach the subjects that matter more.
4. Measurement: achievement in the arts cannot be measured. In this age of rampant standardized testing, we need to be able to rate student progress with objective measures.
5. Expertise: to be taught well, the arts require specialist individuals who are artists themselves or have the experience and skill in the art disciplines.
6. Money: the arts require special supplies, specialists and a visiting artist salaries, and administrative time for field trips, performances, and shows. The arts are expensive.
7. Autonomy: the arts will survive in the community even if schools eliminate them.

I have heard each of these concerns from various places within my teaching career. Davis addresses each one individually and explains why these excuses are not good enough for why we do not have the arts in the general classroom.

**Value: the arts are nice but not necessary.** There are thousands of community art centers dedicated to education around the country. Individuals, who have personally experienced the power of the arts, and want to give back to their community what they had experienced, usually fund these art centers. These centers offer a chance for youth to find places of growth and learning. When the arts are taken out of the schools, youth as well as adults, seek out arts

education. Art helps students take charge of their own learning. They get the opportunities to work collaboratively, find confidence, creativity, and self-expression in which to encounter their own value (Davis, 2008).

“With an eye to what matters, along with and not instead of the teaching of subjects like science and math, arts advocates must argue for the lessons of engagement, authenticity, collaboration, mattering, and personal potential. These lessons must be available in schools. The arts help children to realize the place and need for the basics even as they give them the vision and strength to make use of that learning” (Davis, p. 28).

**Talent: arts are really only for the gifted.** It is hard to know if any students are gifted in art if you never introduce them to it. School is the prime place for such introductions and a place for students to explore their own artistic ideals. They come to us ready to sing, dance, and draw. My own personal students thrive on these kinds of activities because it speaks to what they already love. Jessica Davis says, “All students need to be introduced to the arts in school not only so they have the chance to decide whether these are areas in which they desire further training, but also because the arts are truly basic to us all. The three “R”s are the basics of school-based education, but the arts are basic to human beings before, hopefully during, and after their life in school” (Davis, p. 29).

**Time: there isn’t time within the school day for including the arts, we barely have time to teach the subjects that matter more.** There needs to be time during the day for the arts. According to the national association for music education students who were involved with the arts scored 23 points above average in math and 31 points above average in writing in 2012 ([www.nafme.org/take-action/what-to-know/all-research/](http://www.nafme.org/take-action/what-to-know/all-research/)). According to this study the longer students have studied the arts the higher their scores. Therefore, it is imperative that we make

time to include the arts. Jessica Hoffmann Davis makes a valid point that students who participate in the arts develop a sense of “can-do” and thus we must find time for the arts. As educators we need to assign and protect time for the arts. It does not make sense to cut out math to make room for more reading because students need both subjects. Neither does it make sense to leave out the arts. I believe the best way to state it would be the way Jessica Hoffmann Davis does with, “The arts must be included on equal footing with other subjects so that they can serve all children as reliable constants in their lives at school” (Davis, p. 33).

**Measurement: achievement in the arts cannot be measured.** Can we make the arts a right or wrong multiple-choice kind of subject? The answer is yes, but we will be doing the students an injustice in learning the arts to reduce it to so simple an answer, just as we do an injustice to non-arts subjects by only measuring the students’ knowledge in those units that we can count. Art has a way of advancing each subject area with hands-on activities that involve all the senses. “The widely used model of performance-based assessment, involving student activities as demonstrations of learning, evokes the notion of an artistic performance in which the integration of knowledge and skill is put on display” (Davis, p. 35).

**Expertise: to be taught well, the arts require specialists.** Elementary educators are required to teach all core subjects and become what we would consider an expert at them. An educator would never say, “I don’t do math” and then be expected to not teach it, but this is acceptable behavior for teaching the arts in schools. “We expect children to enjoy the arts without affording them arts training; we expect teachers who have no arts training to avoid the arts; and we value the arts so little that this self-perpetuating situation does not seem troublesome” (Davis, p.37). Teachers need to have some kind of expertise in teaching the arts,



enough so that when required to teach it they feel comfortable and willing to dive in and make it useful in their classrooms.

**Money: the arts are too expensive.** Educating students in art provides them with sustainable life long learning, enriching their lives and souls. Most of the arts are self-contained; ticket sales refinance the next years plays, local businesses and companies donate money to the arts to help keep it going in the schools, because they see the value in having arts in the classroom. Unfortunately, the district funds for the arts are in constant distress. Budget cuts come and the first to go are the arts, then the athletics, deeming them “extras” but cutting them out will always cost more within our students than any amount of money the district receives for the arts.

**Autonomy: the arts will survive in the community without school support.** Arts in the schools exposes all students to the arts not just those who already have a desire to reach out for it. It gives those students who do not know yet that they love a certain kind of artistic skill a chance to explore it. The only way they will get a chance to do this is if the arts are a part of the school curriculum. By making the arts a part of the school curriculum, it shows that the arts matter, they matter to education, to society, and to the community. Our schools reflect our communities and when art is part of our curriculum, it reflects the importance of art to life.

Art is not only important in the classroom but it is important in life. Art is a fundamental human experience. It has shown up in every society, from the very primitive to the most sophisticated. All have expressed themselves through all forms of art. Young children use art as a way of learning through different forms. Art is satisfying at any age (Lowenfield & Brittain, 1982).

The arts help teach and reinforce students academically and socially. Elliot Eisner (2002) gives ten lessons the arts teach in *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*, which have application to my own personal experiences as a teacher. A summary is found on the NAEA's website.

1. The arts teach children to make good judgments about qualitative relationships. Art makes students see learning not as a grade but as a valuable means of discovery. They want to make these discoveries but sometimes have a hard time doing it on their own, until art is involved. The discovery becomes more innate.

2. The arts teach children that problems can have more than one solution and that questions can have more than one answer. Art helps them 'see' differently when things are difficult, and when things seem difficult, 6<sup>th</sup> graders tend to give up easily, unless they can figure out their own way of doing something. Then it becomes a part of them and they take ownership in it.

3. The arts celebrate multiple perspectives. There are many ways to see and interpret the world. Art teaches them that what they do is valuable and does not always have to conform to a single perspective. They can stop comparing themselves to their peers because their way of doing and seeing things is just as valuable.

4. The arts teach children that in complex forms of problem solving purposes are seldom fixed, but change with circumstance and opportunity. Learning in the arts requires the ability and a willingness to surrender to the unanticipated possibilities of the work as it unfolds. They 'buy in' to the concepts being taught.

5. The arts make vivid the fact that neither words in their literal form nor numbers exhaust what we can know. The limits of our language do not define the limits of our cognition. Students can achieve and express understanding in many different ways. It isn't limited to any words or numbers.

6. The arts teach students that small differences can have large effects. Through their art, especially within other subjects, little details or changes can have great significance.

7. The arts teach students to think through and within a material. All art forms employ some means through which images become real. Students get the chance to explore and solve problems along the way within a material that they may not feel totally comfortable with.

8. The arts help children learn to say what cannot be said. When children are invited to disclose what a work of art helps them feel, they must reach into their poetic capacities to find the words that will do the job. It gives them a chance to find that voice within themselves.

9. The arts enable us to have experiences we can have from no other source, and through such experience to discover the range and variety of what we are capable of feeling. Art creates emotion, whether good or not, it has the capability to make ones emotions change.

10. The arts' position in the school curriculum symbolizes to the young what adults believe is important. If I value it and want to teach art and find ways to constantly integrate it into my regular curriculum, my students will start to value it as well. In addition, because they value it and become excited about it, their parents will as well. Thus, integration of the arts conveys an important message about what is important.

“The aim of the educational process inside schools is not to finish something, but to start something. It is not to cover the curriculum, but to uncover it.” (Elliot Eisner, 2002, p. 90). It is my job, as an educator, to inspire my students to want to know more by uncovering things in the world around them. Art is one of the best ways to do just that. With art they discover a whole new world of possibilities and ways in which to see, understand, and pursue it.

## Artistic Development in Children

Children develop in stages, in the arts as well as in academics. If educators teach according to these stages students will achieve better understanding of the subjects in the curriculum. According to Developmental Psychologists Jean Piaget (Lowenfield & Brittain, 1982) children go through four stages of development: Sensorimotor ages 0-24 months, Preoperational ages 24 months to 7 years of age, Concrete operational ages 7-12 years, and Formal operational ages 12-adulthood. Piaget indicates that a child's cognitive development changes in a predictable pattern that is related to the child's age. He states that according to a particular age group children are able to perform certain tasks and are able to perform cognitively according to this age group. Piaget also indicates that some children may not go through these stages at the age that is expected, but eventually they must at some point go through them (Eisner, 1997).

Children develop artistically in stages just as they do in other learning areas. As children grow older their culture and environment begins to have a bigger effect on their artistic ideals. According to Piaget (Lowenfield & Brittain, 1982) there are five stages of artistic development that children pass through before they are 12 and become 6<sup>th</sup> graders. These stages are: The Scribbling Stage, the Preschematic Stage, the Schematic Stage, the Stage of Dawning Realism, and the Pseudo-Naturalistic Stage. As with all stages, children will pass through them at different rates and often exhibit characteristics of one or more levels at the same time. A teacher needs an understanding of these stages in order to establish levels of expectations for students (Lowenfield & Brittain, 1982). To better understand this artistic development and to understand where a 6<sup>th</sup> grader's development might be, a brief overview of each stage follows.

**Scribbling stage.** Children go through the scribbling stage approximately at 2-4 years of age. In this stage a child investigates scribbling. They enjoy just being able to make lines on a paper. It is not until about the age of four that a child starts to make any recognizable marks in their drawings. This stage is also known as *The Manipulative Stage* (Hurwitz & Day, 2011).

**Preschematic.** This stage usually lasts until the child is about 7. In this stage the child starts to draw representational items. Children of this age are eager to explain and show their drawings. They are proud of what they have accomplished.

**Schematic stage.** This stage starts around seven and usually lasts until about the age of nine. Children in this stage develop more representational images. One significant thing about this stage is that the child draws the items at the bottom of the page in a straight line. These last two stages are also referred to as *The Symbol-Making Stage* by Hurwitz and Day (2011).

**Stage of dawning realism.** This stage starts around nine years of age and can last to about twelve. This is the stage that most of my 6<sup>th</sup> grade students are in. I can expect my students to be able to accomplish certain ideas and art instruction because of this stage. In this stage children still draw representations but are much more aware of themselves as is apparent in their drawings. There is a lot more detail and objects are no longer in straight lines across the bottom of the page. Drawings become smaller, children often become self-conscious of their drawings and do not want to talk about or show them. Children begin to compare their work and are much more critical of it. They are also more concerned with what their peers are doing and wanting to conform to them. It is sometime during this stage that the child develops a sense of proportion and depth. It is at this point that the child goes into the next stage (Hurwitz & Day, 2011). This

next stage often occurs within 6<sup>th</sup> grade and as an educator I can start to teach some different artistic skills and strategies.

**Pseudo-naturalistic stage.** This is the stage of reasoning. This stage marks the end of art as spontaneous activity as children are increasingly critical of their drawings. The focus is now on the end product as they strive to create "adult-like" naturalistic drawings. Light and shadow, folds, and motion are observed with mixed success, and translated to paper. Space is depicted as three-dimensional by diminishing the size of objects that are further away. This stage may mark the end of a child's artistic development. Often times, when asked to draw something an adult will typically make their drawing very similar to that of a twelve year old. These two stages are called *The Preadolescent Stage* according to Hurwitz and Day (2011).

These artistic developments are closely related and have a large impact on the child's emotional development. Piaget's (Lowenfield & Brittain, 1982) developmental stages are also closely aligned with these artistic development stages. What the child is thinking about themselves and their environment comes out in their drawings. According to Piaget these stages are indications of ways in which children typically deal with information and can actually prevent certain kinds of learning (Lowenfield & Brittain, 1982). So it is with the students' artistic development, depending on where they are at within these stages can make some art projects seem very difficult or too easy and not time worthy.

These last two stages are where my 6<sup>th</sup> grade students are developing. They want to emerge into making three-dimensional looking art. They want their art to be realistic. They are very critical of their own work and are constantly comparing themselves to other students. Especially at this state drawing is a process that a child uses to signify and reconstruct their

environment (Lowenfield & Brittain, 1982). I would like to take a closer look at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade age group because of the focus of this master's project.

#### Artistic Development: 11-12 Year Old Children

At this age children usually begin art tasks and creating art for the educator rather than just for fun and they tend to lose the idea that their art can be just fun (Lowenfield & Brittain, 1982). I believe it is important to get some abstract kind of art ideas presented to students at this age. At this age students can and are willing to carry on conversations about why they like or do not like something. This can include art. Students are developing their own artistic preferences. They are figuring out who they are and who they want to be. This can and should include art. They can start to see art as an expression of identity (Lowenfield & Brittain, 1982). They can start to appreciate art in many forms. Even if they do not like it, they have an understanding of what it would take to create something and can learn to have an appreciation for the artwork. We do not want the students to get into the mindset of "I don't do art" so as educators we need to have the courage to explore the arts as active learners alongside our students. This will eliminate this kind of attitude because the educator creates a safe environment for the students to explore (Davis, 2008).

6<sup>th</sup> graders can denote spatial awareness. They can create, according to their own memories and ideas about objects, creating realistic looking pictures. In my own experiences 6<sup>th</sup> graders have a hard time seeing the good things about their art and compare their art to other peers. Within my own 6<sup>th</sup> grade classroom my students often ask if what they have done is good. I have had students throw away their own art creations because they do not think it adequate enough and they do not want their peers to see what they have done. One year I had a student whose artwork looked amazing. This student had followed the guidelines and yet also had a

personal flair. This student even started helping others with their own projects. However, when he had almost finished the art project he decided that it was not acceptable, crumpled it up and threw it away. No matter how much I coaxed him to start over or go get the thrown away art project he refused to even attempt to finish or try again. This student never turned anything in.

6<sup>th</sup> graders need constant feedback that what they are creating is worthwhile. It is also important at this stage to help students look at their art critically for themselves. Many students may not be able to do this and so most of what should be said should be positive. Depending on their developmental level however, students could find value in suggestions from an adult about how to make their drawing adhere to their conceptions of what a good drawing is.

### **Arts Integration**

As I was investigating the reasons for including or integrating art into the 6<sup>th</sup> grade school curriculum I found an interesting fact that I had not previously known about Benjamin Franklin. In the book *Educating Artistic Vision*, Elliot Eisner says that according to Benjamin Franklin our new country valued education and its educators. According to him art was to be used as a tool for improving the skills of the professional and the quality of the crafts necessary for life. Art was to be a means of helping our youth better understand other subjects including mathematics, science, and writing. As our country grew, the need for arts in education grew with it. Writing became an art form of its own, and art was used to better the quality of manufactured goods. The arts were a way, and in my opinion still are, of bettering the country and its youth by helping them see the world from different perspectives and by helping them creatively think about problems they face in the world around them. This creativity may also help our students become successful in the future business places of America (Zhao, 2012).



Edutopia producer Mariko Nobori (2012) gives a great definition of arts integration. She states, “Arts integration goes beyond including art projects in class; it is a teaching strategy that seamlessly merges arts standards with core curricula to build connections and provide engaging context.” I have always found that the arts help student retention. Sandra Rupert and Daniel Willingham (2006) have performed studies of how integration improves school behavior, test scores, and student involvement and enthusiasm for other subjects. Connecting other subjects to art standards helps with retention and understanding. Often, they are creating an art project from things they learned in science, math, or reading. Then, when faced with a question about it later they remember that art project and what they learned about it. They take ownership in their work because they are the ones who created it. The subject/topic now matters to them when before, it might not have. Students become involved because as humans, they have an innate desire to create (Nobori, 2012). Through creating art, knowledge becomes a part of them. Graphic visual images, unlike speech, “stick” (Szekely, 2012). Elementary instruction can influence how later studies are shaped including the extent to which learning becomes remedial in the upper grades (Nobori, 2012). If I can get my students to engage in other subjects through art, not only will they understand the curriculum better, but they will also want to know more. With this kind of attitude towards education the world is limitless. Art helps students discover goals and encourages them outside and inside the classroom (Szekely, 2012). With art as a focus of integration, the classroom becomes an important place to nourish pride in children’s initiatives, ideas, and expressions, where increasingly little attention is focused on the things they create and little opportunities to be proud of ones creative accomplishments (Szekely, 2012). As Yong Zhao explains in *World Class Learners* we need to be constantly praising and creating opportunities for this creative thinking to occur within the classroom rather than stifle it because this is the

wave of the future and we need creative thinkers to make our future a successful one (Zhao, 2012).

With the constant demand for better test scores, districts are eliminating the arts in the elementary level schools. On the surface one can understand this way of thinking. School is the place to learn the building blocks to prepare for a successful and well-rounded life. So when budget cuts come, and they always come, what should a district decide? Drawing or math, sculpture or science, dance or history? But why does it have to be one or the other. It is important that educators find creative ways to integrate the arts into other subjects. A teacher doesn't have to be an artist to do this, but does need motivating examples (Resnick, 2010).

Studies show that art-centered schools outscore non-art-centered schools in academic achievement scores. Art education can actually help the brain to rewire itself, to make stronger and more plentiful neural connections, and can help build memory skills (Resnick, 2010). Involvement in the arts is associated with gains in math, reading, cognitive ability, critical thinking, and verbal skills (Smith, 2009). Arts learning can also improve motivation, concentration, confidence, and teamwork. A 2005 report by the Rand Corporation about the visual arts argues that the intrinsic pleasures and stimulation of the art experience do more than sweeten an individual's life. According to the report, they can connect people more deeply to the world and open them to new ways of seeing, creating the foundation to forge social bonds and community cohesion (Smith, 2009).

As I have looked deeper into arts integration I found many books, magazines, blogs, and even classes within my district that describe integrating art within other subjects. I shared many of these ideas with the teachers that are participating in this project with me to show them that there is value here not just because I say so. This idea is not new and has been around since the

'30s when Leon Loyal Winslow wrote *The Integrated School Art Program* (Hurwitz & Day, 2012). Integrating the arts into the curriculum has become more prevalent within the last decade according to findings from the NASAA 2006 (National Assembly of State Arts Assembly) and the May 2005 Harris Poll commissioned by Americans for the Arts. With the newly introduced common core, educators may find it easier to integrate arts and give them the value they deserve.

Hurwitz & Day (2001 p. 28) in their book *Children and their Art: Methods for the Elementary School* stated, a quality art program will create seven different experiences for elementary students. Each one of these experiences they describe uplifted my ideals as an educator. With each experience students develop a better understanding of the world around them and why it should be important to them through art. They see the value in what they are learning because of these experiences. These experiences are as follows:

1. Students will create artwork and gain an understanding of art as a means for expressing ideas, feelings, and ideals. As students are introduced to other ways of learning they begin to understand and make connections within their world of knowledge. With the common core being adopted in Utah, educators are more reliant on creating a learning experience for students that is more investigative, and more hands on. It is not based on the drill and kill methods of understanding, but rather a creative look at how students can see variations in things. The best thing about the common core, in my opinion, is that it is more focused on the idea of integrating more hands on activities that also integrate arts activities. The students need time to take ownership of what they are working on and art is one way, perhaps the best way, to accomplish such a goal.

2. Students will see a variety of quality visual arts in what Hurwitz and Day from Broudy refer to as the 'imagic store' because students have a store of various visual images to explore and create imagination.
3. Students will gain a basic understanding of the range of the visual arts throughout history and across many cultures. As general educators this is an easy way to help teach social studies and history core curriculum.
4. The student will learn about a range of world cultures through study of artworks, their contexts, purposes, and cultural values. In the process they will appreciate their own culture through art.
5. The student will increase their awareness of the influences of visual culture in everyday life, and develop powers of discrimination regarding the quality of messages through visual media.
6. The student will learn how art expresses cultural values and in turn influences society.
7. The student will discuss art and use sources to seek specific information about art and artists.

Each experience mentioned can be done easily with a little creativity in a general classroom everyday. Generalists can find little ways to create all seven of these experiences within their classroom. This is what I hoped would happen within the 6<sup>th</sup> grade as I tried to help the educators at my school understand how important art education was, not only to their students, but also to their own teaching methods. I wanted to show them that the arts can serve as a model for teaching other core subjects and that when given the opportunity to explore other subject matter through art, they discover things that perhaps even they didn't see (Eisner, 2002). The arts uses all senses which is what we want our students to do when learning any subject. Let

it become a part of them. Unfortunately, there is little to no time for imagination in other subjects (Eisner, 2002). I was hoping for my team of 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers to be able to see the value in the arts integration and to want to make time for it in their busy schedules.

Educators are in a constant world of ‘do better’, ‘test scores must be increased’, ‘our school didn’t meet AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress)’. We are always looking for ways to improve our teaching practices and our schools. Art is a critical component in a well-rounded education. Art is the level playing field - no matter how rich or poor, tall or short, pretty or ugly to the bone, if you can draw, you can find personal fulfillment and build self-confidence (Resnick, 2010). Educators are researchers, daily researchers. Teachers are constantly looking at what worked, who taught this better, what we could do differently to improve. It is never ending and we are constantly learning from others, and ourselves on how to be the most effective teachers. It is when we lose this drive that we lose our teaching capabilities. The most effective teachers give time for the exploration of art within their classrooms because it gives students a chance to use all their senses to find different ways of getting an answer and will essentially reach to all learners through exploration (Eisner, 2002).

### **Methodologies that Support my Teaching and Inquiry**

Because of budget cuts and the constant demand for better test scores in mathematics, language arts, and sciences, the arts have fallen through the cracks and turned into a reward or craft that has no real art instruction. The arts are one of the most expensive programs to run in an elementary school. There is a much higher drive for students to be proficient in tested areas of the curriculum. There is a constant demand for supplies and materials needed to teach art, as well as a qualified teacher. My elementary school has lost the funding to have a qualified visual

arts specialist, and many teachers do not feel qualified to teach visual art. Consequently this subject isn't getting taught.

As teachers, we are constantly being bogged down with how much we have to teach in all subject areas, especially those subjects that are tested at the end of the year. The arts are slowly losing their place in our elementary classrooms. To address this growing problem at my elementary school I was interested in coming up with a solution.

**Action research.** Elementary school teachers are solely responsible to teach all subject areas to students between the ages of 6-12. This can be a daunting task especially since 2001 when No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was first introduced to the United States' public schools. Since that time, public education has put more and more emphasis on test scores especially those of mathematics, language arts, and the sciences. These are the test scores that have, until recently, directly affected the schools "adequate yearly progress" (AYP). Consequently, participation of the arts in all its forms, has significantly dropped in many schools over the last decade. The arts have been called "the lost curriculum" by the Council of Chief State School Officers (Chapman, 2005). Because of NCLB, overwhelmed elementary teachers have even more expected of them.

Amazingly, some elementary teachers have put in the time and effort to work and fill the holes that this system created. One approach I discovered was to adopt an action research method toward curriculum and teaching. Action research can be a constant part of the work of an elementary teacher. "Action research is a way of learning from and through one's practice by working through a series of reflective stages that facilitate the development of a form of "adaptive" expertise. Over time, action researchers develop a deep understanding of the ways in which a variety of social and environmental forces interact to create complex patterns. Since

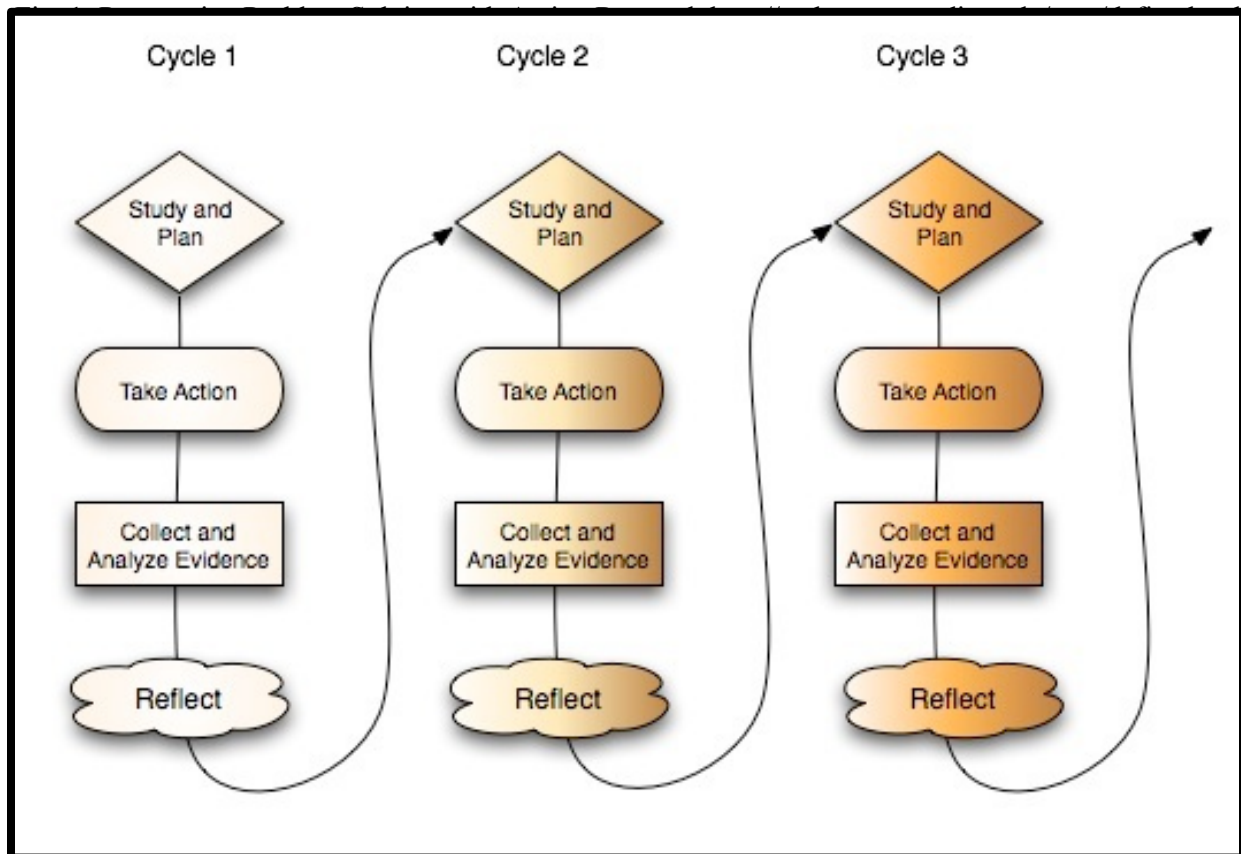
these forces are dynamic, action research is a process of living one's theory into practice (Reil, 2011).”

Teachers can be researchers as we reflect on our teaching practices and improve them based on feedback from ourselves (Clarke & Erickson, 2003). Some key ideas about action research include the teacher as a researcher, whether individually or within a group of colleagues. It is the processes of investigating something you are doing in the classroom to better understand the education environment and to improve practice (Schwalbach, 2003). Action research sees the teacher as both researcher and educator. The teacher decides what needs to be studied everyday within the constraints of their own classroom. Action research unites theory and practice, collects data in a systematic way with evidence of whether your ideas are achieving the desired outcomes (Schwalbach, 2003).

Elementary teachers have integrated action research into their everyday practices. This is what I refer to as “good teaching practices”. In my school, teachers meet every week as a grade level team to look at our teaching methods and reflect on what is working or not. We then look at what we can do to improve curriculum short falls and discuss ways to try something new. We are learning from and through our teaching experiences by reflecting on them and developing a form of adaptive expertise.

Action research gives the teacher the ability to learn from their own experiences, thus creating the perfect methodology to use as I studied my own master’s project question: “How could I create a curriculum within my 6<sup>th</sup> grade that would 1. Teach actual art processes, 2. Be simple and worthwhile to the other teachers at my school, 3. Be valuable to parents, and 4. Be something that they would feel comfortable teaching as well. Even if they had no prior art knowledge?”

Through action research I had the opportunity to do a trial and error type of research. I learned from my colleagues what was working well and not well for them. I could see if the curriculum was too hard to understand or if they didn't find it valuable, and then re-adjust to help meet the needs of my teachers, parents and their students. Action Research is a linear process where I see a problem and figure out a possible solution. Then I try out said solution, gathering data, analyzing and reflecting on that data. After that I make needed adjustments, and start it all over again. Margaret Riel (2011) best describes it within this model:



This research is ongoing and constant. When I first heard about and saw this model of action research I thought, “This is exactly what I am already doing within my classroom.” My own personal classroom teaching strategies went hand in hand with action research. I was already doing a form of research without even realizing it.



Action Research has been an approach to improving school practice since the 1950s, when Stephen Corey (1953) wrote his seminal work on the subject, *Action Research to Improve School Practice*. However, even as early as the 1930's John Dewey was using and studying action research and has paved the way for teachers to become researchers in their own right. Action research enables teachers to reflect on their practices and to search for answers to questions they have about their work with students (Jenkins, 2006). It can also include my students in the process. What better way to understand my classroom than to engage my own students in the research process? It is research with my students not about them. It is a joint effort that seeks improvement together.

As the researcher, I wanted to improve my own teaching practices and in so doing help out my school with its art program because we will no longer have the advantage of having an art specialist. Action research seeks immediate feedback about what I am doing well and what is not working. Action research enables teachers to reflect on their practices and to search for answers to questions they have about their work with students (Jenkins, 2006).

**Qualitative research.** Research is a scientific approach to solving a problem. When solving a problem, you can seek understanding in two basic approaches: quantitatively or qualitatively. To better understand what I could do as a teacher within my own classroom I have included definitions for both types of research. I used qualitative research because I was a part of the research and there aren't numbers by which I was addressing this project's success.

Quantitative research is defined by researchers as an objective type of scientific inquiry in which the researcher attempts to be detached from the actual subjects of the study (Tomal, 2010). In this kind of research you don't need to know the subjects of the study. You only need the information that they gave you. This is a basic numbers research that compare which

numbers are better than others. Daniel R. Tomal (2010) describes quantitative researchers as characteristic of the classical medical scientists who study and independently make observations about the cause and effect of variables. But qualitative research is more involved with the subjects themselves. This type of research is much more natural for an educator because they are with the subjects every day and also see themselves as a factor within the research.

Tomal (2010, p. 4) describes qualitative research as; “the study of the natural setting of the subject, assumes researcher is involved in the study to some extent, assumes each study is independent to itself and emergent, studies theories and concepts that are often derived during the research, knows that a hypothesis is not always made, but may include a tentative hypothesis, and makes narrative descriptions in making conclusions.” This has been a checklist of sorts and as an educator each one is checked off. Action research is a methodology that can be both quantitative and qualitative. It also seeks to make practical improvements, usually through a qualitative inquiry. This approach aligns best with the research I want to conduct within my own classroom and within the 6<sup>th</sup> grade at my school.

**Narrative inquiry.** These narrative explanations and examples of how things are happening within our classrooms led me to another methodology that is useful in this project, narrative inquiry. Narrative descriptions are important in making conclusions. These descriptions make up a large part of how I understand what I am studying. The other 6<sup>th</sup> grade educators that I am working with will need to keep a narrative description of what is happening within their classrooms since I can not be in their classrooms to observe the happenings within their art lessons.

Narrative inquiry is a form of research and analysis within qualitative research in the social sciences. Thus narrative inquiry focuses on the organization of human knowledge more

than merely the collection and processing of data. It also implies that knowledge is considered valuable and noteworthy even when known by only one person (Leavy, 2009).

I want to know, through my own research, how the processes I adapt in the classroom have an impact on my teaching practices. Narrative inquiry is a new methodology in education but has been used in the humanities and other fields under the broad heading of narratology (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). Narrative inquiry comes from people shaping their daily lives by the stories they tell themselves and the stories that others tell. Narrative inquiry is the phenomena of thinking about experiences as a story (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). What better way to tell my story of a 6<sup>th</sup> grade classroom than through narrative inquiry? Narrative is the best way for me to represent and understand my experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2006). This master's project is based on my own experiences and therefore narrative inquiry is a great way to describe my experiences and my learning process for others.

Narrative inquiry helped me to express what I needed to say and helped my team of 6<sup>th</sup> grade educators to express themselves in a way that would not belittle what they were doing or make them feel undervalued. Everyone has a story to tell, I just needed to encourage each of them to tell it. My own personal data within journal writing and videos will be understood and interpreted through narrative inquiry.

The journals kept by my team of teachers told me what things they valued and how they believed the lesson was received in their respective classes. Their writings of these lessons are important to this master's project because it gives me insight to my research. Narrative inquiry is a collaborative method for telling stories, reflecting on stories, and (re)writing stories (Leavy, 2009). Narrative inquiry focuses on the organization of human knowledge more than merely the

collection and processing of data. It also implies that knowledge itself is considered valuable and noteworthy even when known by only one person (Leavy, 2009).

Applying these methodologies, action research and narrative inquiry into my practice requires me to educate my own team of 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers about the importance of what I am doing. They will keep a journal of their experiences while implementing the art lessons provided. I will combine their experiences and mine in a narrative inquiry format. As part of my research I had 6<sup>th</sup> grade students engage in the lessons and then take a quick survey of their thoughts on the lessons and teaching instruction. Action research gives me the ability to have a focus group consisting of parents and teachers. The group contributed in a discussion of their thoughts about the lessons and whether or not they find them valuable and to put forth any suggested improvements.

As an elementary teacher, I am constantly explaining things in a story format so my students will be more engaged and feel a part of what is being taught. I needed a way to express how I was interpreting my research and how I was valuing it within my classroom. Narrative inquiry helped me be able to express what I needed to say and helped my team of 6<sup>th</sup> grade educators express themselves in a way that would not belittle what they were doing or make them feel undervalued.

### **My Research Questions and Methodology**

As I stopped to think about my master's project question: "How can I create an art curriculum that is both accessible and easy to teach for the teacher and/or parent alike within a 6<sup>th</sup> grade classroom?" I had to think about how I was going to collect information to represent what I was learning and what the other teachers in my school were learning while teaching the various art lessons. I had no idea what kind of information their work and their responses to the

work would generate. The more I investigated action research the more I started to understand that the information I was receiving needed to be qualitative. Using a more qualitative approach allowed me to reflect on what and how I was collecting data and whether or not it was generating the results that were useful for my study. Action research gave a reflective way of teaching that I needed in order to perform my research. I wanted to see my teaching not as concrete steps that would eventually have an end, but an ongoing process of learning from experience (McNiff, 2002). I also wanted to give my collaboration team of teachers and parents the ability to see this as valuable and on-going. It would be a way of constantly striving for something better in the lives of our students and children.

Applying these methodologies, educating my team of the importance of what I am doing, and having them keep a journal of their experiences while implementing the art lessons provided was critical. Using action research gave me the ability to have a focus group consisting of parents and teachers. The group has contributed in a discussion of their thoughts about the lessons and whether or not they found them valuable and to put forth any suggested improvements.

## Chapter 3

### Project Interpretations and Reflections

While looking at how to collect and analyze the data that I would be using during my master's project research I realized that analyzing it would be more difficult than I had originally thought. I was working on making my own teaching practices better and in turn hoped to make my school community teaching practices in art better. But how was I to do that?

#### Data and Data Collection

While the students were a big part of my research their experiences were not the primary data that I wanted to collect. My primary concern was how the other teachers at my school responded to the lessons. Did they think the lessons were easy to teach? How could I have done anything differently that would have made it better? What kinds of things did they adapt into the lesson? These kinds of questions led me to the research that I wanted to conduct. However, this also presents a struggle when analyzing the data.

During discussion I found that the 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers at my school were not that comfortable teaching art. Unfortunately, they proceeded to tell me that they would love to do some rubbings and call it good without any lesson, inquiry, or depth because it could become busy work for the class while they worked with smaller groups on more important subjects such as math and reading. However, I wanted the students to have quality art lessons that included more than a regurgitation of the teacher's example and were informed by art history and had a relation with other subjects.

In addition to the other teachers being involved with teaching art, I wanted the parents to be able to come into a classroom with some kind of art lesson that would be beneficial to the

students. But the lesson had to be meaningful and easy to teach from a parent perspective. My students loved art! I do not think that it really mattered what we did as long as they got to explore a little more with materials, designs, and colors. Nevertheless, I wanted the instruction to be meaningful and integrated with other disciplines.

I used questionnaires and journals rather than interviews to collect most of my data. I planned on giving a questionnaire to the students after each lesson, about a day later. This way students would have time to process and think about the class. I wanted to know what kinds of things from the lesson stuck with them.

The parents who would be teaching were given a questionnaire at the beginning of the study, the middle, the end, and then one right after the lesson they taught. This would give me a chance to see what kinds of things the parents value or do not value about the art lessons and things they find most helpful. The 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers at my school were also given a questionnaire. It was important that the data be unbiased. To diminish this kind of biases both students and teacher/parents would be answering all questions anonymously through the questionnaire.

The questionnaires consisted of questions about the art lessons for the teachers and parents. They were scaled on a 1-5 rating system to make analysis of their answers easier to collect and combine. This also made it easier to put the data into easy to read graphs and charts. Because the questions were scaled on a number system it automatically created a medium, mode, and mean. This information was helpful when deciding what kinds of things I was doing well or things that I needed to improve upon.

Some data was collected and analyzed through video recordings of the lessons. I explained to teachers, parents, and students what I was using the videos for and invited them to

sign a permission slip. I wanted to analyze the video because sometimes brilliant things happen in class but when asked about it later the teacher or student can not come up with what was said. When reflecting on these videos all students were enthusiastic about what they were doing. They all looked like they were having fun. I had some students walk around and interview others with what they liked and remembered and how they felt about the art they were making. It was interesting to learn that the students were more reflective if one of their peers were asking them the questions instead of an adult. They talked on what things were hard for them and things they thought were fun and also connected themselves to some of the artists we had discussed in class.

To minimize attrition in my data, after each day that the questionnaire was administered there was a follow-up day for those students who were absent. This helped maintain the greatest possible participation in my sample population.

I did not think that knowing the socio-economic status of my school would be part of my data but on further review, I realized it actually might affect my results. According to the data gateway reports from the Utah office of Education in 2012, 33% of the 1112 students enrolled at the school were low income, 11% were minority, and 5% were English learners. The students' attitude towards art may have a direct link with how their parents viewed art. From my own personal experiences parents of lower socio-economic situations tended to not see the value of art in the classroom because there is such a drive for success in other areas. This would be a great place for further study.

My data included a narrative report of all findings. This report included the findings of not only my own classroom but that of three other classrooms along with parent feedback. My analysis then, will still be an ongoing report of findings. I found things that I was able to interpret and start to find patterns within this narrative report.



As part of my data, each teacher kept a journal of the lessons taught. It was an electronic journal so I could read their entries as soon as they wrote them down. Looking through these journals I found some enumeration; similar things, such as words or phrases, that would help solidify what I was trying to do within the art curriculum. Wordle, was helpful in looking closer at their journals. This is an online website that uses text from documents to find repetition of words creating a picture of these words. The more a word is used the larger it appears in the picture. These journals were an important data source for this study. I wanted to see if any words would pop up that gave me any inclination of positive or negative things that were repeated within their entries. I wanted to know how things went in other classrooms. I knew I could teach a lesson that I came up with and think was beneficial and integrated in a way that I found valuable for my students. Now, I wanted to know if I could help make that happen in other classrooms. Interestingly, this was based a lot on their perception of how things went. I thought it was important for the general educator to understand the benefits of art in the classroom and not just as the next regurgitation of the teacher's example.



that the teachers themselves might feel the art lessons were worthwhile and applicable. With the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Common Core State Standards being so vast it is hard to teach everything that is required by the end of the year. I did not want my teachers to feel like this was just another thing they had to teach. I wanted and needed them to see it as worthwhile and connected invaluable ideas with other subjects they had to teach.

I wanted to use parent volunteers as well, not only to engage parents into what was being taught at school but also because I wanted to see if I could start a little of what my sisters had in their schools with art. They had parent volunteers teaching the whole art program and the PTA was running it. This fact undermines the teacher in the classroom as an art teacher. I think it makes a large statement that art does not need to be taught by someone who has had training, schooling, or experiences with art. Because of this astonishing piece of information I wrote the lesson plans in hopes that parents would be able to teach the lessons as a substitute teacher.

In efforts to reach out to parents I decided to send home a letter explaining my master's project and what would be required of them. Unfortunately, I only got three parents to respond. I interpreted such a poor response as parents were not concerned enough about not having an art specialist in our school to participate. How did the PTA require parents to participate? How were the parents reliable enough to participate? These questions solidified my concerns that actual integrated art curriculum was not being taught within my sisters' schools by the PTA and that parent volunteers could not be relied upon to run such a program. I could not expect the PTA or even parent volunteers to be totally responsible for quality art instruction within my school. We need educators to teach an integrated curriculum. While the lack of volunteer participation was disheartening I moved forward with a short focus group that included my three volunteers.

During the focus group discussion, I explained what they would be doing, how the lessons were to be taught, and planned when they could come in to teach a lesson.

I also had the parents fill out a questionnaire about art. It consisted of five questions and a five part scale, as follows:

1= not true 2= somewhat not true 3= no opinion 4= somewhat true 5= very true

- 1- Art is an important part of my child's education.
- 2- I feel comfortable teaching in front of students.
- 3- I believe having no art specialist at our school is a concern.
- 4- I think every child can be an artist
- 5- What is one thing you would like to see the students understanding about art.

They were to circle a 1 through 5 scale of not true to very true, with the last question being open-ended. I also had them answer these questions when they were done teaching their two lessons.

The reason I had them fill out the questionnaire was because I wanted to see if after the lessons the parents felt that it was worthwhile and easy to teach. The lesson they were teaching was on stained-glass. A parent emailed me some of her thoughts on how the lesson went. She said:

“I forgot to send my feedback on the art lesson from Monday. It actually went better than I thought and I think the kids had a good time with it. I am sure I didn't cover it the best, but I think they got the idea you wanted. The one and only thing I think might be helpful in going forward is to have plans written for each lesson just like you would for a sub. Although if it is a teacher that is presenting the material she/he won't need as much as a parent volunteer would. For example, "show the first five slides talk about..." I loved all of the teaching you did before the lesson at our after school meeting and I think that was very helpful for me. It was also so helpful to be able to go to the websites you gave us and get some background about the topic we were teaching.”

While the data was limited. I did think that her advice about breaking down the lesson even further would be helpful especially for the parent volunteers. This indicated that the lesson

plan was not as clear to the parent volunteer as I had originally thought. I wanted the volunteers to get involved with their lessons and look more deeply into art making so that they would also become a little more passionate about the topic they would be teaching and hopefully try out the art on their own giving the students their own examples, and perhaps make the lessons their own. I was very glad to hear that she did go ahead and look at some of the other background information about her topic and that she ended up liking teaching the lesson.

### **The Art Lessons**

I found that in order for these lessons with parent volunteers to work the way that I imagined, volunteers needed to commit to a day and word needed to get around that there was an opportunity to help out in the classroom. It needed to have value. I felt this is where the socio-economics came into play.

I started out by teaching each 6<sup>th</sup> grade class about graffiti/pop art (Appendix p. 65). We had a great discussion about what graffiti/pop art started out as and how it has gone to a more negative thing in our society, but that it can make large statements. Each class was very engaged in the discussions and thought the artists that ended up doing pop art for people and got commissioned to paint on a wall was awesome. They liked trying to figure out what statements the artists were trying to portray through their art. We also talked about color and how that can have an impact on the paintings as well as the image.

I let the students create their background canvas first before they were to design their name on their paper. The students loved getting into the paint and designing things. I thought as 6<sup>th</sup> graders they would be more likely to use the stencils and want to draw pictures instead of just kind of creating some colored backdrop, but the kids got way into it. Some got a little crazy and

their paper started turning into a wet brown mess but the project turned out in spite of those parts.

The second day the class had to use their own name as their art focus. When the kids designed their names, they were very excited about using bubble letters. I showed a short video of how to create basic bubble letters and then add in some personal flair. Making some letters smaller and perhaps putting some flames around the letter. I wanted them to create some bubble letters that they thought would represent them. Some got very creative with their letters and some just did your basic bubble letter. I was really happy about introducing tracing paper to the kids. They thought this was so cool and it led into discussions about how professional artists, especially cartoonists' use tracing paper in their artwork. To move the characters seamlessly the artist uses a drawing on tracing paper over the next drawing to keep things in the exact same spot except for the things they want to show movement in. I believe the end results were positive and the students learned a lot.

When I do this project again I would have the students try to use at least one of the stencils to create some dynamics within their background. I would also think about letting the students include a word that could describe them as a person, instead of their names. A highlight was the students were then trying to write titles of folders, projects, and even their names on their papers. They discovered a new found artistic skill of bubble lettering. Some of them got really good at it and students ended up asking each other to write their names on things. One student had a natural ability to see how the letters could connect and where to place them.

The next week I taught my class the stained glass lesson. I did not have enough volunteers as mentioned before, and they could only do it at certain times of the week or month and I wanted to get started right away. I am really glad that I taught it first to my class however

so that I had a chance to fix anything that I thought went wrong. I also had a chance to improve the PowerPoint presentation they were to use for the lesson.

Each lesson was taught over two days. On the first day, students were given background knowledge to help them make connections within their other lessons, and to start giving them ideas about their art. The second day was for actual art making. The students were shown what they were to make on the first day so they would have some time to think about their art and hopefully come up with some creative and original ideas about what their finished piece would be.

Before the students were taught any of the lessons I had them also take a questionnaire that consisted of five questions. I wanted to know a little of the student background towards art as a basis of my research. This helped guide what kinds of discussions were appropriate in the lessons I created and how the students see themselves as artists. If the percentage of students who did not value art as a subject or even thought of themselves as good artists was low it could change the way the lesson plans were written and therefore taught. The way the students' valued art could prove to be difficult in teaching it, especially for the first lesson. These questions were also based on a scale of 1 through 5 and were:

1= not true   2= somewhat not true   3= no opinion   4= somewhat true   5= very true

1- I think art is fun and interesting.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

2- Art is not a real school subject, but it may be fun.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

3- I am really good at art.

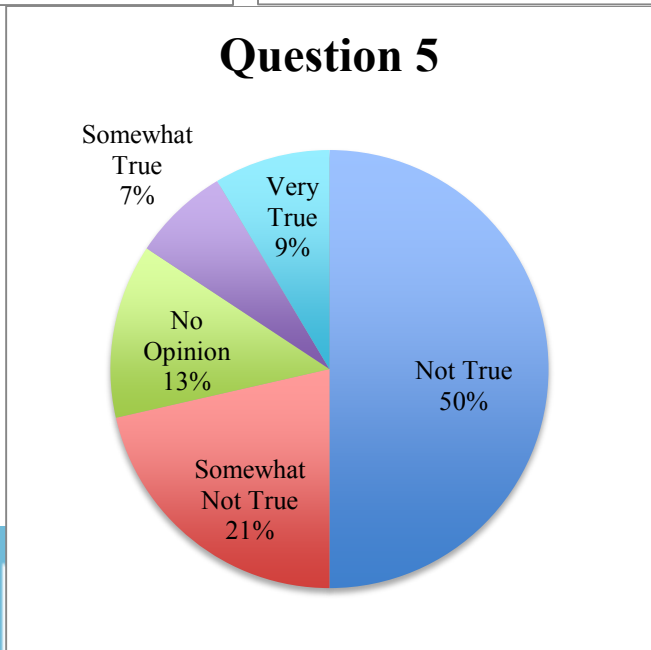
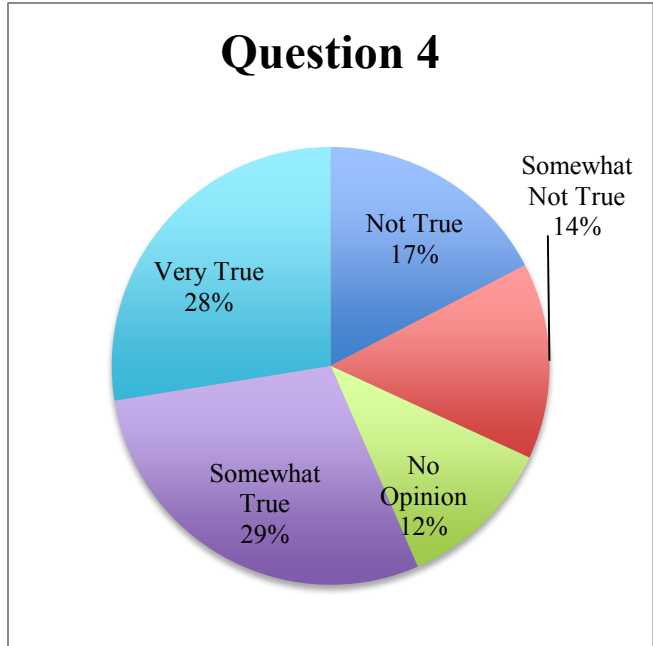
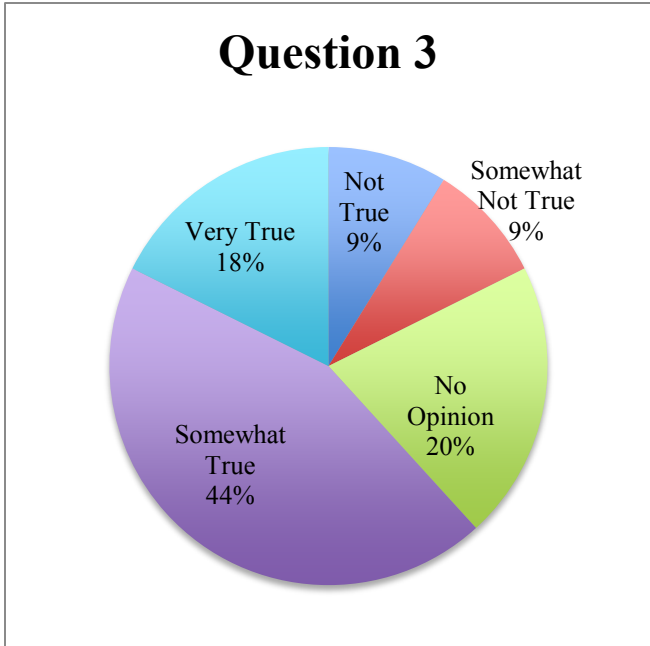
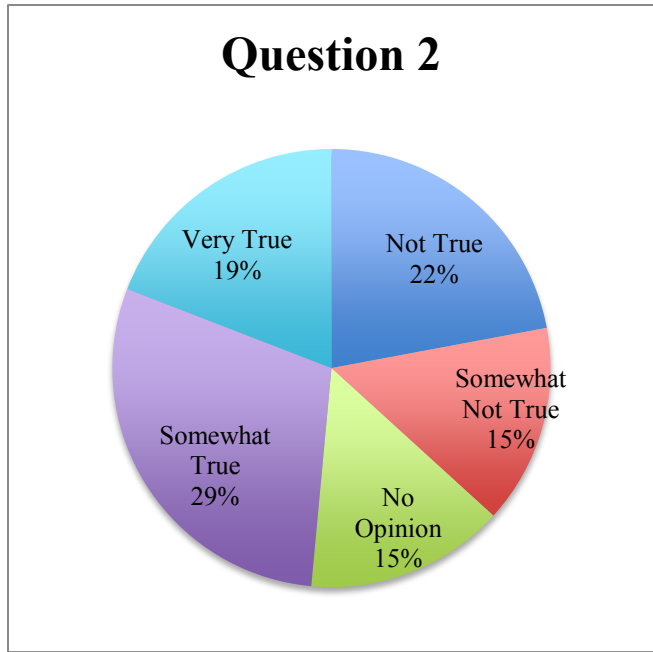
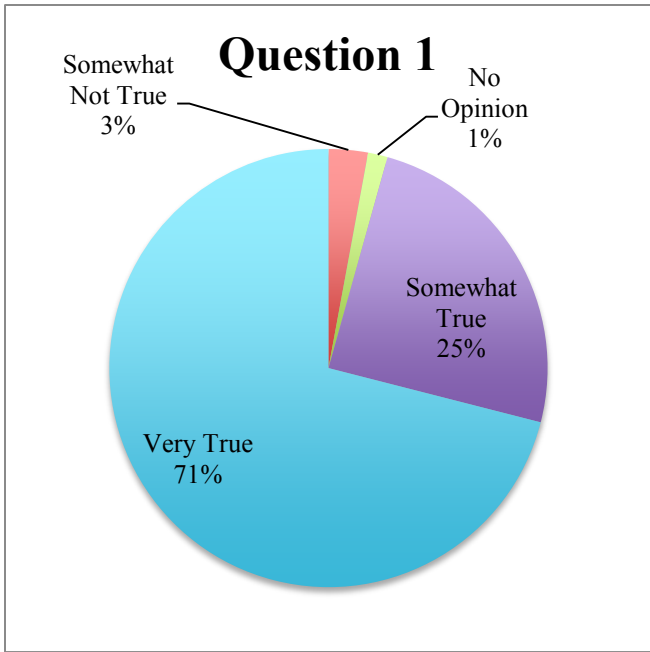
1                      2                      3                      4                      5

- 4- I can name at least one artist that I know of, from any time period.  
1 2 3 4 5
- 5- I can name a contemporary artist that is still alive.  
1 2 3 4 5
- 6- What is one thing you would like to learn about art this year?

These are my student results:

Fig. 3: Student Questionnaire 6<sup>th</sup> grade results





I was surprised a little by the results of the student's questionnaire. 71% of the 120 students questioned thought art was fun. I thought that would have been closer to 100%. Also, only 44% of the students questioned thought they were good at art, which is encouraging that they have not lost all of their art ideals by 6<sup>th</sup> grade. I think now it would be interesting to see if 1<sup>st</sup> graders thought this as well, I suspect this question would be closer to 100% for 1<sup>st</sup> graders. I also thought it interesting that 50% of the students thought they could name a contemporary artist, even after discussing what that meant. I was very optimistic about this fact and could not wait to start teaching the students the lessons I had planned for them.

### **Teacher Reflections**

The teachers at my school taught both Islamic Art (Appendix p. 67) and Michelangelo's Hands (Appendix p. 71). I gave these two lesson plans to the teachers a few days before they were to teach them but not at the same time, and asked them to let me know if they had any questions. Each teacher had great things to say. These lessons were taught after I had taught each class a lesson on graffiti/pop art (Appendix p. 65) and a volunteer had taught them on stained glass (Appendix p. 73). Teachers will be referred to as #1, #2, and #3 throughout the rest of the master's project.

Here are the notes for Michelangelo's Hands lesson from teacher #1.

#### Teacher #1 ART notes

*(What went well? Was the lesson easy to use/read/understand? What was the students responses to the lesson? What didn't go so great? What would make this easier?)*

#### Hands Lesson Part 1 3-25-13

My kids LOVED once again the history side of the lesson. They all wanted to participate by asking and answering questions. I really enjoyed the picture book that went with the lesson. I felt limited to sitting right by my Elmo-I wish that I could have had it scanned in or an electronic book.

Everything went fairly well with the lesson until we got to the actual "art work" portion. They struggled with sketching the outline of their hands. At this point, I required two hands, but have since modified that requirement. So, many students were struggling with hand positions.

My biggest complaint, is that I needed more time to prepare the lesson. The lesson plans were great and easy to follow. However, I got them that morning and needed to teach the lesson after lunch. I didn't feel like I had an adequate amount of time to prepare to teach and stumbled over my words.

### Hands Lesson Part 2 4-12-13

Modifications from last lesson: I allowed some students to start over. I allowed only one hand instead of my original 2.

Today we focused solely on the actual art project. After briefly discussing the grayscale and showing examples, the students began to shade in the hands they traced the previous week. When I first told them about taping the picture underneath their desks to shade, they were a little bit anxious. Then, as time went on, they began to complain about how hard it was for them shade the way they wanted to because they couldn't get their hands in the right position. When their arms started to ache from holding them up with no rest, they began to ask me if they could take their pictures down and sketch on top of their desks. This presented a great opportunity for me to be able to discuss how hard it must have been for Michelangelo to paint the Sistine Chapel! They were amazed at his perseverance!

The only thing the students seemed to struggle with (besides the shading from underneath their desks) was their confidence in drawing and shading the detail. They kept asking for my approval and I had to continually reassure them that they were doing a great job.

After reading through Teacher #1's notes I wish I had given the lesson plans to her sooner, maybe even weeks sooner. I loved that the kids thought it was great. I was also pleased that the lesson plan was easy to read and follow but maybe just needed to be presented to the teacher earlier. I was glad that the teacher was willing to share some frustrating things about the lesson. For example, the lesson plan was never meant for both hands and I am glad that she figured that out pretty quickly. I also loved that even though it was hard for the kids at first and needed constant praise for their work that they had fun with it and also learned something about Michelangelo. I also really liked that it opened up a discussion about what it might have been like for Michelangelo to paint the Sistine Chapel ceiling on his back, it is rewarding when I can get my students to have a real experience that drives what I want them to know home. The pictures turned out great, even with all the nervousness from the students on their own ideas about shading and drawing.

Teacher #2's comments from both the Stained Glass day of the volunteer and her own lesson on Michelangelo.

### Teacher #2 ART notes

*(What went well? Was the lesson easy to use/read/understand? What was the students responses to the lesson? What didn't go so great? What would make this easier?)*

#### 3-10-13 Discussion Day-Stained Glass

The lesson today was a lot of fun! The students were very intrigued by how stained glass is created and the effort it takes to make a beautiful piece of art. Our parent volunteer was amazing! I could tell she spent time doing extra research above and beyond the lesson plan. She asked great questions which helped engage my students. I knew they were engaged because they all wanted to share connections they made with the content of the lesson. The lesson was easy to understand because the content was simplified to an appropriate level for my students. They are also all very excited about being able to individualize and implement their own creativity into the stained glass art project.

#### 3-25-13 Intro to Michelangelo Lesson

So, I already LOVE the Renaissance and Michelangelo so this lesson was a lot of fun for my kids. I wish I could have taught it earlier so I could have used it as an extension when I was teaching my students about him. I used the Michelangelo book provided and read it under my document camera so we could get a more in-depth look at the art in the story. It was also nice to be able to tie in Literacy with the art. Once we discussed the story, we talked about the vocabulary words (art terms like *fresco*) which they thought was pretty fabulous. When I had them trace their hands onto the white paper, they were excited about how they were going to position their hands because there were so many options!

I appreciated teacher #2's notes about each lesson and the fact that she was so optimistic about the lessons themselves. I do wish that I had given her the lesson on Michelangelo sooner so that it would coincide with what she had already taught her class about him, because that is part of what I wanted to happen not only for the teachers to get out of the lessons but also the students. Hopefully they were able to make connections with what she presented to them and the art lesson that she taught.

Teacher #3 never actually got around to writing any notes for me but did end up teaching the lessons again the next year.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the teachers and volunteers ended up really liking the lessons planned and the students all seemed to enjoy them as well. All teachers said they would definitely teach the lessons again and thought they were time worthy and fun. Even though the teachers were a little apprehensive about teaching art, they all thought the lessons went well with what they were already teaching and were really happy with the connections made both during the discussion day and the art-making days.

In the future, I will be able to put lessons together for each core subject taught in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade that both parent volunteers and teachers are comfortable teaching. These lessons will reinforce and compliment the lessons the teacher is already teaching in their regular classrooms.

This whole process of doing research as the researcher has been engaging and fun. I valued that I could use my own results to guide my own teaching practices and then get to share those teaching practices with my 6<sup>th</sup> grade team. Action research methodology is a way for me to really look at what happened within my 6<sup>th</sup> grade and discuss things that went well and where I could improve on making this process run a little smoother.

After conducting this research and implementing the art lessons in my school on the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level I am excited to look at other ways to get parent volunteers to come in more often. I thought the students were engaged and ended up understanding other subject content better. I will use action research again to see if using these lessons will actually improve student knowledge in assessment based areas.

I know my team of 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers were excited to try doing these lessons again the next year. This gave me confidence to think even bigger. I wanted to try to get the entire school

on board with this. It is my future goal to have arts-based lesson plans for easy implementation in each grade level.

I definitely learned that teachers are willing to do almost anything for their students. If they believe that it is worthwhile and enhances their learning they are even more willing to try it out.

When I first started this master's project I was in a different elementary school that had no art specialist. This of course triggered the research performed. I have sense moved to another school that has an art specialist. Even with this educator on our staff I plan to collaborate with her to find ways that her lessons are also integrated. I also plan on bringing these lessons to my new 6<sup>th</sup> grade team. I will be talking to them about what art means to education and how it is imperative to our students' learning.

I would like future elementary educators to know that this is only one step in creating an interactive and integrated classroom where learning will be fun and engaging. These lessons could be taught in any 6<sup>th</sup> grade elementary classroom, which is particularly relevant since the National Common Core has been adopted in most states. I would also hope that any educator or parent volunteer would learn just as much as the students and have fun doing it. I would like to quote Elliot Eisner and many others like him who have said, "We are born to create." I believe that we should all tap into that create aspect we are born with and really expand our learning experiences in the elementary classroom for both students and teachers alike.

Fig. 4: The book *Michelangelo* read to the students on the discussion day

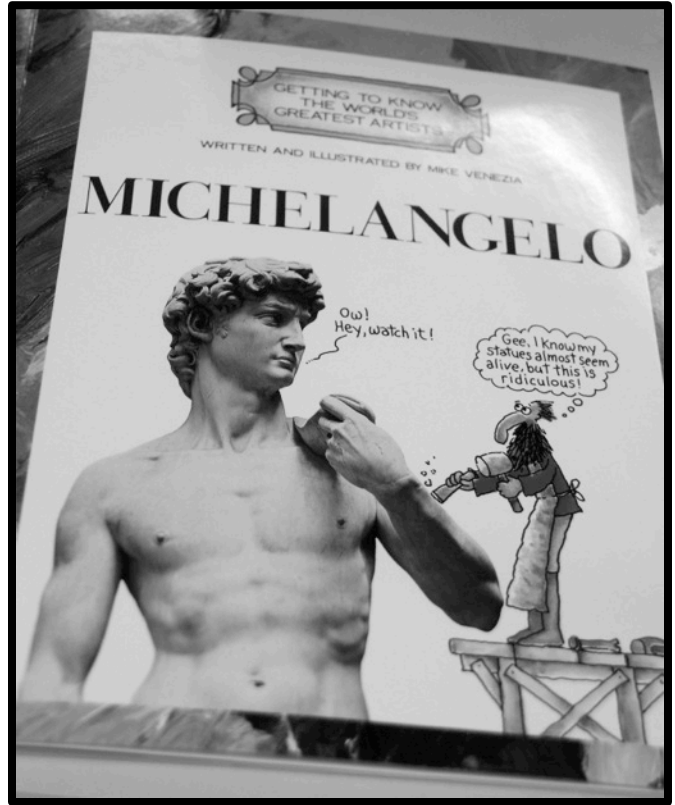


Fig. 5: The picture of the hands of Adam and God from the Sistine Chapel. In black and white so students can see shaded parts.

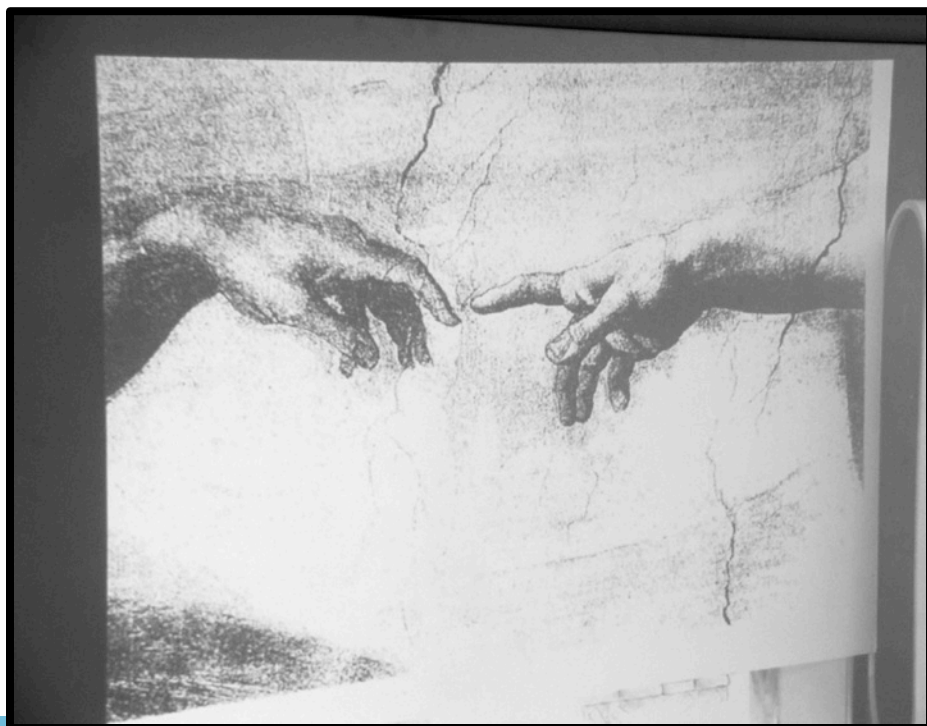




Fig. 6: Student's artwork underneath a desk.

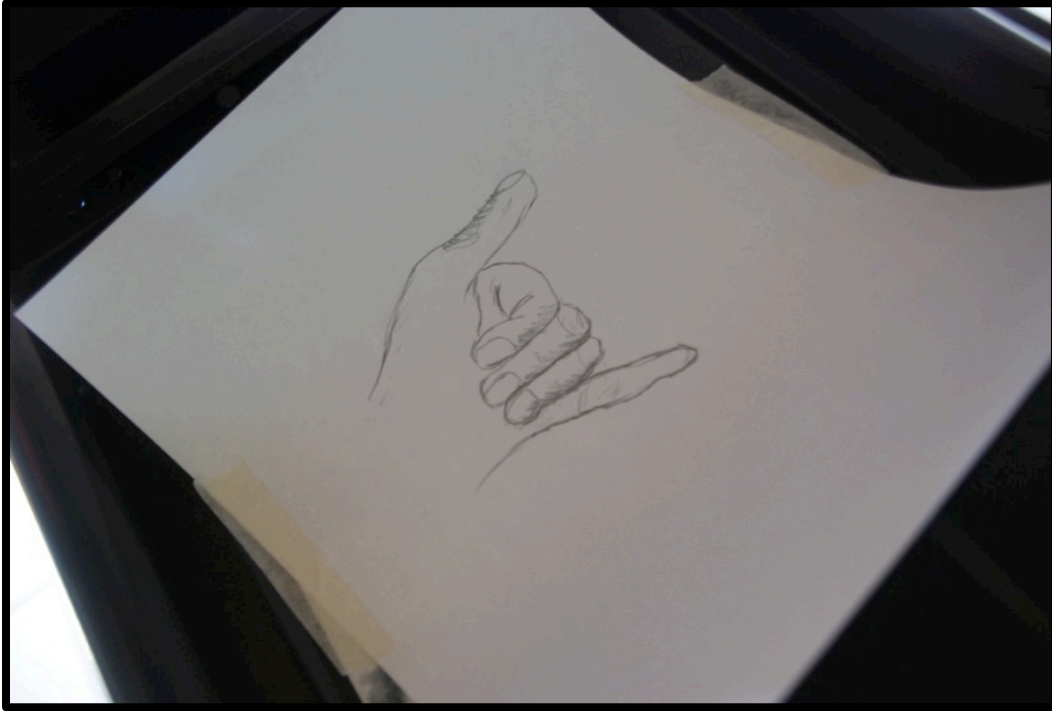


Fig. 7: Student's artwork underneath a desk.





Fig. 8: Students under their desks drawing like Michelangelo.



Fig. 9: Example of Stained Glass  
Created by Alton L. Hone



Fig. 10: Islamic Name Plates



Fig. 11: Close up of Islamic Name Plate





Fig. 12: Student working on stained glass project



Fig. 13: Student stained glass projects hanging in window



Fig. 14: Student working on Stained Glass Project



Fig. 15: Video about social studies integration



Fig. 16: Video about graffiti art and other content areas



Fig. 17: Graffiti art



Fig. 18: Use of tracing paper





Fig. 19: Use of tracing paper

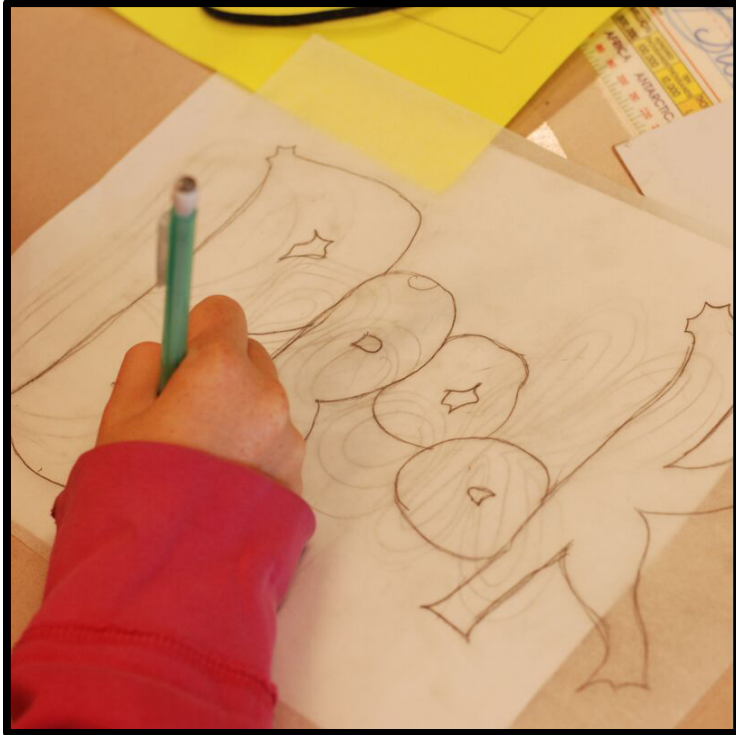


Fig. 20: Close up of Graffiti Art poster



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## Appendix

### Focus Group Consent

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#### Introduction

I am Miss Hone, a 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Pony Express Elementary. I am completing my grad studies at Brigham Young University in Art Education. For my thesis, I am collecting information about integrating art lessons in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade classroom.

As part of my research I would like to invite you to participate in a parent focus group. This group will meet at least 4 times during the next 5 months to discuss the art lessons. You will be required to teach at least one integrated art lesson to a 6<sup>th</sup> grade class and you will be required to fill out a questionnaire about your experiences and come to our focus group willing to discuss what you did.

On any and all questionnaires you may answer only those questions that you wish to answer, or you may stop the entire process at any time.

Also, because focus groups include discussion of personal opinions, extra measures will be taken to protect each participant's privacy. If you agree to do this you are also willing to agree to keep all information confidential.

#### Questions about the Research

Please direct any further questions about the study to Camille Hone at 801-789-2600 Ext: 135 or to chone@alpinedistrict.org You may also contact Dr. Daniel Barney at 801-422-1581.

Questions about your child's rights as a study participant or to submit comment or complaints about the study should be directed to the IRB Administrator, Brigham Young University, A-285 ASB, Provo, UT 84602. Call (801) 422-1461 or send emails to irb@byu.edu.

You have been given a copy of this consent form to keep.

#### Participation

Participation in this research study is voluntary. You are free to decline to participate in this research study. You may withdraw your participation at any point.

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Parental Permission for a Minor

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### Introduction

I am Miss Hone, a 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Pony Express Elementary. I am completing my grad studies at Brigham Young University in Art Education. For my thesis, I am collecting information about integrating art lessons in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade classroom. As part of this research I am asking your child to fill out a questionnaire on the various art lessons that will be taught in the next five months.

The results of this questionnaire will be shared with my BYU cohort and professors, but will not be shared with anyone else. All questionnaires will be anonymous and will only be used as a tool to further my teaching instruction.

### Procedures

If you agree to let your child participate in this research study, your child will be asked to participate in various questionnaires in the next 5 months.

Your child may answer only those questions that your child feels comfortable answering, or your child may stop the entire process at any time.

Again all questionnaires will be anonymous and will not be affiliated with any specific child and will only be used as a tool by me to further my teaching instruction.

### Questions about the Research

Please direct any further questions about the study to Camille Hone at 801-789-2600 Ext: 135 or to chone@alpinedistrict.org You may also contact Dr. Daniel Barney at 801-422-1581.

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You have been given a copy of this consent form to keep.

### Participation

Participation in this research study is voluntary. You are free to decline to have your child participate in this research study. You may withdraw you child's participation at any point.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Video Release Form

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As part of this project, I will be making video recordings of the classroom your child is in during their participation. Please indicate what uses of this video you are willing to permit, by initialing next to the uses you agree to and signing at the end. This choice is completely up to you. I will only use the video in the ways that you agree to. In any use of the video, you (or your child) will not be identified by name.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Video can be studied by the research team for use in the research project.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Video can be used for scientific publications.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Video can be shown at scientific conferences or meetings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Video can be shown in classrooms to (elementary/middle/high school/college) students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Video can be shown in public presentations to non-scientific groups.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Video can be used on television or the audio portion can be used on radio.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Video can be posted to a website (i.e. YouTube)

I have read the above descriptions and give my express written consent for the use of the video as indicated by my initials above.

Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Art Questionnaire

Each question is on a scale of 1-5

1= not true    2= somewhat not true    3= no opinion    4= somewhat true    5= very true

7- I think art is fun and interesting.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

8- Art is not a real school subject, but it may be fun.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

9- I am really good at art.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

10- I can name at least one artist that I know of, from any time period.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

11- I can name a contemporary artist that is still alive.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

12- What is one thing you would like to learn about art this year?

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## Art Questionnaire

Each question is on a scale of 1-5  
1= not true    2= somewhat not true    3= no opinion    4= somewhat true    5= very true

6- Art is an important part of my child education.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

7- I feel comfortable teaching in front of students.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

8- I believe having no art specialist at our school is a concern.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

9- I think every child can be an artist

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

10- What is one thing you would like to see the students understanding about art.

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## Ideas about Meaning and Graffiti/Pop Art

### Essential Questions:

- What does your name mean to you?
- What does your name tell others about you?
- How do you see yourself?
- What adjectives would you use to describe you?
- Why do people create graffiti?
- What is street art?
- What is pop art?
- What is empathy?
- Does color have a mood? If so, what moods do colors give you?
- What color would represent you?
- Is art a language? If so How?
- Why do we make art?

### AIM:

To explore why we make art and what kinds of ideas are represented by art. The goal is to get the kids thinking deeper about what art has to say rather than it's good or bad art and look deeper into what could possibly be said from another persons artwork. Then create pieces of artwork that will have something to say to an audience.

### OVERVIEW:

This unit will consist of students looking deeper within themselves and thinking of ways they could describe themselves in graffiti/street and pop art. They will also discuss what makes art and is art a form of language.

### ILO

- Students will explore concepts of color
- Students will look at meaning behind color and street art.
- Students will learn techniques of pop/street art
- Students will gain understanding of pop/street art
- Students will create own graffiti art with meaning
- Students will create own pop art with meaning

### Materials

- Paper
- Tempura paints
- Paint brushes
- Scissors
- Black sharpies
- Colored markers

- Examples of shepard fairey and/or youtube  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VXmN7U93H7o&feature=em-share\\_video\\_user](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VXmN7U93H7o&feature=em-share_video_user) and  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1dm823ysplc&feature=em-share\\_video\\_user](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1dm823ysplc&feature=em-share_video_user)
- Examples of Blek le Rat
- Examples of andy Warhol
- Expamples of Roy Lichenstein
- Examples of Jasper Johns
- Access to graffitcreator.net
- “ehow” videos on graffiti art [http://www.ehow.com/video\\_4979301\\_draw-graffiti-letters.html](http://www.ehow.com/video_4979301_draw-graffiti-letters.html) and [http://www.ehow.com/video\\_4979301\\_draw-graffiti-letters.html](http://www.ehow.com/video_4979301_draw-graffiti-letters.html)

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Show Shepard Fairey instalations youtube video and/or ppt of his work and create stencils for repeated background.
2. Discuss color and what certain colors mean or represent to them. Using stencils create stenciled paper with tempura paint. Be sure not to use black or white paint because it will interfere with graffiti letters later.
3. Create a personalized “color wheel of meaning” note: the color wheel will reflect the individual student’s personality and emotions with certain colors and why. It is not a typical color wheel.
4. Discuss what their name means and how they see themselves with this name
  - Discuss why they think people create graffiti and what is street art?
  - Show ppt on Blek le Rat
  - Show short ppt on people writing their names on things and discuss why people like to do this. Pose the question have you ever done this and write in their journals why they think people like to write their names on things and several adjectives that describe them or tell a little bit more about themselves
  - Show students graffitcreator.net for ideas jot down ideas in journals
5. Show short howto film by two artists on how to draw graffiti art and create a nameplate with name and one of their adjectives in the style of graffiti art no color only the outline then trace onto tracing paper
6. Using personalized color wheel, and their tracing paper create name and adjective on stenciled paper – outline and style with black sharpie and then color with markers.
  - Hang in hallway as a “Writing on the Wall” project. Leaving stenciled paper for other kids to write an adjective about themselves.
7. Show Andy Warhol ppt discuss different colors used and why they think he used them. Pose the question: “what statement do you think he was trying to say?/Why do you think he painted it this way?” write in journals.
  - Show short ppt on Roy Lichtenstein and look at the colors/repetition/stenciling etc.
  - In journals answer same questions about Lichtenstein
  - Show Jasper Johns discuss same questions
8. Create a pop art inspired repetitive self-portrait using photobooth and then paint it.
9. Classroom Museum. Showcase all artwork. Discuss a sort of critique about others art.

## Islamic Art Lesson Plan

Topic: Islamic Art	Time Frame: 2: 40 minute lessons	Grade Level: 6 <sup>th</sup> grade	Date: January 20, 2012
<p>Objectives: Students will be able to create 2 pieces of art after studying three common motifs: calligraphy, geometry, and tessellations: 1- a tessellated line drawing of their name, and 2- a foil rubbing of an Arabic common phrase or word that means something to them.</p>		<p>Materials Needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PPT of Islamic images</li> <li>• KSL news cast on Beauty &amp; Belief</li> <li>• 12x12 piece of drawing paper</li> <li>• Tracing Paper</li> <li>• markers/crayons/colored pencils</li> </ul>	
<p><u>Art Utah State Core Connection:</u> Standard 2 (Perceiving): The student will analyze, reflect on, and apply the structures of art. Standard 4 (Contextualizing): The student will interpret and apply visual arts in relation to cultures, history, and all learning. Objective 2 Connect various kinds of art with particular cultures, times, or places. Standard 3: (Expressing): The student will choose and evaluate artistic subject matter, themes, symbols, ideas, meanings, and purposes. Standard 1 (Making): The student will explore and refine the application of media, techniques, and artistic processes. Objective 1: Explore a variety of art materials while learning new techniques and processes.</p>			
<p><u>History Utah State Core Connection</u> Standard 1: Objective 2: Evaluate how religion has played a central role in human history from ancient times to today. <input type="checkbox"/> Explore the importance of religion in the cultural expression of ancient civilizations (e.g. customs, artistic expression, creation stories, architecture of sacred spaces). <input type="checkbox"/> Identify key tenets of the major world religions (i.e. Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism). <input type="checkbox"/> Analyze how religious ideas influence current issues.</p>			
<p>Important Vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Islam</li> <li>- Calligraphy</li> <li>- Culture</li> <li>- Allah</li> <li>- Muslim</li> <li>- Ka'ba</li> <li>-Moral</li> <li>- Tessellations</li> <li>- Arabic</li> <li>- Qur'an</li> </ul>			

### Plan/Procedure:

#### Day 1:

1. Start today with a little background about the Muslim culture and Islamic religion. (Students should have some background already from their Social Studies instruction). Here is a pretty good website of information for kids <http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/carolrb/islam/art.html> and a great PDF for more information about this topic can be found here



[www.nga.gov/education/classroom/pdf/islamic-tp.pdf](http://www.nga.gov/education/classroom/pdf/islamic-tp.pdf)

2. Ask: What do you remember about the Islamic religion? (Get some answers and write them on the board) Eventually lead them into remembering the Qur'an and the Islamic 5 pillars which are; 1-faith, there is only one God, Allah; 2-prayer, must pray 5 times a day; 3-charity, give to the poor in the form of an alms tax; 4-fasting, during Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim calendar, and the 5-Pilgrimage to Mecca and the Ka'ba.
3. Lead them into understanding that their Islamic religion was very important to them and they followed it in all their everyday actions and duties, even on their plates or bowls when eating.
4. Show the KSL news report on the Beauty and Belief: Crossing Bridges with the Arts of Islamic Culture. Click on Photo Gallery and show some of the works of art from the exhibit pausing to talk about what kinds of designs they notice.  
(<http://www.ksl.com/?nid=148&sid=18304832&title=byu-museum-to-host-international-islamic-art-exhibit>) Keep in mind that this first aired last spring so it is a little out dated and the museum is gone.
5. Show pictures of several different Islamic art designs, from the PowerPoint starting with the bowls. Ask: The Qur'an was written in what language? (Arabic)
6. Reshow the pictures of the bowl and ask: Do you see some letters in these pictures? Point out where the letters are. Connect this back to their own cursive writing and ask: How would you like to get a chance to write in Arabic? We will, but first we want to take a look at how they created their designs and letters.
7. Show the next few slides of Islamic art making sure to point out the lines, shapes, and tessellations.
8. After you have pointed out a few for them. See if the students can find the shapes, tessellations and lines of words.
9. Inform students that in Islamic art they didn't portray the figure very often and instead they covered area in shapes and patterns. You will get to do a similar design another day
10. Show them how it works and show them the slides from the ppt of how to do this.
11. Have them fold their paper and keep for another day.

Day 2:

1. Start today with showing the same slides as the day before and asking what they remember and where the shapes, lines and tessellations are in the pictures. Take note especially to notice how they colored this
2. Explain that today they will be taking a closer look at the shapes and tessellations of the Islamic art on their own by creating a picture similar to the Islamic art with their names.
3. Take 12x12 piece of drawing paper and have students fold in half to create a triangle.
4. Fold paper again in half to create another triangle, and in half again created another triangle. Open paper to reveal 8 folded triangles.
5. While paper is still folded have students write their name in bubble letters along the folds of the triangle, with letters touching both the top and bottom fold of the triangle. Open paper.
6. Using tracing paper reflect the bubble letters over the fold to create a design/tessellation.
7. Repeat on every fold.
8. Color your design. Make sure that the students color in a way that is reflectent of Islamic art and not in bits and pieces of the actual shapes but in longer designs. (This may require a few times modeling to get them to see these types of images). They should also use

<p>some kind of complimentary colors in their design.</p> <p>9. Students should back their designs with some sort of border and then hang them up for display.</p>	
<p>Extensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Go on a virtual tour of the Islamic Art Collection at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art <a href="http://collectionsonline.lacma.org/mwebcgi/mweb.exe?request=browpage;dept=islam">http://collectionsonline.lacma.org/mwebcgi/mweb.exe?request=browpage;dept=islam</a></li> <li>-Put their pieces of art up in the school for a mini-exhibit so other grades can see their work.</li> </ul>	<p>References:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Islamic Art Collection at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art <a href="http://collectionsonline.lacma.org/mwebcgi/mweb.exe?request=browpage;dept=islam">http://collectionsonline.lacma.org/mwebcgi/mweb.exe?request=browpage;dept=islam</a></li> <li>- Islamic Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; <a href="http://www.lacma.org/Islamic_art/intro.htm">http://www.lacma.org/Islamic_art/intro.htm</a></li> <li>- BYU Museum of Art <a href="http://beautyandbelief.byu.edu/exhibition-highlights/">http://beautyandbelief.byu.edu/exhibition-highlights/</a></li> <li>- Islamic Translator: <a href="http://translate.google.com/#">http://translate.google.com/#</a></li> <li>- KSL: <a href="http://www.ksl.com/?nid=148&amp;sid=18304832&amp;title=byu-museum-to-host-international-islamic-art-exhibit">http://www.ksl.com/?nid=148&amp;sid=18304832&amp;title=byu-museum-to-host-international-islamic-art-exhibit</a></li> <li>- Mrs. Erbs art page; <a href="http://wesbmsart.blogspot.com/2011/10/islamic-art-name-designs.html#comment-form">http://wesbmsart.blogspot.com/2011/10/islamic-art-name-designs.html#comment-form</a></li> <li>- Access Islam; <a href="http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/accessislam/lessonplan10.html">http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/accessislam/lessonplan10.html</a></li> </ul>
<p>Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>Formative</u>: Using the rubric grade their name tessellation</li> <li>- <u>Summative</u>: Walk around room make sure students are on task and following directions. Help where needed.</li> </ul>	

## Name Plate Islamic Art Project Rubric

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Category	4	3	2	1	Score
Following Directions	Use of bubble letters. The letters mirror each other. The students name fills the whole triangle and the letters are touching across folds.	Use of bubble letters. The letters mirror each other. The letters are mostly touching across fold. Whole triangle is filled with letters.	Use of bubble letters. Some of the letters mirror each other. The letters are mostly touching across fold. Whole triangle isn't filled in.	No use of bubble letters. The letters do not mirror each other and are not touching across the fold. Whole triangle isn't filled in.	
Use of Color	Student colored in lines and shapes within the design. Use of complimentary colors was apparent and the overall aesthetics was great.	Student colored in lines and shapes within the design. Use of complimentary colors wasn't apparent and the overall aesthetics was ok.	Student colored individual letters of name rather than lines and shapes within the design. Overall aesthetics was weak.	Student colored individual letters rather than lines and shapes. There was no thought into the overall aesthetics of this piece was all random.	
Participation and Attention	Student paid attention during class all of the time. Stayed on task for the whole production time.	Student paid attention during class most of the time. Stayed on task for most of production time.	Student did not pay attention the majority of the time in class. Did not stay on task during most of the production time.	Student did not pay attention in class discussion and was not on task during production time.	

Comments:

## Michelangelo's Hands

Grade: 6 Time: 2, 40 minute sessions

Lesson adapted from [www.projectarticulate.org](http://www.projectarticulate.org)

ILO	Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students will study the life of the Italian Renaissance artist Michelangelo.</li><li>• Students will define and describe the concepts of 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional objects; sculpture and fresco painting.</li><li>• Students will create a modeled or shaded drawing of their hand in a sign language position, cut it out and mount it pop-up style to look like a piece of sculpture.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pencil</li><li>• White drawing paper</li><li>• Masking tape</li><li>• Cotton balls</li><li>• White chalk</li><li>• Colored construction paper</li><li>• 9x9 black construction paper</li><li>• scissors</li><li>• glue</li><li>• pedestal hand-out</li></ul>

### Background Information:

Read the book Michelangelo by Mike Venezia to students making sure to include the following important information.

- Michelangelo was born in 1475 during the Renaissance in Caprese near Florence, Italy. His family moved to Florence, a thriving artistic city, when he was just an infant.
- Michelangelo was raised by a family of stonecutters, maybe because his mother was too ill to care for him.
- By the time he was 13, his artistic talent was evident and he apprenticed in the workshop of Ghirlandaio, the famous local painter who taught him how to paint a FRESCO.
- A fresco is made by painting with pigments directly in wet plaster. A chemical reaction occurs so that the painting becomes part of the wall or ceiling of a building.
- When he was about 15, Michelangelo learned to create sculpture in a school operated by the powerful Lorenzo de' Medici and later moved into the Medici palace.
- Michelangelo is considered perhaps the greatest sculptor in art history.

On pages 19 and 24 are pictures of Michelangelo's most famous works. The first is the Pieta and the second The Delphic Sibyl from the Sistine Chapel ceiling (upper right hand corner).

The Pieta is a marble sculpture showing Mary with the body of Jesus in her lap, made when Michelangelo was only 24 years old. Students may need to be told the biblical story to understand the subject, but should be able to make connections to history lessons on the catholic church and the importance of it during the Renaissance. The lifelike quality and beautiful detail in the cloth and figures are important to note. Michelangelo carved stone in a very skillful way, creating many textures with his tools in some areas and extremely smooth surfaces in other places.

The Delphic Sibyl is a figure from the Sistine Chapel Ceiling in Rome. The ceiling is covered with a huge fresco painted by Michelangelo, which shows many scenes from the Bible and Greek mythology. It took four years to complete this painting, which has the famous image of

the hands of God giving Adam life at the center. This shows Michelangelo's painting style is very sculptural. The body, clothing and architectural setting look three-dimensional.

The Sistine Chapel [www.socialstudiesforkids.com/articles/worldhistory/sistinechapelceiling.htm](http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/articles/worldhistory/sistinechapelceiling.htm)

Procedures	
Day 1:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduce Michelangelo to the students by reading the book <i>Michelangelo</i> by Mike Venezia under the Elmo. Making sure to pause on each painting, pointing out shape, shading, and lines that are used.</li> <li>2. Give students a few extra little information about the Sistine Chapel from the social studies for kids website.</li> <li>3. Explain that they will be creating their own drawing inspired by Michelangelo's sculptures and the hands of God and Adam from the Sistine Chapel.</li> <li>4. In order to do this they need to either draw the hands from the Sistine Chapel or their own hand. They can choose which to do.</li> <li>5. If they draw their own hand have them make a sign language letter or some other appropriate hand sign on the hand they do not use to draw.</li> <li>6. Students trace around their hand and about 2 inches up their wrist.</li> <li>7. Students tape the art paper with their hand outline to the bottom of their desk, this will be their "ceiling" for their artwork.</li> </ol>
Day 2:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have a quick conversation about who Michelangelo is and what he is famous for. Making sure to ask them leading questions, from what was discussed the day before.</li> <li>2. Show students some quick ideas about seeing lights and darks on their hands. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Point out that a hand is made up of basically lots of little ovals and circles. Each bend of each finger is where each oval meets, and each finger is attached to one large rounded off square, the palm, within which are several small circles for each place where the fingers meet the palm.</li> <li>Point out that where the light hits their hand needs to be lighter on their paper, and darker where the light doesn't hit. Remind the students of the gray scale and how it should apply to shading their hand to make it look more 3-D or statue like.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Show students how to use a cotton ball to smear pencil markings for shading.</li> <li>4. Show students how to use a piece of chalk to make their drawing look more gray and marble looking, to create the look of a statue.</li> <li>5. Students lay on floor under their desks and sketch/shade their hand on their art paper. Using cotton balls where appropriate and then chalk.</li> <li>6. When finished have students cut out their hand and glue on a fun shaped piece of colored construction paper, as to make their "statue" hand stand out. Glue whole thing onto 9x9 black construction paper.</li> <li>7. Hang up for others to admire, perhaps on the ceiling or just a wall within the classroom.</li> </ol>

## Stained-Glass Windows

### Background information

Stained-glass windows have been admired for their utility and beauty since ancient Rome, when pieces of colored glass were assembled into patterned window frames. In Europe, the art of stained glass reached its height between 1150 and 1500, when magnificent windows were created for great cathedrals. Most of what is known about medieval stained-glass making comes from a twelfth-century German monk who called himself Theophilus. An artist and metalworker himself, Theophilus described in his text, *On Diverse Arts*, how he carefully studied glaziers and glass painters at work in order to provide detailed directions for creating windows of "inestimable beauty."

The basic ingredients for making glass are sand and wood ash (potash). The mixture is melted into liquid which, when cooled, becomes glass. To color the glass, certain powdered metals are added to the mixture while the glass is still molten. Molten glass can be blown into a sausage shape, then slit on the side before being flattened into a sheet; it can also be spun with a pontil iron into a round sheet (crown). A window's pictorial image is created by arranging the different pieces of colored glass over the design drawn on a piece of board. If fine details such as shadows or outlines are required, the artist paints them on the glass with black paint.

For each window, pieces of colored and painted glass are laid out on the design board, with the edges of each piece fitted into H-shaped strips of lead (comes). These comes are soldered to one another so that the panel is secure. When a panel is completed, putty is inserted between the glass and the lead comes for waterproofing. The entire composition is then stabilized with an iron frame (armature) and mounted in the window.

(Department of Medieval Art and The Cloisters, The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

### Materials

- White Paper – cut in half sheets
- Transparencies – cut in half sheets
- Scotch tape
- Sharpie markers – Black and other colors
- Stained-glass slide show PPT
- [http://www.stainedglassmuseum.com/education\\_story\\_of\\_glass.html](http://www.stainedglassmuseum.com/education_story_of_glass.html)
  - great website about Theophilus and how stained glass came to be – a little history lesson

### Procedure

#### Day 1

- 1- Show slide show of stained glass works of art in medieval European art while giving some background of what stained-glass is and possibly how it is made.
  - a. Make sure to have the students make connections with what they are learning about in history and in Light Energy.
  - b. Ask what colors would be good to include in their stained-glass, and why? (lighter colors will let more light in and darker ones won't let as much light

in)

- 2- Explain that they won't be working with glass but we are going to try to create a similar work of art that will capture the light from the sun.
- 3- Show some more contemporary stained glass artists starting with a video of a commercial artist, Chuck Franklin and others ie. Lee Baldwin <http://baldwin-glass.com> and Jack Roseman <http://jackroseman.fineartstudioonline.com> to trigger some inspiration for their own art.
  - a. Make sure to point out their colors, shapes, and lines in their art work.
- 4- Show them how to make a quick design using a template or a Zen-tangle.

Day 2

- 1- Students use half sheet of white paper to create a drawing with thick black pencil lines and not too intricate designs.
- 2- Have the students map out what colors they will use where with colored pencils. (not crayons the wax will stick to the transparency).
- 3- With Transparency taped over their paper design, transfer design onto transparency with thick black sharpie lines and then color in spaces according to their design
- 4- Cut into a shape or frame if desired.
- 5- Hang in window.
- 6- Finish off with a critique of their work... What do they like? What do they see that is cool in other projects? What would they have done differently if they could?