NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Assessment WHITE PAPERS for ART EDUCATION

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Introduction

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This special series, *Assessment White Papers for Art Education*, teaches about current and established assessment practices and theories and how they are relevant to all of NAEA's membership. Assessment refers to how we measure and appraise anticipated and unanticipated student performances, learning outcomes, dispositions, and teaching and program effectiveness (Sickler-Voigt, in press). Its practice in the visual arts is highly unique. We must be able to navigate and assess the broad spectrum of performances and dispositions in the visual arts—including artistic practices and behaviors, inquiry methods, specialized language, and the global histories of fine arts, media arts, visual culture, design, and crafts—so that students can become competent creators who possess a full range of 21st-century skills. Teaching art in today's classrooms and community settings requires that we have the necessary assessment tools and methods to measure and appraise what is most important for children, adolescents, and adults to know. Our assessments must be ongoing, valid, and reliable so that they align with learning tasks and curricular goals. We must be able to utilize assessment results to guide students in acquiring greater knowledge and skills, as well as articulate how we use assessment results to improve our teaching and supervision methods.

Each of us comes to the art education profession with different assessment skillsets, experiences, and feelings. Research in our field has demonstrated how some art educators have great concerns or indifference for assessment due to lack of training and/or having been compelled to use assessments that are ill-suited to measure performances and dispositions valued in the visual arts (Dorn, Madeja, & Sabol, 2004). Many teachers have heard statements such as "It cannot be assessed if it is not on a test." Such falsities discredit our discipline's most common practices because visual arts learning tasks are often performance-based and not assessed on tests. When negative consequences associated with assessments and evaluations are high, art educators can feel great pressures to select narrow, predetermined outcomes that discourage teachers and students from trying new processes, inquiry methods, and choice-based learning tasks. Lessons become risk-free, tried-and-true, and fully teacher-driven; they move away from the core behaviors teachers and students value most.

As a general rule, art educators understand how the acts of taking chances and making mistakes (which sometimes occur during art production and inquiry tasks) can be important components of the learning process and lead to quality results. Art educators who are assessment literate—that is, highly proficient in assessment—know how to use assessments to guide teaching and student performances that include creating artworks, developing portfolios, experimenting with art media and processes, brainstorming ideas, and reflecting in journals (Chappuis, Stiggins, Chappuis, & Arter, 2012; Sickler-Voigt, in press). They develop comprehensive learning tasks that encourage students to be aware of and apply artistic behaviors and mindsets (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2013). When assessments are necessary for teaching evaluations, assessment-literate art educators consider strategies to make their results extend beyond compulsory exercises. Seeing the values of assessment in everyday teaching and as part of a well-rounded education, they communicate assessment results to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and policy makers. They articulate the valuable role of art education in our schools and communities and demonstrate evidence of student growth and achievements.

Recognizing the importance of quality assessments in art education, NAEA's leadership and Professional Materials Committee designed this peer-reviewed series to present the voices of art educators and students who have information to share about their effective use of assessments in classroom settings and beyond. Professional Materials Committee members provided recommendations for making the White Papers accessible to elementary, middle level, secondary, higher education, preservice, supervision/administration, and museum education divisions. As a collection of works, the White Papers are contemporary resources that assist art educators in becoming assessment-literate practitioners who will be able to select and develop the most appropriate assessments for given tasks, analyze assessment data, and interpret assessment results to inform and improve student learning, teaching, and supervision. For those already proficient in assessment, the White Papers can inspire new ideas and strengthen current assessment practices.

Sections I and II of the *Assessment White Papers for Art Education* have been structured around NAEA's strategic goals of community, advocacy, learning, research and knowledge, and organizational vibrancy to introduce assessments commonly used in art education. They identify how art educators can combine qualitative assessments (that appraise dispositions, explorations, and mindsets) with quantitative assessments (that result in numeric scores). Combined qualitative and quantitative assessments allow art educators to acquire fuller, richer understandings of what is being assessed and apply different types of assessments to suit learners' needs. These sections also discuss the roles of team-building and mentoring in assessment so that art educators feel supported as they work toward producing quality results using resources that include portfolios, dialog, self-reflection, and the Model Cornerstone Assessments.

Just like teachers, students need to know how to use assessments. **Section III** identifies strategies for art educators to plan and implement quality assessments that maximize students' full potential. Student-centered assessments in the visual arts align with curricular standards, learning goals, objectives, and desired expressive outcomes such as idea development, habits of mind, and innovation and problem-solving skills (Eisner, 2002). Assessment-literate art educators present assessments in student-friendly language; teach students how to use assessments; and explain what is being assessed, why it is being assessed, and how it is being assessed. With practice, students learn to use formative assessments to guide in-progress learning tasks so that they are better prepared to reach goals and targets measured through summative assessments. **Section IV** provides methods for art educators to analyze learning outcomes, make interpretations, and report assessment results. Its papers describe how art educators collect evidence that includes student work samples and analyze assessment data to interpret assessment results. They describe some of the ways that art educators document and visualize data to acquire necessary insights, overcome challenges, and make revisions to existing assessments and practices. **Section V** presents case studies of art educators' effective uses of assessments in diverse settings. Its papers identify art educators' roles as leaders who mentor others, give students voices, implement curricular choices, and set goals. As a collection that sheds light on contemporary teaching, learning, and assessment practices, the section offers pathways for students to become lifelong learners who are proficient in the visual arts through authentic assessments, ones that extend beyond the classroom.

In sum, this series of *Assessment White Papers for Art Education* offers a starting point for NAEA's members and the greater public to understand assessments' applications to art education (NAEA, 2015). NAEA's leadership and Professional Materials Committee invite you to use these papers to find your own pathways to assessment literacy, build upon the White Papers' scholarship to generate invigorating ideas to further theories and best practices in visual arts assessment, and advocate for fair assessments that measure and appraise what our discipline values most. ■

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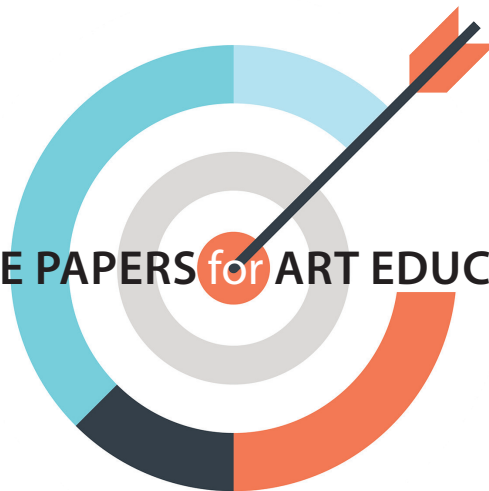
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Assess What Matters Most: Recommendations for Gathering Information About Student Learning

Mary Elizabeth Meier

"Art teachers and students can design qualitative assessment approaches that promote more personalized and individualized methods of idea development."

There is a shift occurring in the field of art education to empower students and teachers to design personalized, classroom-based assessments to support rich, complex, and unpredictable processes of learning in K-12 art (Beattie, 1997, 2006; Hafeli, 2001; Gates, 2017). In this paper, I present three recommendations for gathering information about student learning using qualitative assessment principles and approaches. By orienting to qualitative assessment approaches, teachers can exert confidence in developing tools to gather information about student learning in ways that expand beyond numerical data. Qualitative data is rich with description and focuses on the unique qualities of experience. I advocate for qualitative assessments for use by teachers and students in K-12 classroom art studios who are working together to build a culture of creative idea development, in which students are engaged in individualized and cooperative research as part of the process of making and responding to works of art. We must move beyond overly simple assessments that take inventory of structured concepts in art (such as tabulations of the formalist characteristics of a work of art that focus solely on the student's use of materials, techniques, and elements and principles of design) and shift our efforts toward assessments that nurture ideas in the making.

Facing Challenges and Orienting to Qualitative Assessment Approaches

Sometimes art teachers feel limited by quantitative, numerical measures of student learning (e.g., selected-response quizzes, checklists) that ask students to show what they know or recite what they have learned. The term *assessment* brings to mind the quantitative—what is concerned with quantity and numeracy. This includes grading

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scales, objective testing, and standardized accountability measures. Relying solely on quantitative assessments can limit descriptions of student learning to what is most predictable. Predictable outcomes are not the only outcomes worth assessing. Assessment methods can also be qualitative, concerned with rich descriptions of quality. For example, teachers and students gather information about works in progress. Students can select assessment tools to identify and review their learning experiences (e.g., open-ended checklists, constructed-response journal entries, sketchbook analysis, and self-evaluation tools). Teachers and students can collaborate to build ideas and record information about various pathways of investigation (Rolling, 2006). Classroom-based assessment of student learning in art should include qualitative information that teachers and students gather in order to explore what is varied, emergent, complex, or unexpected.

Art teachers, as the primary stakeholders of assessment in art education (Dorn, 2002), often express frustration about assessment (Bensur, 2002). We grapple with the dynamic nature of the field of contemporary art at large and the nature of highly personalized work which student artists can and should undertake (Boughton, 1997). Yet, art teachers who work within the context of schooling also face the expectation of selecting criteria for assigning a grade in art (Gruber & Hobbs, 2002; Sabol, 2006). Forty years after Efland (1976) critiqued the *School Art Style*, the culture of schooling is still wrought with institutionalized expectations for highly standardized and replicable assessments that are rooted in the values and concerns of the industrial revolution (Robinson as cited by RSA, 2010). At present, Efland's *School Art Style* remains a dominant orientation to art education when the teacher evaluates and scores the "art project" as separate from the student and as an object of evidence that should comply with pre-determined formalist parameters (i.e., student must include and adhere to specified elements). Assessing by counting categories and criteria is a straightforward way to "score" a project and determine numerical point values for grading. However, when we

> move towards "scorable" student learning outcomes for studio work, we have in turn limited our scope for assessment to what can be seen in student artworks or observed in students' ways of working. In doing so, we have narrowed and in some cases diminished what we recognize as the nature of art making and of student learning in art. (Hafeli, 2001, p. 24)

Recommendations

In addition to my role as a university professor (teaching undergraduate and graduate level courses in art education) and as a supervisor of student teachers in art education, I often facilitate work groups and school-district sponsored workshops to explore assessment of student learning with in-service art teachers. In these workshops, I have joined with art teachers to discuss a variety of conundrums we associate with the administrative demands and public policy directives to measure student learning in art. Often, teachers must use data about their students' learning to justify their own effectiveness (Shaw, 2016). In my home state of Pennsylvania,

state policy supports local teachers of non-tested subjects (i.e., art teachers) to author their own student learning objectives and student performance measures as contextualized, school-based assessments (Beattie, 2006). Supported by state policy, each art teacher designs assessment tasks and uses qualitative descriptions of student learning in their teacher effectiveness portfolio. As I discuss matters of assessment with teachers, I have noticed that art teachers are deeply interested in learning alternative perspectives related to qualitative assessment methods, which accommodate and embrace the unexpected events that transpire in their studio art classroom. Teachers also feel pressure to comply with policies in ways that are least disruptive to teaching/learning.

During workshop discussions, I have offered the following three recommendations to encourage teachers to hold true to what they believe about art education while they also work to discern assessment requirements that seem distant to the aims of art education: (1) Assessment can be defined as gathering information about student learning (Beattie, 1997); (2) Each teacher can design qualitative methods (Stake & Munson, 2008) of gathering information about student learning, which are well matched to the task of describing complex experiences with particular students in particular contexts; and (3) Each teacher should be empowered to assess what matters most, including the ways of working in the ambiguous, subjective, and emergent stages of creative idea development (Gates, 2017; Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2013; Rolling, 2006). These three recommendations serve as guideposts to encourage teacher-designed assessments that fuel rigorous, spontaneous, and emergent teaching/learning practices that center on students' artistic and creative exploration. Art teachers and students can design qualitative assessment approaches that promote more personalized and individualized methods of idea development. I explore each of these three recommendations in the sections that follow.

Recommendation #1: Define Assessment as Information Gathering

For the purpose of documenting experiences in studio classrooms, I adopt Beattie's (1997) definition of assessment as various processes for "gathering information… for the purpose of making an evaluation" (p. 2). I define *assessment as gathering* information about student learning, experiences, habits, and capacities in K-12 studio classroom contexts. The art teacher partners with students in employing a wide variety of methods to gather and share information about how students and teachers are engaged in individualized/cooperative, responsive, and contextualized methods of working. We can find our foundation for this work in the philosophies and methods of Reggio Emilia early childhood education, in which children and teachers are co-investigating and using pedagogical documentation (Kline, 2008; Turner & Wilson, 2010) to record and reflect upon experiences. We can apply the tenets of Reggio Emilia to all levels of art education by observing, listening, and documenting how students engage with learning experiences. Turner and Wilson (2010) wrote:

> Documentation is not about finding answers, but generating questions. It is a bit of a paradox because we do come to know

things about the children and what we might do next, but this knowledge should not lead us to closure. Rather, it sparks more wonder and inquiry about the children and the teaching that follows. (p. 9)

Students who are working in artistic and creative ways may learn to gather information about qualities of their experiences as part of the journey of inquiring, making artwork, documenting practice, seeking feedback, and fueling the momentum of more investigation. The Studio Thinking habits of mind (Hetland, et al., 2013) are useful lenses for exploring the working dispositions that are prevalent among those who engage with creative work. For example, *engage and persist* is a habit of mind that could be a framework for designing assessments that record how students persevere in learning and making processes.

Recommendation #2: Adopt Qualitative Orientations Toward Gathering Information

The field of art education is advancing qualitative and arts-based research methods that can inform classroom-based assessment practices and are well-suited to studying the subjective complexities of experience (Meier, 2013). A qualitative orientation to gathering information about student learning can build on visual, narrative, and descriptive information as data. A qualitative stance of inquiry and questioning can help us attend to what is particular to each teacher, student, context, and situation (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009).

Teachers who design qualitative assessments are finding multiple ways to gather, describe, and interpret information about student learning by way of visual portfolios (Davis-Soylu, Peppler, & Hickey, 2011), sketchbooks and research notebooks (Thompson, 1995; Anderson, 1994), Rich Assessment Tasks as complex investigations that attempt to encompass the richness and depth of the discipline of art (Beattie, 2006), Visual Thinking Maps as graphic organizers (Fountain, 2014), and interpretive descriptions of important issues through student self-reflection (Hafeli, 2001). We can also work with students to use qualitative and mixed-method tools (e.g. notes of analysis, rubrics, continuums, surveys) to attend to both pre-defined and emergent criteria. It is important to recognize that many teachers are expected to present assessment data in specific ways that are consistent with the norms and culture of schooling. When the school administration requires a numeric format, art teachers can use a mixed-method approach (quantitative in partnership with qualitative) to gather information about qualities of student learning and also show data in numeric summaries.

Another matter of consideration among art teachers is how to remove bias from a rubric and how to avoid making subjective evaluations about student's work (Gates, 2017). The assumption that assessments of student learning can and should be designed as "objective" prevails from the positivist assumption that scientific methods of research, especially those based in numerical data, are inherently objective and therefore without subjectivity, bias, or judgment. Research (and assessment) is not without subjectivity. We strive to gather information about student learning in ways that are accessible and equitable. We do not pretend that an assessment is objective, neutral,

or without motivations; however, we can investigate the assumptions, beliefs, and values that influence teacher and student actions (Keifer-Boyd, Amburgy, & Knight, 2007). To gather information about learning and experience is to work from the personal–professional perspectives of what teachers and students know (and have yet to know) about the world, ourselves, each other, and the varied process of artmaking, responding, and idea development (Kind, 2008). This commitment to assessment that emerges in the midst of classroom life and with particular people at a particular time leads to the next recommendation, which is that we must assess what matters most, not simply what is easiest to assess.

Recommendation #3: Assess What Matters Most

The nuanced qualities (qualitative nature) of art experiences are places of opportunity to exercise the human capacity of imagination. The capacities of imaginative learning can be observed and practiced by noticing deeply, embodying, questioning, making connections, identifying patterns, exhibiting empathy, living with ambiguity, creating meaning, taking action, and reflecting/assessing (Holzer, 2009). If these capacities of imagination are worth exploring with students, then they are worth the effort of assessing. For example, students can use these capacities for imaginative learning as the basis to analyze, reflect, and further develop sketchbook and research notebook explorations. When students lead the analysis of their work and annotate their notebook entries, teachers can find insights into the students' thinking and locate opportunities to encourage the next stages of investigation. "Creativity needs to be nurtured, not 'notched'" (Hardy, 2012, p. 154). It is by providing opportunities for specific and positive feedback that we help students seek varied pathways toward their learning goals. At the same time, I recognize that art teachers continue to be challenged by administrative mandates to present data in numeric ways that are alike to standardized test results. I encourage art teachers to find support in advocating for alternative assessment approaches that are better matched to study the complexities of learning in art.

Conclusion

It is necessary to think beyond assessing skills and concepts by quantification and give more attention to gathering qualitative information about what matters most in each unique context where learning in art education occurs. Let's spend less effort in designing assessments that "take stock" of what is predetermined and, rather shift toward gathering information about what is emerging. Ultimately, teachers and students decide what matters most in the "collaborative artistry" (Ewald, 2007, p. 23) of teaching and learning as reciprocity. To excel in the art of teaching in our field requires that we expand our understanding of assessment to include descriptions of the qualities of experience that are not easily quantified. ■

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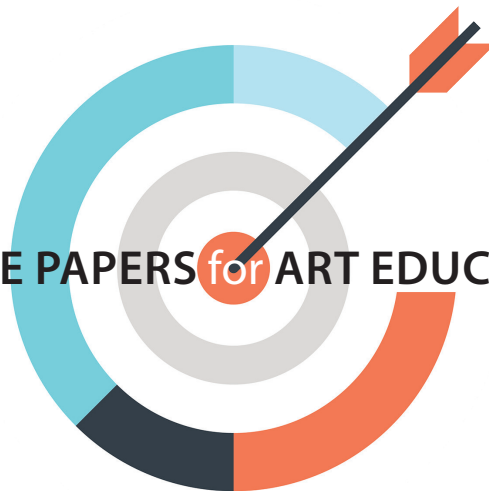
Assessment
WHITE PAPERS for ART EDUCATION

Experimenting With Assessment: A Yearlong Process

Julie Etheridge

> "Several students claimed that the process of self-assessment asked them to be more honest with themselves and with the work that they had produced."

Assessment Can Be Stressful

Art teachers may find student assessment stressful when they fear that the rigid criteria might stifle creativity (Gruber & Hobbs, 2002), while others will see assessment as a valuable tool that sparks possibilities for future projects (Schönau, 2012). As a high school art teacher, I experience a high degree of stress when carrying out student assessments. My stress arises from parents questioning assessment procedures or from students demanding an explanation as to why they received a lower grade on their project than peers. To work through these challenges, I have developed rubrics to assist and measure students' learning. McCollister (2002) asserts that rubrics are valuable forms of assessment that provide specific criteria and expectations to students. While the rubric is an effective tool in clarifying objectives, I find that this form of summative assessment in my teaching practice slowly converted into a check sheet for success instead of a guide. Students would measure in-progress drawings or paintings against the rubric to achieve a perfect score and ignore the creative process. As a result, I found this method of assessment was no longer providing a reflection response in my students.

As noted by Bensur (2002), when students are provided with a set of objectives, they tend to suppress creativity to produce work that the teacher will find acceptable. Furthermore, a rubric may not demonstrate all the types of learning that occur while students work on a project. Per Winner and Hetland (2008), the learning process focuses on students and teachers continuously discussing the artistic choices and inviting students to observe, develop skills, welcome risks, and embrace failures while working on a project. This vibrant process is reduced when completing an assessment working toward a numerical grade.

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When focusing on assessment and rubrics, I realized that my students and I no longer engaged in artmaking that evoked wonderment—moments when I see my students becoming animated while forming their ideas for a project. My desk becomes a hub where students come to ask the question, "Can I?" and my response is always, "I don't know, but let's see what happens." What I treasure most about teaching is witnessing the passion and determination that my high school students display while working on a project. When I meet with each student, we discuss ideas and refine techniques. I encourage students to circulate the classroom during mandatory breaks to provide peers with helpful tips. The art room becomes a dynamic space of possibilities filled with conversations.

As noted by curriculum theorist Dwayne Huebner (1999), the curriculum should be ever-shifting in a conversation between the teacher and the student. It is through this dialogue that learning occurs. Interestingly, when developing summative assessment rubrics as a class activity, lively conversations and debates erupt over words such as "effort" and "creativity." In my classroom, I began to question what would happen if I embraced the idea of assessment as a conversation with my students. What would the assessment process be composed of and what would the likely outcomes be? I looked to Schönau's (2012) model of developmental self-assessment, with students defining the project and treating evaluation as a self-reflective process. A good grade is not perceived as the end goal. Instead, each evaluation is a springboard for the next project. Schönau explains that this process invites students to be responsible for their own learning and evaluation. Assessment becomes "an instrument in students' own artistic learning" (p. 55). Because I am required to assign grades, but also wanted to work with Schönau's model, I decided to have students assign themselves a grade after participating in a critique of their work to meet both of these needs.

The Plan: Renewing Wonderment With the Sketchbook

In September 2016, I decided that for an entire year I would focus on developing new formative and summative assessments that relied upon my students and myself engaging in conversations centering on the students' process and growth as an artist instead of the final art product. Formative assessment consisted of biweekly structured peer-to-peer conversations focusing on techniques. Summative assessment must result in a grade, so I decided that students would discuss their work with me only. Unlike traditional critiques where the teacher or mentor is viewed as having superior knowledge, I embraced a type of co-mentoring as described by Barrett (2000). Within this model, co-mentoring provides a fluid relationship between the teacher and the student in which a sense of caring emerges and where the student is heard. According to Barrett, when students realize that they are not being criticized, they respond more positively and engage in more critical reflection.

While I was enthusiastic about the idea of self-assessment as a path to bring wonderment back into the classroom, I also recognized that students need high marks for college entrance. I focused on

the students' sketchbook for the two assessment processes while students continued to create other art projects. The sketchbook is a space where my students play with unfamiliar materials. As a class, we decide the overarching topics for the sketches. Critical inquiry is developed as students continuously review their sketches and reassess their work to create new drawings in reaction to the world around them. While working in their sketchbooks at home, students are expected to be self-directed and monitor their own progress over the term. Furthermore, since the sketchbook is perceived as a space for learning, I felt that it was a safe space for me to experiment with this the new assessment process. As noted by Smith and Henriksen (2016), art students need to make mistakes and develop a "growth mindset" (p. 9) where failure is part of the learning process. Students would submit their sketchbook three times over the course of the year. Every two months, I required them to create 15 to 20 sketches that included drawing and painting from the topic list the class had generated. My criteria invited students to experiment with mediums and with a variety of genres of drawing and painting, hopefully igniting wonderment into their artmaking. I instructed them to bring in their sketchbooks and participate in peer-to-peer formative assessment after the first month. At the end of the two months, students would meet with me to discuss their development as an artist and provide a grade for my mark book.

Students Self-Assess Based on Effort

After I described the sketchbook assignment to my Grade 11 students, I explained that they would self-assess their work. Several students grinned at one another. A few asked if they could give themselves a perfect score. I replied, "Yes" and saw more grins. I no longer felt stress but feared that I had selected a form of assessment that could call into question my abilities as a teacher. During the first peer-to-peer formative assessment, I instructed students to provide feedback regarding skill development and use of mediums. Students randomly paired up with classmates to assure that peers with different skills spoke with each other. Usually my students are reluctant to speak about their work, so I was surprised at how candidly they spoke to one another and how thoroughly they embraced the idea that the feedback was critical to their artistic growth. I circulated, listened to the conversations, and refrained from imposing my opinions. I happily observed that the more skilled students tended to appreciate the work of those students who found drawing or painting difficult.

At the end of the initial grading period, the students participated in a summative self-assessment with me at my desk; they discussed their sketchbooks and provided a final grade for my mark book. I expected students to discuss their progress in the way they had in the peer-to-peer formative assessment. Instead, most students described their progress in terms of effort. After each student revealed his or her mark, the student waited for me to protest. I simply recorded the mark. Students would then return to their seats and compare their marks with their friends, much to my frustration. While the marks were much higher than what I would have graded, I knew that the students were taking more risks, engaging in critical thinking, and applying strategies to solve problems in their sketchbooks. And the feeling

of wonderment began to re-emerge in my classroom as a highly animated group of students provided a new list of topics for their sketchbooks.

Alterations to the Assessment Process With a Class Vernissage

While the peer-to-peer formative assessments created more critical reflection between the students than I had anticipated, I was not satisfied with the summative assessment. Students focused on the final grade instead of seeing the assessment as a tool for growth (Schönau, 2012). Furthermore, unlike the co-mentoring that occurred in the peer-to-peer formative assessments, the summative assessment produced dialogue that resembled what the students thought I wanted to hear to justify their grades. In response, I decided to alter the procedure.

For the second summative assessment, we organized the classroom like a vernissage, with the students' sketchbooks on display. Unlike a class critique that is traditionally used for judging (Barrett, 2000), I decided that the celebratory atmosphere of a vernissage with food, beverages, and background music would create a space that was conducive to conversations. The students formed two groups: artists and critics. The artists sat at tables and waited for critics to sit beside them and review their sketchbooks. I revised the criteria for the conversations to include questions concerning experimentation, failure, and growth. Afterward, the critics wrote ideas for future sketches in the artists' sketchbooks. I invited teachers and administrators to the event. Several teachers had heard that my students were determining a sizeable portion of their term mark and were curious to see the process. Both teachers and administrators expressed amazement concerning my students' insightfulness, their sketchbooks, and how they handled various mediums—pencil, ink, and Sharpies—to create imagery that reflected their personalities. One English teacher commented how certain students' approaches to drawing, such as their use of whimsical or tight lines, reminded her of how these students articulated themselves in her class. After the event, students reflected upon their process and the conversations that they had with their peers and with the other invited guests. The students then wrote a numerical mark in the sketchbooks and handed them in to me. To my amazement, students had lowered their marks significantly. While I had found the sketches to be superior to those in the first iteration of sketchbook assessments, the students felt differently.

Discussions With Students

The students and I reflected upon the self-assessment process. Several students claimed that the process of self-assessment asked them to be more honest with themselves and with the work that they had produced. They had embraced the idea that artists can be their own best critics and accepted that students should not passively conform to a set of ideals set out by the teacher (Bensur, 2002). One student expressed that the self-assessment allowed him to feel proud of his work without worrying about failing or what I thought about it. He stated that he felt that I had not witnessed his determination because he was not as skilled as the other students (Winner & Hetland, 2008).

It spoke volumes about how students perceive assessment and my role as gatekeeper concerning the final grade that appears on their report cards. I saw this too when several students insisted that I view their sketchbooks and provide them with my opinion as their teacher because I had not had time to view their sketchbooks during the vernissage. To respect their wish to share their sketchbooks with me, I invited all students to speak with me during the following lunch hour. While only two students dropped by, the entire hour was spent discussing their sketchbooks.

Conclusions

By embracing peer-to-peer formative assessments and self-assessments for summative evaluations, I experienced a personal transformation with regard to my relationship with assessment. Previously, assessment had been a chore that created stress (Gruber & Hobbs, 2002). By experimenting with conversation as a basis for the assessment process, it instead became an opportunity for discussions, learning, and celebration (Huebner, 1999). The students experimented more when they realized that they were in charge of their own learning (Schönau, 2012). Furthermore, for this process to work, I had to believe in my students. I continued to employ the new assessment processes throughout the remainder of the school year. By the final vernissage of sketchbooks, I knew from the growth in the students' work that I had stumbled onto an assessment process that had revitalized my classroom practice and returned that missing sense of wonderment. ■

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Assessment WHITE PAPERS for ART EDUCATION

SECTION II

Assessments That Promote Vibrant Learning Communities and Advocate for the Visual Arts

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Model Cornerstone Assessments (MCAs): A Powerful Tool for Measuring Student Achievement in Visual Arts Education

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"Authentic performance assessment… focuses on the ability to use relevant knowledge, skills, and processes for solving open-ended problems through responses to meaningful tasks. "

Publication of the National Core Arts Standards in 2014 (National Coalition for Core Arts Standards) was accompanied by optional sample assessments called Model Cornerstone Assessments (MCAs). This model for performance assessment follows the structure and formatting of the National Core Arts Standards. It provides a resource for art educators and other stakeholders to use as a possible tool for creating standards-based assessments for their local art programs and as a resource for learning about performance-based arts assessment. The 2014 National Core Arts Standards for Visual Arts and MCAs are part of an ongoing history of educational reform and development of arts assessment in the United States.

Educational reform has been a national agenda item since the founding of the American republic (Efland, 1990; Soucy & Stankiewicz, 1990). Contemporary waves of educational reform were precipitated by publication of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), *Toward Civilization* (National Endowment for the Arts, 1988), *Goals 2000* (U.S. Department of Education, 1994), and *No Child Left Behind* (Sabol, 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2002). These reports touched off reforms that continue today in the areas of national and state standards, curriculum development, and assessment in the fields of general education and art education.

The National Standards for Arts Education, first published in 1994 (Music Educators National Conference), were adopted or modified by various states in the creation of their state-level curriculum standards. These standards included knowledge and skills based on the discipline-based art education model, commonly known as DBAE (Clark, Day, & Greer, 1987). Standards content was divided among the curricular areas of

aesthetics, art criticism, art history, and art production. Although these standards were widely used, accompanying examples of assessments needed to measure learning under these standards were not commonly produced or widely disseminated (Sabol, 1994). Legislative restrictions, scarcity of state and local assessment funding, lack of visual arts assessment as a state or local priority, educators' lack of assessment training, and curriculum and time limitations were among factors that hobbled assessment development and dissemination of assessments in visual arts education at that time (Sabol, 1994, 1997, 1998; Zimmerman, 1997).

The 1994 National Standards for Arts Education were succeeded by a new generation of standards published in 2014 by the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS). NCCAS is composed of representatives from each of the professional arts education associations, including the National Art Education Association (NAEA) and other public agencies concerned with education in the arts, such as the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, The College Board, Young Audiences, and Americans for the Arts. This iteration of voluntary standards provided a new foundation for designing curriculum for visual arts education. The design of the standards utilized the curriculum model known as *Understanding by Design* created by Wiggins and McTighe (2005). Their model consists of Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions. Enduring Understandings (EUs) are commonly referred to as "Big Ideas" or those ideas and processes that are central to a discipline and have lasting value beyond the classroom. Essential Questions (EQs) are related directly to Enduring Understandings. Essential Questions enable students to probe more deeply into the meaning and implications of the Enduring Understandings. They precipitate further learning and a generation of additional questions about the Enduring Understandings.

Exploring the Standards Model

Wiggins and McTighe's model (2005) is a generic curriculum design structure that is applicable to all disciplines. In order for this model to be used to generate curriculum standards, the model had to be expanded. In designing the 2014 National Core Arts Standards, NCCAS augmented the *Understanding by Design* model consisting of Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions by adding Artistic Processes, Anchor Standards, Performance Standards, and Model Cornerstone Assessments (MCAs). The standards include four **Artistic Processes**, with knowledge and skills linked to these processes. "The Artistic Processes are the cognitive and physical actions by which arts learning and making are realized" (National Coalition for Core Arts Standards, 2012, p. 11). The Artistic Processes include Creating, Presenting, Responding, and Connecting. **Anchor Standards** describe the general knowledge and skill that teachers expect students to demonstrate throughout their education in the arts. Anchor Standards are parallel across the arts disciplines of dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts. They represent agreed-upon ideas all of the arts hold in common. There are 11 Anchor Standards and they apply to all grade levels, thereby enabling students to expand their understanding of each of these standards as their learning progresses from grade to grade. They serve as the tangible educational expression of artistic

literacy. **Performance Standards** are the indictors, identifying characteristics, or "look-fors" that students' work will exhibit and against which student achievement will be compared. Performance Standards are discipline-specific and were written for each grade level from preK through 8th grade, with three performance levels at the secondary level: Proficient, Accomplished, and Advanced.

Developing the Model Cornerstone Assessments

As the 2014 National Core Arts Standards for Visual Arts were being written, it became apparent that they would create a significant shift in learning for art education programs across the nation. Publication of the standards produced a unique opportunity to examine new approaches for measuring student achievement under these standards. It was equally apparent that examples of assessments were needed to demonstrate how measurement of learning under these standards might be structured (Sabol, 2006; Shuler, Brophy, Sabol, McGreevy-Nichols, & Schuttler, 2016; Zimmerman 1997). It also was understood that art educators in the field possessed varying degrees of knowledge about assessment practices and equally varying degrees of mastery of the skills needed to design assessments (Dorn, Madeja, & Sabol, 2004; Herpin, Washington, & Li, 2012; Nickerson, 1989; Sabol, 2006, 2010; Zimmerman, 1997). For these and other reasons, NCCAS decided to create assessment tools or examples of assessments called **Model Cornerstone Assessments** (MCAs) to support art educators' work in developing standards-based assessments for their programs and schools.

Because of the unique nature of learning in the visual arts, NCCAS decided to create authentic performance assessments. Authentic assessments differ from standardized and alternative measures in that they are performance-based and include real-life decisions and behaviors of professionals in a discipline. Although authentic assessments and performance assessments are viewed as being synonymous by some (Dorn et al., 2004; Shuler et al., 2016; Zimmerman, 1997), others suggest that authentic assessments replicate the real world whereas performance assessments are contrived to determine whether students can use information learned in practical applications (McMillan, 2001; Tileston, 2004). For the purpose of designing MCAs, both ideas were embraced in that a contrived task can determine whether students can use the information, but discussion of how the information is or could be used in the real world is a critical aspect of fully understanding applications of the information. Armstrong (1994) characterized authentic performance assessments as legitimate because they are intellectually challenging but responsive to the student and the school. Authentic performance assessment does not focus on factual knowledge as an end in itself. Rather, it focuses on the ability to use relevant knowledge, skills, and processes for solving open-ended problems through responses to meaningful tasks. Another key factor that distinguishes authentic performance assessments from traditional assessment tasks is that they provide opportunities for students to integrate many kinds of learning and are not dependent upon lower-level thinking skills and problem-solving abilities.

The MCAs were modeled after "Cornerstone Tasks" developed by McTighe and Wiggins (2011). Although the standards include grade-level divisions, MCAs were not written for each grade level. Examples of MCAs were written for the elementary, middle, and secondary levels with three MCAs written for the secondary level: Proficient, Accomplished, and Advanced. The secondary MCAs were designed based on the numbers of art courses students have completed at the secondary level. Therefore, the Proficient MCA was designed for students who are in their first art course at the secondary level. The Accomplished MCA was designed for students in their second art course and the Advanced MCA was designed for students in their third or higher art course at the secondary level.

Exploring the MCA Model

Model Cornerstone Assessments (MCAs) serve as anchors for the curriculum. They identify the most important performances that students should be able to demonstrate with acquired content knowledge and skills. These performances are captured in the Artistic Processes described in the standards: Creating, Presenting, Responding, and Connecting. MCAs are intended to engage students in applying these processes and the knowledge and skills for each process described in the standards in authentic and relevant contexts. For example, students at the secondary proficient level are asked to examine contemporary works of art and identify themes of the artwork (Responding) and compare them with social, cultural, or political issues in their own lives (Connecting) and then make a work of art using a contemporary artmaking approach (Creating) that will be shown in a student-created exhibition of the artworks (Presenting). In this example, students are called upon to use higher-order thinking (e.g., evaluation) and habits of mind (e.g., persistence) in order to achieve successful results. The authenticity and complexity of MCAs is what distinguishes them from the de-contextualized, selected-response items found on many tests. MCA tasks serve as more than just a means of gathering assessment evidence. These tasks are, by design, "worth teaching to" because they embody valuable learning goals and worthy accomplishments (National Coalition for Core Arts Standards, 2012, p. 15).

The MCA model incorporates the structures and content detailed in the standards model. The MCAs are parallel in construction and design with the standards. They also demonstrate how each of the Artistic Processes identified in the standards and their related Performance Standards can be assessed through valid and reliable performance-based measures. MCAs are *not mandatory*; they are optional tools art educators may elect to use. MCAs may be used exclusively or in combination with other existing assessment methods and tools art educators currently use to measure student achievement in their programs. However, the MCAs provide a standards-based and research-based example of one possible approach, among others, for assessing standards-based student learning outcomes and expressive capacities of art students.

MCAs consist of seven distinct components: (1) Title and Short Description of the Assessment; (2) Strategies for Embedding in Instruction; (3) Detailed Assessment Procedures; (4) Key Vocabulary, Knowledge, and Skills; (5) Strategies for Inclusion; (6) Differentiation Strategies; and (7) Resources and Scoring Devices. A design template with these components is provided for art educators' use on the NCCAS website.[1] Art educators may use all or any combination of these components in designing their own MCAs.

Depending on choices art educators make regarding available options for MCA designs, the MCA model is capable of producing an array of quantitative and qualitative data that can be used to measure student performances as well as curricular design, instructional methodologies, and course and program design. These data and data summaries can be shared with administrators, parents, and other stakeholders and decision-makers to illustrate how students and programs are performing relative to the standards and for advocacy initiatives.

Teams of preK through secondary art educators and researchers created, piloted, and benchmarked sample MCAs. They produced MCAs for 2nd, 5th, and 8th grades with three additional assessments—Proficient, Accomplished, and Advanced—designed for use at the secondary level. Numbers of art educators from across the country piloted and benchmarked the MCAs between 2015 and 2016. Sample portfolios of benchmarked student work from each of the MCAs were posted on the NCCAS website for public examination.[2] The posted MCA benchmarked portfolios provide a range of examples of the quality, complexity, and comprehensive nature of learning in the visual arts as illustrated in the MCA tasks and student works in the portfolios. Benchmarked MCA works also may be used for instructional purposes or as a means for comparing various students' work and their growth over time. Using MCA student products also may enhance advocacy and other calls for public demonstrations of quality learning in visual arts education programs. In these ways MCA responses can serve additional purposes that go beyond simply capturing students' achievement.

MCAs may be characterized by a number of attributes they possess (McTighe & Wiggins, 2011; National Coalition for Core Arts Standards, 2012). "They:

- are *curriculum embedded* (as opposed to externally imposed);
- *recur over the grades*, becoming increasingly sophisticated over time;
- establish *authentic contexts* for performance;
- assess *understanding and transfer* via genuine performance;
- *integrate 21st-century skills* (e.g., critical thinking, technology use, teamwork) with subject area content;
- evaluate performance with established *rubrics*;
- engage students in *meaningful learning* while encouraging the best teaching;
- provide content for a student's portfolio (so that they graduate with a *resume of demonstrated accomplishments* rather than simply a transcript of courses taken).[3]

Using the MCA Model

The MCAs are flexible in their design. They may be used as intact assessments, or they may be modified at the discretion of the art teacher. For example, the sample MCAs include all four of the Artistic Processes. Art educators may choose to assess their students under each of these processes in one combined assessment. However, the MCA model also permits art educators to select one or more of the Artistic Processes and focus assessments specifically on those processes alone.

Art Educators who have used the MCAs in their programs reported dramatic positive impact on student learning and engagement with art education content. MCA-piloting art teachers at all instructional levels reported higher levels of student engagement, more sophisticated critical thinking and problem solving, combined with higher student motivation and personal connection with art learning. One teacher said that her students asked when they would be able to do the MCAs again because they enjoyed them so much. Another reported that students said they felt that for the first time, they had a choice in how they could demonstrate what they had learned in the art classes. Because piloting art teachers experienced the impact of the MCA model on student learning, many of those teachers created additional MCAs for their other grade levels and classes. They also suggested that educators' adoption of the MCAs influenced their curriculum development, instructional practice, student motivation, and uses of assessments for enhancing student learning and achievement in visual arts education programming. The demonstrated impact of MCAs on enhancing the quality of art education programming, as well as the use of the outcomes of MCAs as demonstrations of student achievement in the visual arts, hold significant power in illustrating outcomes of student learning and for advocating for visual arts education programming.

NCCAS has learned many things from art educators' uses of the MCAs in their programs. Feedback from art educators has been used by NCCAS to evaluate the real-world application of MCAs in art programs. In the future, development of additional MCAs may be undertaken, including expanded focuses on student processes and better understanding of the impact MCAs have on curriculum development, instructional methodology, and refinement of assessments designed by art educators. Other emerging understandings from the field, about how well MCAs function and how they might be improved, is a very real goal that will continue to be examined and pursued by all who implement and use Model Cornerstone Assessments in their art programs. ■

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Endnotes

[1] www.nationalartsstandards.org

[2] www.nationalartsstandards.org

[3] See p. 15 at www.nationalartsstandards.org/sites/default/files/NCCAS%20%20Conceptual%20Framework_4.pdf

[4] Link was active at time of writing, but all free and classroom wikis were disabled and no longer accessible as of 7/31/18.
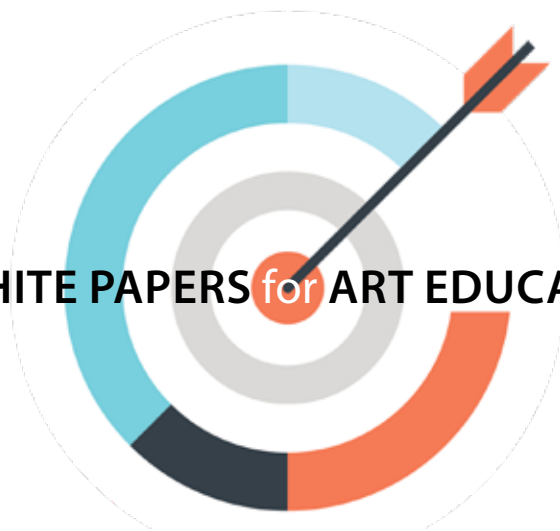
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Assessment WHITE PAPERS for ART EDUCATION

Changing Mindsets About edTPA: From Test Anxiety to Demonstrating Teacher Competencies Through Authentic Teaching and Assessment Practices

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"Lessons driven by a central focus often combine content inspired by a big idea, art production and inquiry methods, artists, media, design qualities, and subject integration."

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Teacher education programs in 40 states require teacher candidates working toward visual art certification to take edTPA, a high-stakes summative performance assessment developed by Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity (SCALE) and distributed by Pearson's Evaluations Systems (Pearson Education, 2018). Since its implementation in 2013, edTPA has been aligned with accreditation and teacher candidates' requirements for program completion, graduation, and/or teacher certification. edTPA's implementation arose in response to the teacher accountability movement, with its standardized measures designed by SCALE as valid predictors of preservice teachers' abilities to effectively instruct preK-12 students on their first day of teaching (Pecheone, Whittaker, & Klesch, 2017). For its visual arts assessment, art education specialists have provided input in developing and updating its requirements, resources, and rubrics that address concepts of best practices within the field and content derived from the National Visual Arts Standards. Teacher candidates submit an original portfolio that contains evidence demonstrating their teaching competencies.

Creating the wealth of data required for edTPA portfolios can feel overwhelming to teacher candidates, including high-achieving ones. Test anxiety expands beyond traditional paper-and-pencil tests and includes diverse forms of assessment and evaluation for which teacher candidates need to perform at proficient or above proficient marks for success. Test anxiety affects individuals cognitively and physically, with symptoms that include stress, nervousness, restlessness, and other discomforts

(Cizek & Burg, 2006). In extreme circumstances, test anxiety can be so debilitating that it causes competent people to perform below their normal capabilities. This is particularly true when stakes are high, as with standardized assessments.

For edTPA, teacher candidates' portfolios must include original lesson plans that they teach sequentially, related assessments, quality exemplars of student works, and instructional video footage that documents how they teach students. Teacher candidates must also prepare nearly 30 single-space pages (maximum) of written commentaries that explain and self-assess the planning, instruction, and assessment segments within their edTPA portfolios. Trained scorers that include certified art educators and professors in teacher education assess candidates' full portfolios using edTPA's 15 rubrics.

Although the edTPA Visual Arts handbook clearly explains its requirements and how edTPA scorers assess portfolios, teacher candidates need supplemental guidance and mentoring before the assessment takes place. As a teacher educator, I have initiated comprehensive curricular methods (Sickler-Voigt, in press) and developed a support system for preservice art educators that make the performance assessment a more natural experience through which teacher candidates can showcase their skills with teaching portfolios that have value beyond edTPA and focus on what they would normally do given quality preservice learning experiences. This White Paper identifies constructive approaches that assist teacher candidates in preparing for the teaching profession while also taking edTPA.

Being The Best Teacher I Can Be: Applying Authentic Teaching Practices to Guide edTPA Portfolio Development

Instead of presenting edTPA as a "test" that teacher candidates have to take, I encourage preservice art educators to shift this mindset and ask: "How can I demonstrate excellence in curricular planning, instruction, and assessment?" I regularly ask teacher candidates to reflect on the professional beliefs and ambitions that make them want to become teachers as I present theories and best practices associated with comprehensive planning, instruction, and assessment in the visual arts. I introduce these tasks early in the preservice curriculum so that teacher self-reflection becomes an important part of their professional development. We discuss the meaning of authentic instruction and assessment practices. Authentic instruction identifies what it means to be a quality teacher who cares about students' needs and develops a meaningful curriculum and assessment practices that connect to students' lives (Anderson & Milbrandt, 2005).

By seeing students as valuable members of the learning community, art educators using authentic methods become familiar with students' interests and varying abilities. Classroom learning environments are communicative and well-managed, with students having ample opportunities to participate in inquiry-driven and choice-based learning tasks. Art educators apply ongoing assessments, including authentic assessments that have value in the classroom and beyond. With practice, teacher candidates learn how to apply these practices to demonstrate their roles as authentic teachers who are skilled in explaining why their standards-based instruction and assessments

are necessary to student learning and how they provide students with meaningful choices to thrive as unique individuals in preK-12 art classrooms and beyond.

As promoted in authentic instruction, edTPA reflective commentaries must include evidence that identifies how teacher candidates support students' active learning. Many practicing art educators plan and instruct using big ideas, essential questions, quality visuals, media, and context that prompt student engagement and reflections. Curricular content relates to students' life experiences and has valid community and cultural connections. Art educators select developmentally appropriate learning tasks that challenge students, while remaining within reach. They identify when students need further assistance or accommodations to meet learning targets. In addition to developing clear plans and demonstrating effective instruction, teacher candidates need to know how to emulate the practices of art educators who are proficient in applying different assessment methodologies (Chappuis, Stiggins, Chappuis, & Arter, 2012; Eisner, 2002).

For example, formative assessments that occur during learning tasks allow educators to know the proficiencies students have acquired and where they need additional support as they prepare for summative quantitative assessments that result in numeric scores and measure students' abilities to reach objectives. Teacher candidates should also be able to use qualitative assessments to appraise student dispositions through sources that include communications, observations of students working and interacting, reflections during class critiques, student artists' statements, and student journals.

It's Not All New to Me: Building on My Existing Knowledge

A helpful strategy for reducing test anxiety associated with edTPA portfolio development is for teacher candidates to identify what they already know given their collective art education, studio, and education courses and applicable life experiences. Well before they take edTPA, I have students work in teams to review the edTPA handbook and ask questions about content they do not understand and discuss ways to transfer their accumulated knowledge and dispositions to real world teaching scenarios. Together we review edTPA's meanings and students begin to recognize how oftentimes seemingly new words and concepts have connections to theories and practices they already know. We discuss ways to select the most appropriate terminology, theories, and practices that suit their teaching needs and styles so that their future edTPA commentaries will reflect who they are as human beings and developing art educators. I recommend that students collect books and keep notebooks, journals, electronic files, glossaries, and word banks as references for incorporating academic vocabulary, artistic processes, inquiry methods, theories, and best practices.

Examples of quality resources include the National Visual Arts Standards and their framework of creating, presenting, responding, and connecting (State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education, 2014); the Model Cornerstone Assessments; and the National Art Education Association's professional publications. We discuss ways to

get to know the students they will be teaching during their residency/ student teaching semester and the communities and cultures to which those students belong so that they can make relevant connections and integrate them into their planning, instruction, and assessment practices. The preservice art educators identify ways to align their understandings of applicable children's development theories (Sickler-Voigt, 2015). As the program progresses, I also have the preservice art educators film and assess their teaching prior to edTPA. Many are surprised by how a camera can initially make them feel uncomfortable, but they grow more comfortable and prepared with practice.

edTPA calls upon teacher candidates to develop portfolios with a central focus. Lessons driven by a central focus often combine content inspired by a big idea, art production and inquiry methods, artists, media, design qualities, and subject integration. All content has relevance to teaching the visual arts and extends beyond basic exercises with valid assessments that measure and appraise student learning outcomes. When first practicing writing edTPA's planning, instruction, and assessment commentaries with a central focus, teacher candidates may neglect to include the necessary details because they assume that scorers already know what they are talking about. I explain to teacher candidates that their thorough descriptions of selected terms, theories, philosophies, and assessments serve as teaching tools that allow others to understand their intentions and meanings. I provide guidance in helping teacher candidates teach students age-appropriate academic art vocabulary that aligns with a central focus and learning tasks. For example, they can emphasize active art verbs and actions as they work with students to describe, analyze, interpret, and judge art in oral and written forms. Other ideas include developing open-ended questions, readings, and prompts that stimulate students to ask further questions; explaining content in their own words; pointing to visual evidence in artworks and during demonstrations; and comparing and contrasting artworks and ideas.

Yes, I Can!: Maintaining Positive Dispositions

Teacher candidates must prepare their edTPA portfolios after teaching all day and attending university seminars. During this exhausting process, it is helpful for teacher candidates to envision how they will reach their professional goals and practice positive self-dialog using motivational phrases, such as "I can do this!" With goals and positive mindsets in place, teacher candidates will need to create and stick to a schedule to keep up with the vast workload. I recommend that they identify possible obstacles that can hinder their performance and seek ways to eliminate or reduce negative thoughts through methods such as deep breathing, healthy lifestyle choices, and utilizing mentors.

Like all humans, teachers sometimes make mistakes. Standing in front of a classroom and reviewing edTPA video footage of their teaching, teacher candidates will notice areas for improvement. Sometimes they are too harsh on themselves and their mistakes in their written commentaries. In assessing practice commentaries that they have written, we discuss constructive ways to describe how their planning, instruction, and assessment can be improved without being overly critical of themselves and the students they teach. Using people-friendly language, teacher candidates should identify their

mistakes or disappointments and express how they have grown from the experience using self-reflection and supports from established educational theories and practices. They should also mindfully integrate their personal strengths and the quality outcomes, learning patterns, and positive dispositions that students accomplished under their guidance.

Teacher candidates need to know how to make their edTPA experiences personally meaningful with a life that extends beyond passing the performance assessment. I encourage teacher candidates to integrate content from their edTPA portfolios into their existing teaching portfolios to use on job interviews. Teacher portfolio content can include examples of their original edTPA lesson plans, student work, and assessments. Using the self-reflection skills that they have developed, teacher candidates will have a strong foundation they can apply to describe the relevance of their portfolios using multiple forms of evidence and to showcase their full teaching abilities.

Conclusion

Because edTPA functions as a teacher accountability assessment required by many teacher education programs, I strive to make the edTPA experience positive for teacher candidates. Instead of centering on edTPA's pros and cons as much scholarship does (Goldhaber, Cowan, & Theobald, 2016; Madeloni, 2015; Pecheone, Whittaker, & Klesch, 2017), this White Paper explains my role in supporting teacher candidates and helping them reduce test anxiety as they prepare for edTPA using authentic instruction and assessment practices (Anderson & Milbrandt, 2005; Nelson & Knight, 2010).

Like many art educators in teacher education, I prefer evaluating teacher candidates' abilities without them having to pay additional funds for a mandated, privatized standardized assessment. I also recognize how edTPA's comprehensive approach challenges teacher candidates to self-reflect on their planning, instruction, and assessment. Therefore, with the teacher candidates I mentor and supervise, I approach edTPA's preparation as a community of learners and focus on the values of knowing what teachers and students can achieve given quality planning, instruction, and assessment practices, while at the same time highly valuing art educators as unique individuals. ■

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Assessment

WHITE PAPERS for ART EDUCATION

Assessments That Promote Vibrant Learning Communities and Advocate for the Visual Arts

Using Blogs and ePortfolios to Assess Student Growth in Middle and Secondary School Art Classrooms in West Virginia: A Cross-Case Analysis

Terese Giobbia

> "Blogs became valuable qualitative forms of inquiry that helped inform preservice teachers of what was most important to their students' contextual and artistic learning."

Middle and secondary school students typically spend 9 hours a day on their smart devices (Barnwell, 2016). With this in mind, art teachers can contemplate strategies to leverage this vast usage of technology to drive positive results in the classroom. Exposing students to new and engaging art activities and materials is one way educators can offer an environment that allows students to interact with and make meaningful art. Studies show that participation in the arts leads to greater engagement in school, more positive social outcomes, and enhanced cognitive and academic skills development among middle and secondary school students (National Education Association, 2012; Robertson, 2014; Slattery, 2006). This White Paper examines how three preservice teachers used blogs and ePortfolios to assess student learning, tracking the artistic journeys of the students in their classrooms. The findings of this examination illustrate how blogs and ePortfolios, when used as summative and formative assessments aligned with specific learning outcomes, can enable art teachers to better identify student progress; evaluate new idea development and literacy skills; and provide meaningful feedback to students in middle and secondary school in safe learning environments (National Education Association, 2012; Tyner, 1998).

Problem Statement

With 87% of American teens having unlimited access to smart devices, the amount of screen time middle and high school students spend on these devices has reached an all-time high (Hsukayama, 2015; Lampert, 2006; Sassman, 2015). James Steyer, CEO and

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Founder of Common Sense Media, says this statistic only proves "kids are literally living in a 24/7 media and technology world" (in Sassman, 2015, p. 1). While studies show smart devices hold vast potential for learning, art educators have become increasingly perplexed at how to incorporate them into curriculum to cultivate creativity and promote positive student learning outcomes (Rideout, Foehr, & Roberts, 2010).

Monitoring artistic growth and assessing creativity among middle and secondary school students who spend most of their time texting and tweeting can be challenging for art teachers (Barnwell, 2016). Traditional portfolios—which emphasize drawing, painting, sculpture, and ceramics skills—while necessary for creating art, often are not guided by contextual considerations that take both artist intent and viewer interpretation into account (Eisner, 2004). Blogs and ePortfolios allow for these contextual considerations through the use of inquiry-based art approaches in a safe learning community where students [and teachers] "know one another, support one another, and have a sense of shared goals and values" (National Art Education Association, 2012, p. 11).

Methodology

Using the edTPA (2016) assessment model of planning, instruction, and assessment, the study followed three preservice art teachers who used blogs and ePortfolios to assess student artistic process and product. The teachers collected student artwork, digital research journals, artist statements, and self-reflections as evidence to show student progress and growth in each of the classroom settings. While each of the preservice teachers used ePortfolios and classroom blogs in different ways to assess their student's artworks, the process was well-documented and analyzed through the teachers' personal blogs. Data collection tools included observations, document review, individual student artwork and projects, artist statements, and student self-reflections.

Data Collection and Analysis

Classroom A is a middle school in a rural setting in West Virginia, with participants ranging in age from 11-14. At this site, the preservice teacher developed a collaborative material culture art lesson, which encouraged students to engage in relevant cultural inquiry through contemporary artmaking processes (Turner, 2017). Within the assignment, the teacher instructed students to create a tree sculpture out of electrical wire. The students used multicolored electrical wires found in their homes to create the sculpture. The preservice teacher presented the class with a series of contemporary artists and artworks, which enabled students to plan, brainstorm, collect materials, collaborate, reflect on, and connect with the materials and end product. The preservice teacher also created a class blog to both document student progress as well as integrate material culture into the middle school art education curricula.

Students used digital journals to take notes, brainstorm, and sketch during class and the teacher used the classroom blog to document their process. Journal prompts were often assigned with one person within the group writing on behalf of everyone during group brainstorming sessions (Turner, 2017). The entries in the blog made

critical thinking more visible and showed an increased understanding of contemporary art through discussions of the medium which they used to create their wire sculptures.

As a result of this fact finding within the classroom blog, five behaviors emerged as significant to student artistic process: problem finding, problem solving, connecting, collecting, and collaborating. The preservice teacher was able to demonstrate active student engagement, analysis, and interpretation of meaning through documentation of the artistic process and critical thinking in the class blog. Unlike the technical skills of drawing and painting used with traditional media of charcoal and watercolor, unconventional artmaking materials such as electrical wire did not come with suggestions on how to use it. Students were left to their own devices to discover successful and unsuccessful ways of working with the new material, and thus found solutions, which were documented with digital imagery of student artworks, student reflections, and teacher feedback within the blog. This collection of materials was critical to the project as students had to extend artistic behavior beyond the school setting to canvass their homes for electrical cords or wires. The act of collecting unwanted or discarded common materials allowed students to experience a contemporary artistic process, enabling a greater understanding of the world around them (Freedman, 2003).

The blog highlighted a strong use of student planning—including brainstorming, sketching, and class discussions—which proved crucial throughout the project's discussions, creation, and completion. Students constructed knowledge by sharing their ideas through discussions in a classroom blog and subsequent brainstorming sessions. Equally significant was the classroom discussion on the logistics of relocating a tree sculpture from the second floor of the school to the first-floor library once the project had been completed (Turner, 2017). Planning, in this case, overlapped with problem solving. This showed a collaborative balance between the artistic process, which allowed for student ownership of duties and student-directed artmaking. The preservice teacher observed student collaboration, where students worked together in undefined groups, and "observed ways in which students worked together, switching back and forth between helping and assisting different people" (Turner, 2017, p. 63). She noted how collaboration provided a way for students to teach other students about their self-discovered solutions and/or findings (i.e., uncasing electrical cord). Additionally, students worked collaboratively to physically create the wire-wrapped tree, attach branches, and connect vines.

In Classroom B, in rural West Virginia, participants ranged between the ages of 11-14. Here the preservice teacher used student ePortfolios and a personal blog to gauge the effectiveness of open-ended and closed curriculums in two different classrooms. Using the instructional strategy of choice-based art, ePortfolios were used to carefully document student contextual learning and artistic progress. In this setting, the preservice teacher conducted two separate lessons, which focused on creating "dream house drawings."

In the first lesson, the preservice teacher purposefully chose a closed curriculum lesson:

> While students were given an opportunity to incorporate personal elements within their dream house drawing, they were only given a limited amount of creative tools, such as colored pencils, paper, magazines, glue, and scissors. The visual images of student artworks captured in the blog depicted more traditional reproductions of houses. (Drennon, 2017, p. 57)

In the second lesson, students were introduced to the concept of found object art:

> For this project, students were told they could utilize any material or object that was available to them, and were given access to fully stocked shelves with found objects and a variety of art materials. The blog documented their research of looking for meaningful objects to put in their dream houses. [Because they were given] choices of alternative artmaking materials, students approached the project with greater vigor and youthful enthusiasm. (Drennon, 2017, p. 58)

Collected images and artist statements in individual student ePortfolios demonstrated how creativity was hindered when closed curriculum instruction strategies were used. When students were given a written curriculum with a set of instructions and no choice of medium or materials, ePortfolios highlighted how students ended up telling the same visual story, where all the projects looked, felt, and acted the same (Drennon, 2017). Instead of creating personal narratives, students simply regurgitated what teachers instructed them to create. Alternatively, in the open-ended curriculum where students were given choices of materials and media for artmaking activities, the preservice teacher's blog highlighted the risks students took within their art activities—pencil drawings and Zentangles—to create art based on their own personal narratives. Specific to this setting, the preservice teacher also assembled a group of art educators, practicing artists and university supervisors to judge the creativity of each of the art images. The individuals were prompted with a question of which image they found to be more creative, and why. The panel rated student artwork based on performance descriptors of creativity, craftsmanship, formal resolution of design elements, and the impact on student progress and how "creativity" flourished (Drennon, 2017). The preservice teacher shared the results of the survey in her personal blog, noting how it demonstrated that when students were given choices, they were able to enjoy creating art through their own storytelling.

While ePortfolios documented the day-by-day artistic process and enabled the preservice teacher to assess student growth within the artworks, the preservice teacher's personal blog enabled her to gather information through pre-assessments of original thumbnail pencil drawings and to post assessments of their final projects of the Zentangles. While there was some disparity in the rankings the panelists gave student artwork, the collected data suggested that using blogs and ePortfolios helped students to take greater risks in their artmaking as they were more willing to share their failures and successes with their peers and teachers.

In Classroom C, a large secondary school serving several small towns and communities in rural West Virginia, student participants ranged between the ages of 15-18. Surrounded by coal mines and refineries, the level of poverty and unemployment was high. In this setting, the preservice teacher used a personal blog, student digital journals, and ePortfolios to highlight ways in which art activities could help students deal with some of their social and emotional stressors. Drugs, bullying, violence, and abuse were just some of the many social stressors students in this setting faced daily. The preservice teacher utilized her own personal experiences and observations of others using art approaches in the K-12 classroom to design a curriculum that used a personal blog to document her personal reflections on her student's progress and growth.

The art lessons the preservice teacher formulated employed color therapy and action painting approaches, as well as a combination of traditional artmaking activities—such as resource journals, paintings, drawings, and three-dimensional papier-mâché products—which were later inputted into their ePortfolios (Rubin, 2010). The ePortfolios the students created provided meaningful insight into the lives of students. They allowed the preservice teacher to communicate directly with the students in a confidential and non-threatening way as she addressed the problems they were experiencing. In her own personal blog, the preservice teacher noted how the color therapy project had allowed her to glance at what her students were dealing with on a daily basis. She observed that often times showing color in their work represented what was going on within their environment and what battles their families were going through. She also noted a lack of color in their artworks seemed to indicate how uncertain they were about their future or what was going to happen next (Elliott, 2017).

What became apparent in all of these school settings was the inherent value of using these specific technology tools to provide students with an opportunity to think in new ways (Eisner, 2002). In each of these settings, the preservice teacher used ePortfolios as a form of inquiry-based learning to evaluate critical thinking disposition among students; this became an effective way for students to communicate their problems to a teacher in a safe environment (Eisner, 2002). The student ePortfolios highlighted how art affected their minds, helped them form alliances with the preservice teacher and with other students, and often helped the students through sometimes difficult stages of their lives. The preservice teachers' blogs became personal journals, where each identified the specific art approaches she used with each individual learner and was able to reflect on specific art approaches she had used that helped her students cope with stress and trauma.

Findings

Smart devices play an increasingly important role in providing students with opportunities to learn how to think in new ways (Eisner, 2004; Robb, Bay, & Vennegaard, 2018; Sassman, 2015). The findings of this cross-case analysis appear to suggest that blogs, when used as formative assessments, and ePortfolios, when used as summative assessments, can be powerful tools to monitor social and artistic development among middle and secondary school students.

Preservice teachers in this study demonstrated ways to assess student progress and provide meaningful feedback to middle and secondary school students through the use of blogs and ePortfolios. Preservice teachers were able to see and assess student growth and process in the classroom blogs, which highlighted students' problem-finding, problem-solving, connecting, collecting, and collaborating abilities. Likewise, artist statements accompanying artwork in ePortfolios and comments in the personal blogs provided preservice teachers with assessment tools to gauge student successes, failures, and artistic process and progress.

In Classroom A, the preservice teacher's blog captured the day-to-day visible artistic and conceptual growth throughout the process of making a tree sculpture out of wire. The panel of cooperating teachers, practicing artists, and university supervisors who viewed and evaluated the ePortfolios in Classroom B commented on the higher levels of quality with regard to craftsmanship, resolution of formal qualities, and creativity among students' completed works. In Classroom C, ePortfolios highlighted personal narratives that emerged within the art activities and artist statements accompanying ePortfolios and provided meaningful insight into the lives of students, some of whom were dealing with daily personal social stressors. In

each of the three settings, the blogs became valuable qualitative forms of inquiry that helped inform preservice teachers of what was most important to their students' contextual and artistic learning. From a teacher's perspective, the technology promoted interactive learning communities that enabled students to take ownership of their work. It also appeared to encourage collaborative learning outcomes between students and teachers in the middle and secondary school art classroom.

As is the case with many schools across the United States, the standardization of the school environment has led to an abundance of students looking to their art teachers for answers on what to create instead of reflecting internally for the answer (Slattery, 2006). When students are allowed to use these technology tools to make personal choices, they are able to enjoy creating art through their own storytelling and personal narratives in a positive and safe environment. These technology tools help students collaborate with peers, maintain open dialogue with teachers, and create more personal and meaningful artworks, while giving art teachers the opportunity to view artistic process, assess student progress, build a sense of community through collaboration and interaction, improve literacy skills, and allow students to take risks within a safe learning environment. ∎

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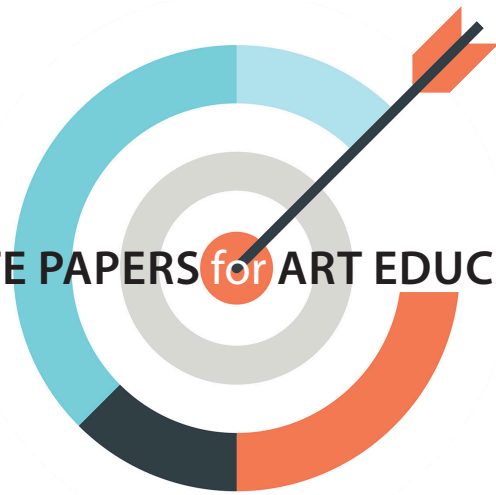
NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Assessment WHITE PAPERS for ART EDUCATION

SECTION III

Planning and Implementing Visual Arts Assessments

Some Guiding Principles for Conducting Assessments in Visual Arts Education

F. Robert Sabol

"Assessment results… provide indicators for measuring the quality of curriculum, instruction, and assessments, and offer opportunities for teachers to evaluate effectiveness of the curriculum and its impact on student learning."

This White Paper provides a selection of some general principles of assessment or overarching ideas that may guide educators in selecting, developing, and implementing assessments of students' learning at all instructional levels or educational settings in which they are used. These principles represent a framework for understanding the nature of assessment and for building comprehensive assessments and assessment programing. Using them is fundamental in creating assessments that reflect and measure the various learning outcomes and program goals in visual arts education.

The Assessment Context in Art Education

Assessment of learning has become commonplace in the field of art education and in art education programs across the United States (Sabol, 2009). Legislative mandates, public policies, and best practices in education dictate the inclusion of assessment as a means for measuring student achievement in all subject disciplines (Center for Educational Policy, 2007; Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2013; Council of Chief State School Officers, 2017; Falk, 2000; Marzano, 2017; McMillan, 2001; National Art Education Association, 2013, 2015, 2016a, 2016b; Sabol, 2010; Stiggins, 2017; United States Department of Education, 2015a, 2015b). Art educators have become knowledgeable about various procedures and means of assessment necessary for measuring student learning (Armstrong, 1994; Beattie, 1997; Dorn, Madeja, & Sabol, 2004; Hafeli, 2009; Sabol, 2006). They have developed skills and proficiencies in the uses of various assessment tools and processes. However, acquisition of assessment knowledge and skills continues to be erratic and varies widely among art educators (Cawelti, 2006; Eisner, 2002; Hafeli, 2009; McMillan, 2001;

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Sabol, 2006; Tileston, 2004; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). In addition, ongoing assessment-related professional development needs persist among art educators and in preservice art education programs (Eisner, 2002; Sabol, 2006; Shuler, Brophy, Sabol, McGreevy-Nichols, & Schuttler, 2016).

Assessment of learning in visual arts education includes unique challenges and opportunities not commonly addressed in other disciplines (Beattie, 1997; Dorn et al., 2004; Eisner, 2002; Hafeli, 2009; Shuler et al., 2016). As a result, art educators are challenged with identifying the means and procedures that will provide evidence of student achievement; this evidence is not commonly required in other disciplines. In selecting and designing assessments, art educators should be guided by accepted assessment standards (American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, & National Council on Measurement in Education, 2014) and by overarching principles and practices commonly accepted for educational assessment (Hopkins, Stanley, & Hopkins, 1990; Kline, 2005; McMillan, 2001; Stiggins, 2017; Tileston, 2004).

Some Guiding Principles of Assessment

For assessments to comprehensively and effectively measure students' learning, art educators need to understand and apply a number of fundamental principles when measuring student achievement. These principles should guide, focus, and direct assessments of students' knowledge, skills, and dispositions. They act to support instruction and the design of assessment programs in art education. These principles may be thought of as a framework for selecting and designing assessments and assessment programs. They also function as a model through which individual assessments and assessment programs can be evaluated. The following selection of assessment principles can be used by art educators in guiding the assessment of student learning in art education programs.

Principle 1. Assessments must measure what was taught and be linked to the educational objectives or outcomes. (Validity)

When assessments measure what was taught, this principle is called validity. Among the most important considerations in assessment (McMillan, 2017), validity is the measure of how well the assessment measures what it is intended to measure (Hopkins et al., 1990; Kline, 2005; Mathison, 2005; Sabol, 1997; Tileston, 2004). If assessments are intended to measure what was learned, then it follows that the assessments must match what was taught. Assessments should include a match between the knowledge, skills, and processes students are expected to know and be able to demonstrate (Popham, 2003). In addition, valid assessments provide evidence of the degrees to which students have met the identified academic standards, objectives, and learning outcomes of instruction.

Validity of assessments also should be aligned with the mission or vision, goals, and purposes of the school and art education program (Haney, 1991; Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2007; Stiggins, 2017; Tileston, 2004; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). By maintaining a focus on this principle, assessments can provide supportive evidence that indicates how well the program is functioning with regard to achieving its mission, goals, and purposes.

Curriculum, instruction, and assessment are directly linked. Assessments should be considered simultaneously with academic standards, curriculum content, processes and skills, and methods used for instruction (Falk, 2000; Marzano, 2017; McMillan, 2001; Tileston, 2004). When designing curriculum and selecting instructional methods, consideration must be given to how, when, and through which means student learning will be assessed. Assessments should provide evidence that the identified educational objectives have been met. In selecting effective instructional methodologies, equal consideration should be given to how assessments can produce evidence of the effectiveness of the instruction provided.

Assessments should be authentic. They should be performance-based and assess a range of students' learning and capacities. Assessments must match the content, knowledge, processes, dispositions, and skills included in the curriculum and what was taught (McMillan, 2001; Sabol, 2004a, 2004b; Stiggins, 2017). The more closely an assessment reflects curriculum content, the higher the validity rating of the assessment or the more accurately the assessment measures student achievement (Sabol, 1997).

Principle 2. Assessments must be repeatable within and among various groups of learners. (Reliability)

In order to track student achievement with individual students and among groups and over time, assessments must provide consistent products or demonstrations of student achievement (Marzano, 2017; Wilson, 2005). Assessments must be reliable. Their reliability is an indicator of test or assessment consistency or stability (Falk, 2000; McMillan, 2001; Popham, 2003). It indicates an estimate of how well the results of an assessment would match if the assessment was repeatedly given to the same student or groups of students under the same conditions (Tileston, 2004). Reliability refers to the consistency of scores, rather than the reliability of the instrument (McMillan, 2001; Tileston, 2004). The principle of reliability primarily focuses on evaluating consistency of assessment scores over time (test/retest), stability of item scores across items (internal consistency), or uniformity of ratings across judges or raters of a person, object, event, and so on (interrater reliability) (Kline, 2005). Enhancing assessment reliability requires that assessment products and performances must be evaluated with fair, consistent, and stable assessment standards and criteria (Hopkins et al., 1990; Kline, 2005; Sabol, 2004a, 2004b; Wiggins, 1998; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Criteria must remain constant and should reflect the most important demonstrations of learning being measured.

Principle 3. Assessments must be fair. (Fairness)

No assessment is perfect, and educators must understand that errors occur in all assessments. However, when properly designed and used, assessments can contribute to furthering fairness and equality (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2003; McMillan, 2001). In selecting and designing assessments, art educators must pay particular attention to identifying biases the assessments may contain (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2003; Stiggins, 2017). Diligence in examining whether social, cultural, racial, ethnic, economic, political, age, and gender biases may be embedded in assessments has a direct relationship to the degrees of fairness

any assessment provides (Popham, 2003). Fairness in implementation of assessments, training of assessors, equitable treatment of all examinees, and interpersonal relationships between examiners and examinees may directly influence evaluations of assessment data, reporting of assessment findings, and professional inferences made from assessment findings (McMillan, 2001; Stiggins, 2017).

Principle 4. Assessments must be ongoing. (Sustainability)

Just as educators expect student learning to be ongoing and continuous, so too should assessment of learning be ongoing and continuous. Frequent recurring assessment provides a basis for understanding students' growth and learning over time, compared with single assessments that take place at the end of the academic year or grading period (Marzano, 2006; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). The frequency of assessment should be determined by the degree of certainty the teacher has about students' knowledge on a given topic (Marzano, 2006). The less certain the teacher is about students' learning, the more frequently assessments should be done. Profiles of assessment results can support teachers' understanding of students' achievements by demonstrating the trajectory of learning or growth, as well as aid in identifying areas needing remedial support.

The use of formative and summative assessments has proven to provide meaningful contributions to learning (Greenstein, 2010; Marzano, 2006; 2017; Shuler, et al., 2016). Formative assessment, or assessing students' works while in progress, enables teachers to diagnose how well students are progressing toward meeting the objectives of instruction and to plan future instruction. Formative assessment further provides teachers with opportunities to redirect or instruct students as they participate in the assessment. Summative assessments, those conducted at the end of the learning cycle, are of value in documenting the culmination of what students have learned.

Principle 5. Students must have time to learn what is being assessed. (Opportunity to Learn)

Students need sufficient time, materials, curriculum content, and formal instruction for optimal opportunities to learn. Students must not only be given time to learn what was taught, but also time to refine their understanding of what was taught and to develop skills needed to demonstrate their levels of achievement. The principle of fairness is directly related to the opportunity to learn. Sufficient time must be provided in the curriculum as well as in the classroom to maximize student learning (National Art Education Association, 2014). To accomplish this objective, Wiggins (1998) noted that assessments should provide feedback (formative assessment) and opportunities for students to revise and improve their work. Black and Wiliam (1998) demonstrated that when student self-assessment skills are learned and regularly applied—and when students have time to experiment and refine their ideas and work—student motivation, engagement, and achievement are enhanced (Dean, Hubbell, Pitler, & Stone, 2012).

Principle 6. Assessments must allow students to demonstrate what they have learned in numbers of ways. (Comprehensiveness)

Assessments should include various methods and means through which students can show what they have learned and can do. Their design should be structured so that students can use their preferred

individual learning styles to demonstrate their understanding of what was taught and the degrees of skills they have developed (McMillan, 2001). Assessment prompts and activities should encourage varieties of responses and creative or unique interpretations. To guide learning and to support unique student demonstrations of learning, teachers should create easily understood rubrics and give these rubrics to students before demonstrations of learning begin (Tileston, 2004). Rubric criteria should provide the basis for making evaluations that are clear and defensible (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2003; Sabol 2004a, 2004b). Criteria should capture the most significant aspects of what was taught and what students must demonstrate in their assessment responses (Sabol 2004a, 2004b). Rubrics, checklists, or other means of evaluating student performances should allow for a range of responses and demonstrations of learning and include differentiated means through which students may respond.

Principle 7. Assessments must be easy for students to understand and for teachers to administer. (Understandability)

Quality assessments have clearly stated procedures, directions, and expectations. Assessments must provide students with sufficient guidance and specificity that enable them to focus their demonstrations of learning on targeted outcomes and instructional objectives (Sabol, 2009; Stiggins, 2017). Students should fully understand expectations and in what form their demonstrations of learning should be produced before they begin assessments (Popham, 2003; Sabol, 2009). Teachers should be able to administer assessments easily and with little need to redirect or clarify tasks after the assessment begins. Storage of student products and other data should be easily accessible and manageable so that teachers can analyze and report assessment findings.

Principle 8. Assessment data and results should be used to inform students and to guide curriculum development, teaching performances, and assessment evaluation. (Diagnostic Capability)

Assessment results must provide clear indisputable indications of student achievement. Students should receive their results in a timely and efficient manner (Dean et al., 2012; Marzano, 2006, 2017). Assessment feedback should be constructive and clearly communicate the following: (1) areas in which students achieved acceptable performances so that strengths can be built upon and (2) areas needing improvement so that problems can be addressed. Feedback should enable students to better understand areas in which they need improvement with suggestions for improving learning (Dean et al., 2012; Marzano, 2006). Assessment results also should be used for determining the collective or aggregated performances of groups of students or classes and for comparing individual or group performances.

Assessment results should be used for diagnostic purposes. They provide indicators for measuring the quality of curriculum, instruction, and assessments, and offer opportunities for teachers to evaluate effectiveness of the curriculum and its impact on student learning. Assessment results also deliver indicators of the quality of instruction teachers provided and present opportunities for changes, if necessary (Marzano, 2017). In addition, results should be used to evaluate the

effectiveness of the assessments. They yield data that can be helpful in evaluating the strengths, weaknesses, and appropriateness of the assessment methods, instruments, and processes used. Teachers can use assessment results to support decisions about whether curriculum, instruction, or assessments should be revised, continue to be used as implemented, or be discontinued (Marzano, 2017; Sabol, 2004a, 2004b, 2009; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).

Principle 9. Assessment methods and tools should vary. (Variability)

One crucial assessment decision art educators make is in their selection of assessment methods or tools through which students' learning will be measured. Teachers need to know the attributes of various assessment methods when determining which assessment is appropriate and best for measuring what was taught (Dorn et al., 2004; Marzano, 2017). Numerous assessment methods and tools, such as traditional pencil-and-paper tests, may be used to measure a narrow or specific range of knowledge, and may successfully provide baseline evidence of artistic knowledge and rudimentary thinking skills that demonstrate initial learning in the visual arts.

Contemporary assessments have shifted to having students complete a performance task, rather than selecting from among provided responses (Montgomery, 2001). Authentic assessments require students to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and processes normally used by artists and other art professionals working in real-world conditions to solve problems (Burke, 2005). Timing of assessments should reflect an ongoing plan to identify students' progress toward meeting curriculum goals and objectives. Assessments should be conducted during learning activities (formative) as well as at the conclusion of learning activities (summative) to gain perspectives about the scope and levels of students' learning and acquisition of knowledge, skills, and processes. Using numerous methods of assessment can offer a more comprehensive understanding of the ranges and depths of student learning.

Principle 10. Students have rights and responsibilities as participants in assessments. (Accountability)

Students should be treated with respect in all aspects of the assessment process so that confidentiality and privacy are protected and opportunities for educational development are enhanced (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2003). Students' individual and personal needs should be taken into account during all stages of assessment, regardless of individual characteristics or special group status, to ensure that any educational need is being met. Students have a right to be assessed by means that meet or exceed standards of technical quality, fairness of administration, and accuracy in reporting results. Students should receive in advance explanations about the nature of the assessment, the intended uses of assessment results, and the confidentiality of their assessment results (Dorn et al., 2004). The greater the consequences are for assessment results, the greater the importance of insuring that the student is fully informed and voluntarily agrees to participate (American Educational Research Association, et al., 2014). Students have a right to understand assessments and to easily access their results (Dean et al., 2012). They also have the responsibility to participate in assessments with ethical, honest, and sincere actions. Students must be informed that divulging confidential assessment content, arranging for someone else to take the assessments for them, or cheating in any form is inappropriate and will result in sanctions or negative consequences.

Conclusion

The assessment principles discussed here are not comprehensive or exhaustive. Additional principles and subcategories of principles exist and should be explored as assessment programs undergo revision and development. These principles are intended to provide general frames of reference for art educators to consider as they create and develop assessment programs for their schools and classrooms. No single principle outweighs another, and the order in which principles are discussed does not reflect a priority. When consistently and collectively used, these principles provide a foundation for objectively assessing students' learning and performances in art education programs. ∎

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SECTION III

Planning and Implementing Visual Arts Assessments

Aligning Learning Objectives and Assessment Methods in the Visual Arts

Leslie Gates

"By considering how specific types of learning are demonstrated, teachers can create formalized assessment methods that are valid indicators of student achievement."

This White Paper offers a framework for art educators to evaluate the alignment of their assessment methods and goals/objectives for student learning. This effort is an attempt to develop "understandable guidelines" for classroom assessment (Gruber & Hobbs, 2002, p. 16), specifically attending to the issue of validity. Assessments are valid insofar as they produce the evidence required to evaluate whether and/or to what degree a student has met the intended learning goal; in other words, the assessment measures what it is supposed to measure.

Background

In 1966, Elliot Eisner observed that measuring students' progress based on a set of educational objectives was commonplace in education but uncommon in art education. He stated that if this type of evaluation were employed in the teaching of art, "it would require first a clear formulation of objectives for each activity included in the art curriculum" and for those objectives to "be so clearly stated that they would be useful in determining if the objectives have or have not been achieved" (pp. 384-385). A decade later, Eisner observed how a desire for accountability and efficiency required a more adequate conception of evaluation in the arts and called for assessments that were "suited to the purposes [they are] intended to serve. No one procedure or type of data is good for everything" (1974, p. 5). The assessment work required of the field at that time—from creating valid assessments of an individual child's growth over time to creating valid large-scale assessments of learning in the arts—was significant given that informal assessment practices were the norm in most art classrooms.

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What transpired in the two decades that followed was a national movement toward standards, objectives, and large-scale assessments. In 1994, President Bill Clinton signed the Goals 2000: Educate America Act that, in part, established the importance of the arts as a discipline of study alongside subjects such as math, language arts, and science. This policy context served as a catalyst for the development of the National Standards for Arts Education and, shortly thereafter, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Assessment of Arts Education. Jerome Hausman (1994) observed that art teachers' informal evaluations of students with "no paperwork or record keeping" would need to be formalized, noting, "Attitudes toward evaluation are undergoing dramatic change" (p. 9).

Compared with other subjects, art education has done little in publishing work specifically related to assessment (cf. Gruber & Hobbs, 2002). Art education scholars who have attended to assessment appear to have focused primarily on large-scale assessments. When Elliot Eisner and Michael Day released *The Handbook of Research and Policy in Art Education* in 2004, the assessment chapters dealt almost exclusively with large-scale assessments. However, in Eisner's own words, "While such tests might be useful for comparing large groups, they are of little use for evaluating individual achievement. And it is the individual child and not the statistic abstraction that the teacher faces" (1966, p. 385).

Rationale

We are now in an era in which teachers are required to formulate clear objectives and to design assessments to determine if and to what degree students have achieved those objectives. The following segments of this White Paper provide practical suggestions for increasing the validity of assessments in the visual arts by employing a variety of assessments that are well-aligned to learning objectives.

There are two situations that have repeated themselves enough times in my career for me to consider this topic of alignment worthy of special attention. One situation occurs when I read lesson plans with diverse and worthwhile learning objectives and discover they have a sole assessment method of the teacher assigning a final grade to an artwork. This is problematic because final products are only able to serve as evidence for certain types of learning objectives and leave teachers with insufficient evidence for assessing student achievement on the diverse and worthwhile learning objectives that appear in lesson plans (Willis Fisher, 1994, p. 33). The second situation occurs when teachers, overwhelmed by the nature of assessing learning in the arts yet required to produce quantitative data for reporting purposes, start to privilege aspects of learning in the arts that can be counted (Gates, 2017). Hausman identified one consequence of such action: Learning is reduced to activities "that bear little or no resemblance to art" (1994, pp. 14-15). For instance, basing a grade on how many sketches the student created or how many colors the student used may indicate more about whether the student followed (the teacher's) directions than it does about the quality of the work the student produced. An explicit consideration of learning goals and related methods for collecting evidence of student achievement can provide teachers with a renewed sense of purpose in their instruction and assessment practices.

Learning Objectives

A worthwhile starting point for aligning learning objectives and assessment methods is identifying the type of learning that needs to be assessed. Some objectives may be mandated in academic standards and/or curricula, while others are written unilaterally by teachers or constructed by/with students. Learning objectives, regardless of whether they will be applied in AP Art History, a painting unit for elementary students, a choice-based middle school classroom, or a field trip to a museum, can be categorized into one of four types of learning: knowledge, reasoning, skill, and product. Table 1 provides an explanation and example for each type of learning objective, taken from a 4th-grade unit about abstraction. The example objectives are written as "I can" statements that students can read and understand.

Table 1. Types of Learning Objectives

Learning Objective Type and Key Words	Explanation	Example
Knowledge Know, list, identify, understand, explain	Knowledge targets represent the factual information, procedural knowledge, and conceptual understandings that underpin each discipline or content area.	I can define the words "abstract" and "nonobjective."
Reasoning Predict, infer, summarize, compare, analyze, classify	Reasoning involves thinking and applying—using knowledge to solve a problem, make a decision, etc.	I can summarize reasons why some artists might work abstractly.
Skill Demonstrate, pronounce, perform	Skill targets are those where a demonstration or a physical skill-based performance is at the heart of learning.	I can show you at least three ways to take a realistic picture and make it more abstract.
Product Create, design, write, draw, make	Product targets describe learning in terms of artifacts where creation of a product is the focus of the learning target.	I can draw an object six times with different degrees of abstraction. This means some of the drawings are more abstract than others.

Note: Adapted from Chappuis, Stiggins, Chappuis, and Arter (2012).

Classifying learning objectives by type may seem meaningless. However, I believe there are at least two valuable reasons for doing so. First, classifying our learning objectives allows us to assess and improve the diversity of the learning we expect of our students within a unit of study and/or over a course of study or period of time. Second, classifying our objectives helps us identify which assessment methods are the most valid and efficient for collecting/documenting evidence of student achievement.

Aligned Assessment Methods

Learning in the arts is rich and complex, and as a result, "no single kind of assessment can provide a representative and accurate measure of student learning in art" (Gruber & Hobbs, 2002, p. 16). Richard Stiggins (2005) proposed that assessment methods can fall into four categories: selected response, extended written response, performance, and personal communication. Table 2 shows Stiggins's analysis of whether each type of assessment provides suitable evidence for the four types of learning outcomes outlined in the previous segment. The information in Table 2 can inform which types of assessments are appropriate for collecting evidence of whether students had met the various learning objective examples in Table 1. For instance, the most efficient assessment for the knowledge objective "I can define the words 'abstract' and 'nonobjective'" would be a selected response measure, perhaps in the form of a short written quiz, a quick ticket out the door, or a technology-based assessment tool such as Kahoot. In these instances, students select the correct definition for each word and the teacher would have evidence of whether each student achieved the learning goal. In contrast, the reasoning objective "I can summarize reasons why some artists might work abstractly" would require an extended written response or personal communication with specific lines of questioning. By considering how specific types of learning are demonstrated, teachers can create formalized assessment methods that are valid indicators of student achievement.

Balancing Quantitative and Qualitative Assessment Methods

This White Paper exists in a section of papers tasked with balancing quantitative and qualitative assessment methods. Examples of each include the numeric results of surveys or tests (quantitative) and observations of students at work or interviews with students about their artwork (qualitative). I contend that the most logical way to balance these approaches is to (1) seek a diversity of learning outcomes that represent the complex and sophisticated nature of learning in the arts and (2) employ a diversity of assessments aligned to those outcomes. A multiplicity of assessment methods occurs naturally when they are aligned to diverse learning objectives.

Selected response items produce data that are typically quantitative in nature, while extended written responses, performance assessments, and personal communication typically produce qualitative data. However, if quantitative data are required for reporting purposes, descriptive statistics are one way to report qualitative data that are generated from much of the assessment of learning used in the arts (cf. Gates, 2017, for specific examples).

Conclusion

Categorizing learning objectives and aligning them to appropriate assessment methods may initially seem antithetical to the creative and emergent nature of learning in the arts. However, clarity of purpose does not necessitate rigidity. "Clarity of purpose is more likely to be useful in the selection of activities designed to reach certain ends than purposes which are diffuse. Clarity of purpose and efficiency in means are desired in the academic areas; it seems reasonable to aspire for no less in the teaching of art" (Eisner, 1966, p. 385). This White Paper gives art educators who aspire to engage in meaningful and valid assessment practices a starting point: examining the alignment of their learning objectives and the methods they use to assess student achievement of those objectives. ■

Table 2. Links Among Achievement Targets and Assessment Methods

Target To Be Assessed	Assessment Method			
	Selected Response	Extended Written Response	Performance	Personal Communication
Knowledge Mastery	Good match for assessing mastery of elements of knowledge.	Good match for tapping understanding of relationships among elements of knowledge.	Not a good match. Too time-consuming to cover everything.	Can ask questions, evaluate answers and infer mastery. However, a time-consuming option.
Reasoning Proficiency	Good match only for assessing understanding of some patterns of reasoning.	Written descriptions of complex problem solutions can provide a window into reasoning proficiency.	Can watch students solve some problems and infer reasoning proficiency.	Can ask student to "think aloud" or can ask follow-up questions to probe reasoning.
Skills	Not a good match. Can assess mastery of the knowledge prerequisites to skillful performance, but cannot rely on these to tap the skill itself.		Good match. Can observe and evaluate skills as they are being performed.	Strong match when skill is oral communication proficiency. Not a good match otherwise.
Ability to Create Products	Not a good match. Can assess mastery of knowledge prerequisite to the ability to create quality products, but cannot use to assess the quality of the products themselves.	Strong match when the product is written. Not a good match when the product is not written.	Good match. Can assess the attributes of the product itself.	Not a good match.

Note: Adapted from Stiggins (2005, p. 69).

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Assessment WHITE PAPERS for ART EDUCATION

A Snapshot of Portfolio Assessment

Amanda Galbraith and Bryna Bobick

"Digital portfolios… help in managing large quantities of work that need to be stored over time, and they allow teachers ways to access both their individual artistic growth and success of the art program. "

As states are continuing to refine teacher evaluation models, there are opportunities for student learning in the arts to be documented and connected with teacher evaluation. The Tennessee Portfolio of Student Growth in the Arts ("the Portfolio") has provided a new perspective on documenting the relationship between student growth and teacher evaluation in the fine arts. It also offers a reliable and rigorous process for art educators to generate an individual growth score and engage in data-driven reflective teaching practice.

Statutes concerned with the methods and purposes of assessment in art education classrooms differ between states. Charles Dorn, Robert Madeja, and Robert Sabol (2004) pointed out that a lack of an established purpose for formal and informal assessments paired with a lack of understanding about interpreting the assessment by art educators resulted in poorly structured and uncoordinated assessments with meaningless results. Dorn (2002) wrote that teachers, when they connected assessment directly to the content being taught, felt they were no longer required to perform according to someone else's rules. With those ideas in mind, this paper spotlights ways the portfolio assessment process in elementary art education is playing a vital role in the contemporary art education curricula in an elementary school near Memphis, Tennessee.

Tennessee's Department of Education (2017) teacher evaluation policy categorizes the fine arts as a non-tested academic subject and therefore prior to the portfolio, art educators were assigned a school-wide score generated from tested subjects as part of their teacher evaluation rating. The Portfolio allows fine arts educators to document and reflect on the work that students do in a way that previously did not exist. This documentation generates an individual growth score that replaces the previous school-wide growth measure. The Portfolio uses a purposeful collection of authentic student

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work artifacts that are grouped into four collections representative of the course load of the educator, based on the state's academic standards, and differentiated based on student proficiency. The art educator constructs each collection using authentic student work; scores each collection for growth using a state-approved, standards-based scoring guide; and then submits the collections using a blind review process to be scored against the same state-approved, standards-based scoring guide by a state-certified peer reviewer. Peer reviewers are art educators who are selected through an application process to participate in an annual certification training. Once the scoring process is completed, art educators receive a growth score for each collection as well as a summative score for the Portfolio.

Thomas Brewer (2011) pointed out that credibly assessing learning in the visual arts can be elusive and confusing. The same can be said for assessing and evaluating visual arts educators. Tracey Hunter-Doniger (2013) explained that a one-size-fits-all method of teacher evaluation is not the answer, especially for subjects like the visual arts. Also, art educators should not be grouped with other teachers for evaluations because their teaching curricula and circumstances are different. Portfolio assessment is one way to track an educator's progress and student achievement. It is important for all participants to have a clear understanding of the purpose, guidelines, and time to support the portfolio process. Administrators need to provide structured class time devoted to art education as part of the school day, so art teachers can teach and develop a portfolio of student work that can be used as a meaningful and valid assessment tool.

Strengths and Challenges

The Rise of Student Growth Models in Tennessee, a report released by the Tennessee Department of Education's Division of Data and Research (2017), found that the scores educators earned on their portfolio submissions aligned with their classroom observation scores. Approximately half of educators who used a portfolio received a higher growth score than they would have if they had used the school-wide growth measure. Further, educators who used a portfolio had slightly higher observation scores than their peers, and educators who used a portfolio did not demonstrate significantly different perceptions of the overall teacher evaluation process than teachers who were eligible but did not use a portfolio.

The Portfolio addresses the need for an individualized evaluation for art educators; however, the process faced challenges during implementation that required flexibility and new learning from educators and administrators who use the Portfolio. These challenges included (a) the adoption of a new online platform for the submission and scoring process after eight years with the original platform, (b) the revision of the scoring guide in preparation for the implementation of the revised Academic Standards for Fine Art, and (c) the delay in reporting of scores in the past since it is a priority in Tennessee that teachers with individual student growth data receive the scores within an aligned time frame. Despite these challenges, the Portfolio has continued to be a valuable tool for informing and impacting teaching practices in the fine arts.

Defining Portfolio

Fred Genesee and John Upshur (1996) and Ricky Lam (2017) noted that portfolio assessment is generally defined as a body of work kept by the individual to document their efforts, growth, and achievements in a continued process. Portfolios allow for individual interpretations and reflections and can be open-ended. In addition, Ayhan Dikici (2009) pointed out that portfolios are purposeful collections of student works reflecting the efforts, development, and successes of each learner. Portfolios provide opportunities for teachers to be evaluated through a process, not through standardized tests, which is often the case for other subjects.

In terms of digital portfolios, they allow for the documents to be assembled in any format as an alternative to a collection of actual artworks (Fitzsimmons, 2008). More educators are using digital portfolios because they help in managing large quantities of work that need to be stored over time, and they allow teachers ways to access both their individual artistic growth and success of the art program. Also, teachers find digital portfolios provide for easier, less time-consuming assessments and ways to track student, and in our case, teacher progress (Dorn & Sabol, 2006).

Student Growth Portfolios in Practice: A Snapshot of an Art Educator's Point of View

The Portfolio is broad enough to capture evidence of student learning across all fine arts content but specific enough to inform individual classroom practice. Constructing the Portfolio requires effort, time, and space to think reflectively about teaching and learning. This model relies heavily on teacher planning and reflective practice because it is grounded in student growth. Therefore, art educators must be intentional through all processes, including planning, classroom practice, assessing learning, and communicating with others about student learning in the arts.

From the point of view of an individual elementary art educator, using the Portfolio has most impacted the practice of this paper's co-author, Amanda Galbraith, in the areas of instructional planning and the organization of the classroom. Before using the Portfolio, this author often relied on a teacher-centered view of success without consideration to how successful the student artist felt when completing their work. The Portfolio has influenced this author to listen to student artists as they gain awareness of their own growth. Once more emphasis was placed on listening to the students reflecting on their work, the educator heard affirming statements such as this one from a 2nd-grade student: "I used to not know how to draw that much things but when I started doing that I got better and better."

Furthermore, there has been a shift in the ways this author structures class time to facilitate student ownership of learning. Considering that most elementary student artists have less than 20 hours of instruction per year before the portfolio deadline, it is vital that the art educator plan backward and begin with the end in mind (McTighe & Wiggins, 2012). This author focuses time thinking strategically and talking with other teachers and administrators about how to structure curriculum so that student artists in class

have opportunities to grow in the ways of creating, presenting, responding, connecting, and applying the studio habits. Additionally, this author intentionally examines the design of the student workspace and regularly incorporates flexible seating. This includes incorporating standing work areas, which allow space for students to work in smaller groups. This design facilitates more opportunities for students to engage more deeply with content across the standards' domains of create, present, respond, and connect.

## Encouraging Dialogue: Art Educators as Leaders in Developing Portfolio Models

Given our combined focus of teacher reflection and researching portfolios to inform practice, we find that the Portfolio creates additional opportunities to engage in conversations with both school and district administrators. Conversations between educators and administrators can occur throughout the process as portfolios are constructed and scores are received. Less than half of the districts in Tennessee that use the Portfolio for fine arts educators have fine arts administrators, which leaves most portfolio guidance conversations to school administrators, non-arts district administrators, and peer art educators. Resources such as an administrator guidance for portfolios document, a crosswalk between the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) evaluation system and the Portfolio, and a needs assessment have been developed through educator, administrator, and state collaboration.

As Tennessee educators implement the revised Academic Standards for Visual Arts (Tennessee Department of Education, 2019), there will be more opportunities for alignment between the Portfolio and the Model Cornerstone Assessments (MCAs) (National Core Arts Standards, 2019). A parallel between the two models is the emphasis on standards-based assessments that are embedded in instruction. The Portfolio allows teachers to design and implement assessments that measure student progress toward mastery of the standards. Unlike the MCAs, the teacher designs the standards-based assessments, evidence is collected at two points in time to demonstrate growth within a grade level or course, and evidence is collected for a small number of students using purposeful sampling rather than each individual student. Future research could further evaluate the impact of growth model portfolios and MCAs on educators' instructional design processes and student achievement of the standards.

In closing, this White Paper provides a snapshot of a portfolio assessment model and serves as a model for other states and regions to integrate what we have learned from the Tennessee Portfolio of Student Growth in the Arts. Through our research, we have learned that is important that all stakeholders maintain open lines of communication and keep abreast of current trends involving portfolio development. We are optimistic other states will involve art educators as leaders in developing portfolio models to assess and to facilitate student growth in the arts. ■

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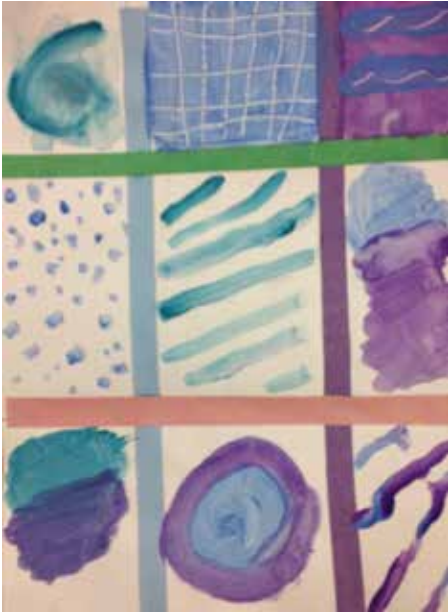
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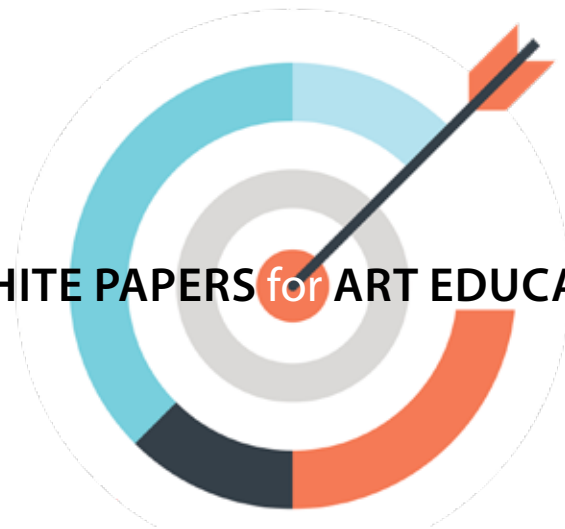
Assessment WHITE PAPERS for ART EDUCATION

The Untold Power of Internationale Baccalaureate Portfolio Assessment in the Visual Arts

Roger D. Tomhave

> **"The untold power of portfolio assessment strategies can be found in the collaborative discussion between students and teachers."**

Resurgence of Portfolio Assessments

Educators in the visual arts and other disciplines have long been advocates for portfolio development and assessment strategies that showcase advanced high school students' highest levels of achievement as well as their longitudinal growth in authentic ways. We have employed portfolio assessment strategies that increase expectations for student artistic achievement through clearly articulated formative and summative portfolio assessments (Arter & Spandel, 1991; Guzik, 2016; McTighe, 1997; Meisels & Steele, 1991; Pett, 1990; Sweeney, 2014; Tomhave, 1999).

Before the implementation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (2002) legislation, and the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, I undertook a quasi-experimental research study comparing assessment strategies for two well-known and highly accepted visual arts college-preparatory portfolio assessments: Advanced Placement Studio Art (AP) and Internationale Baccalaureate (IB) Art/Design (Tomhave, 1999). As the art supervisor for a school system with 25 high schools—12 offering AP Studio Art as an elective course, 12 offering an IB program, and one offering both—I estimated that AP assessment was more product-oriented and summative than the IB program, with limited external criteria and feedback for students along the way before images of student work were sent to the College Board. IB assessment strategies were more process-oriented and formative with recurring feedback in preparation for outside adjudicators viewing portfolios and research workbooks, and interviewing students (College Entrance Examination Board, 1993; Blaikie, 1994). I was curious to know what the results might be if one were to provide an experimental group of AP-enrolled students with IB

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instruction and portfolio assessments for an entire year and then enter these portfolios for AP assessment by College Board adjudicators. How would their scores compare with AP control group students and portfolios? Would there be discernible differences? I was also curious about teacher and student interactions over the course of the year in relation to the developing portfolios. How might these interactions affect the resulting portfolios? The study included three high schools that offer AP courses, three art teachers teaching these courses, and 12 of their students in the experimental group that received IB treatment for an entire school year. Six control group high schools that offer AP courses operated as usual. From the results of this study I am convinced that the untold power of the visual arts portfolio derives from mutually constructed teacher and student interactions.

This educational assessment story remained untold. My attention to portfolios had dramatically shifted while NCLB was in effect and I took on a broader role to oversee all arts programs in my district. The national focus on standardized testing reduced emphasis on portfolio and authentic assessments across all disciplines, and also impacted the visual arts (Chapman, 2004, 2005; Tomhave, 2014). Prior to NCLB, authentic assessments were highly valued and constructivist philosophies embraced. I continue to agree with Lori Shepard (1989):

> The notion that learning comes about by the accretion of little bits is outmoded learning theory. Current models of learning based on cognitive psychology contend that learners gain understanding when they construct their own knowledge and develop their own cognitive maps of the interconnections among facts and concepts… Real learning cannot be spoon-fed one skill at a time. (pp. 5-6)

In the visual arts we have long contended that our students need to be prepared for a world in which there are many shades of gray between correct and incorrect responses, and that there can be many correct responses depending on best fit, circumstances, and contexts. Responses may be personal, or broadly societal, but most importantly, students need to "find new ways of thinking and working through uncertainty" (Heath, 2014, p. 361).

Portfolios as Models of Authentic Assessments

Many educators have emphasized that children's learning must be demonstrated by "authentic" assessments that evaluate what children can do in actual or simulated applied situations. They oppose standardized test assessments that measure only how many bits of knowledge children can recall (Harris, 2014; McTighe, 1997; Potter, Ernst, & Glennie, 2017). The term authentic assessment refers to the practice of involving students in realistic evaluation of their own achievements. By definition, these assessments are performance-based, realistic, and instructionally appropriate (Pett, 1990). The portfolio is a record of the students' processes of learning: what students have learned and how they learned it; how they think, question, analyze, synthesize, produce, and create; and how they interact—intellectually, emotionally, and socially—with others. Portfolio assessments measure students' understanding of their ability to apply knowledge, skills, and concepts appropriately in new situations.

McTighe (1997) stated that like authentic problems, authentic assessments rarely have single, correct answers. Therefore, evaluations of student work must be based upon judgments guided by criteria. These criteria are typically followed by scoring tools such as rubrics, rating scales, or performance lists. These criteria should point to the evidence educators are willing to accept that shows students know, understand, or can do what was expected of them. The criteria also establishes that teachers can recognize the evidence when they see it.

Thoughtful assessment criteria and rubrics can be the key to student success in authentic formative and summative assessments. Determining the criteria that really matter in artmaking—including critical/creative thinking, skillful visual expression, historical knowledge, thoughtful analysis, synthesis of learning, artist statements, oral presentations—and then determining the descriptive rubric statements under each criterion matched to student skill development, knowledge, and performance, is a start to providing specific evidence of student levels of achievement. Longitudinal use of such collections will provide ample evidence of growth over time.

Regular Teacher and Student Interactions

My own study indicates that assessment criteria and scoring rubrics—provided prior to instruction and used routinely—seemed to lead to clearer student understanding of expectations when teacher and student negotiated the language of both criteria and rubric statements. Once negotiated, student achievement rose dramatically because the students and teachers understood each other. The consistent use of descriptive rubrics, defining levels of performance for specific artistic criteria in both formative and summative assessments seems critical.

For purposes of this research project, Internationale Baccalaureate assessment criterion and accompanying 5-point scoring rubrics were reformatted to allow for student self-assessment scoring with justifying comments, and teacher scoring with response comments for each criterion of assessment (Tomhave, 1999). The assessments were delivered by the art teacher at the end of each quarter of the course. Criterion assessed were Imaginative and Creative Thinking and Expression, Persistence in Research, Technical Skill, Understanding of the Characteristics and Functions of the Chosen Media, Understanding of the Fundamentals of Design, and Evaluation of Growth and Development (Internationale Baccalaureate, 1985).

At the time of this research study, AP art teachers in the three experimental schools were trained in the delivery of the IB Art/Design program, parents and students consented to IB treatment, IB curricula and evaluation criteria and scoring rubrics were delivered up front, and the use of IB criteria and rubrics was required throughout the yearlong process of portfolio development. Data from student self-assessment and teacher assessments were collected at the end of each quarter. In this way, the IB assessments were employed as formative and summative assessments.

The following are examples from the study of student comments and teacher responses for specific criterion in relation to scoring of the levels of achievement ranked 1-5. Written evidence in the student comments and teacher responses indicate that during the first and second quarters, students and teachers were trying to gain an understanding of what was meant by each criterion and rubric description.

Quarter 1 Student C1 (4) Comment:
I think that each one of my pieces has something good about it. I tried to use different mediums for my pieces, and I think I am getting pretty skilled with some of those media, especially colored pencils, and duct tape.

Quarter 1 Teacher C (3) Response:
(Note: The teacher circled research at the top of the page) "Research" refers to the study and observation of art by artists from history as well as other cultures. It is important to find your own "place in the world of art."

Quarter 1 Student C3 (4) Comment:
Let's hope I can do this stuff by now. [Another art teacher] taught everything to me first in Art 1, and you've been drilling in our heads ever since in Art 2, 3, 4, and AP. So geez, I hope I'm at least on the right track and semi-successful too.

Quarter 1 Teacher C (4) Response:
Make a conscious attempt to consider design AS YOU CREATE EACH PIECE, not just at the end.

Quarter 2 Student C4 (4.5) Comment:
I think that my brush strokes are confident and I knew what I was doing with these works.

Quarter 2 Teacher B (3) Response:
Reread this. I think that they are asking about a level of knowledge that enables you to make the selections of media for the purpose of a particular piece.

These student comments and teacher responses represent only a few examples of students and teachers negotiating how the rubrics will be applied for each of the criterion. Comparatively, later statements, such as those below, indicate student and teacher arriving at agreement.

Quarter 3 Student C1 (3) Comment:
I think that it is obvious when I have spent time on a piece, because the work I spend lots of time on has good technical skill. I definitely have the ability to create works with technical skill, but I don't always use that potential.

Quarter 3 Teacher C (3) Response:
I agree.

Quarter 3 Student C2 (5) Comment:
This quarter I tended to use media that I was comfortable with and thus I believe I was successful in understanding the dynamics of the media.

Quarter 3 Teacher C (5) Response:
This is a good assessment; set yourself a goal to work out of your comfort zone in at least one medium.

Quarter 3 Student C2 (5) Comment:
Having been in your class for 3.75 years, I feel it would be safe to say that I can produce work with good compositional qualities on a consistent basis.

Quarter 3 Teacher C (5) Response:
Thank you—it is nice to know the message got through.

Quarter 3 Student C5 (3) Comment:
I need to plan ahead and add finishing touches.

Quarter 3 Teacher C (3) Response:
I agree… really give "craftsmanship" the importance it is due.

Through four quarters of interactions, both student and teacher negotiate their understanding of the student work in relation to criteria and rubric descriptions. A less obvious piece of evidence for the developing agreement between student and teacher is present in the volume of writing that took place during the first and second quarters as opposed to the number of times that no comment or response seemed necessary in the third and fourth quarters. Though only a few examples are provided here, all data and discussion with the teachers indicated growing agreement between students and teachers in their interpretation of rubric statements. Also, the teachers stated that as the year proceeded, more discussion occurred verbally and informally than in writing. There was a marked convergence between student self-assessment and teacher assessment, as depicted in Figure 1, a graphic representation of quarterly assessments comparing total student self-assessment scores to total teacher assessment scores.

> **" The portfolio is a record of the students' processes of learning: what students have learned and how they learned it; how they think, question, analyze, synthesize, produce, and create; and how they interact… with others."**

It was telling to monitor student justifications and teacher responses each quarter as the rubric descriptors became clearer to the students. By the third quarter reality had set in—students and teachers were on the same page, and teachers reported high levels of achievement during the fourth quarter. This study indicated that these assessment methods not only led to authentic evidence of growth over time, but also led to higher levels of teacher scores on student achievement through better understanding of teacher expectations and negotiated interpretation of rubrics. The bar had been raised for student performance. Other study results indicated no significant difference in scores achieved between experimental and control group when reported by College Board adjudication, and no correlation between course grades given by teachers and College Board scores. Refer to Tomhave (1999) for full results of the study.
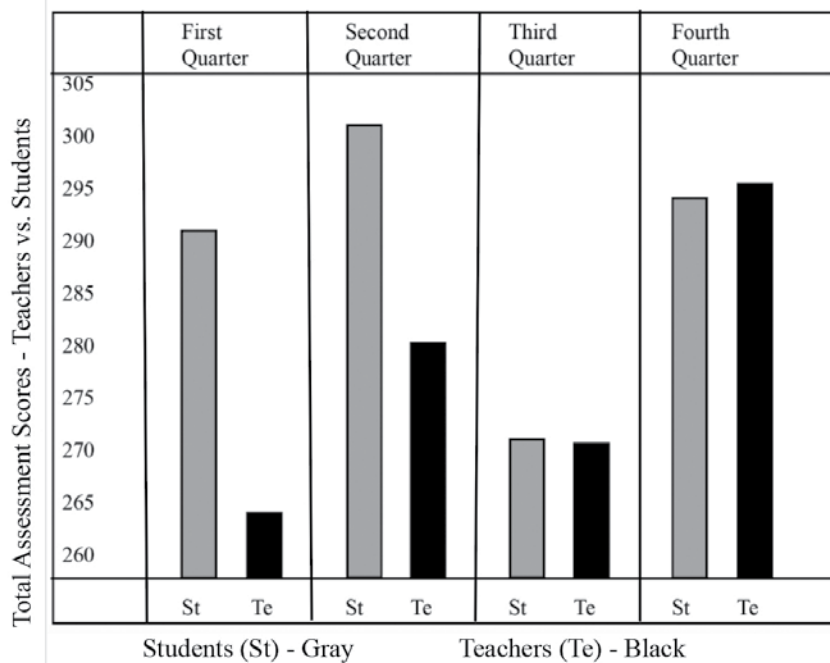
Figure 1. Student self-assessment vs. teacher assessment scores by quarter. Total of all student and teacher scores for each quarter (Tomhave, 1999).

Conclusion

In my estimation, the routine use of portfolio assessments in the visual arts results in authentic measures of longitudinal growth and the highest levels of achievement. In our renewed push toward authentic assessments, we should seize the opportunity to set in motion the kinds of portfolio assessment practices within our school systems that we know "assess student learning" (Gude in Sweeny, 2014, p. 10) and promote processes over products. The untold power of portfolio assessment strategies can be found in the collaborative discussion between students and teachers. Current student portfolios may represent many ways of working, media, themes, intentions, and visual expressions in both two-dimensional and three-dimensional form, but IB criteria cited here are recommended for encouraging high school students to develop authentic knowledge, skills, and dispositions relevant to the world of the working artist. ■

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Assessment WHITE PAPERS for ART EDUCATION

SECTION IV
Analyzing, Interpreting, and Reporting Art Education Assessments

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Components for Gathering and Using Assessment Data to Inform Instruction

Cris Guenter

"Our preservice teachers were doing well, but there was room for improvement, particularly in assessment and reflection of teaching practices."

The teaching performance expectations and assignments that preservice art teachers currently address in field experiences and in their coursework are designed to help them meet the expectations of being a quality art educator in the 21st century (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2009). These assignments may be very different from the assignments that art educators had in their preservice programs just a decade ago. Using tasks from a current preservice assignment, this White Paper will present information and how-to steps that provide essential understandings and relevancy about gathering and using assessment data and assessment procedures in a manner that is clear and supports practical perspectives for art educators.

Art educators in the 21st century need to be thoughtful in their curriculum planning, savvy in delivering highly engaging lessons, and cognizant of best practices in assessment. According to the Partnership for 21st Century Learning (2007), "[The] skills, knowledge, and expertise students should master to succeed in work and life in the 21st century include content knowledge, learning and innovation skills, information, media and technology skills, and life and career skills" (p. 1). Furthermore, assessments of 21st-century skills are noted as part of the critical support system to make sure students achieve these skills. Twenty-first century educators, including art educators, are characterized as being adaptive, lifelong learners, tech savvy, collaborators, forward thinking, and advocates (Cox, 2016).

Current preservice art teachers are being groomed to do and be these very things in their teaching. They are being asked to address assessment, its results, and next steps in their teaching performance assessments (TPAs) that lead to state licensure. When the initial push for TPAs began on my campus almost 15 years ago, the early results indicated

that our preservice teachers were doing well, but there was room for improvement, particularly in assessment and reflection of teaching practices. This insight triggered a need to redesign some instruction for better preservice teacher understanding and better state results. This effort over time led to six components that would help preservice teachers grasp how initial planning of a lesson and its instruction is directly connected to assessment and how that assessment can, in turn, influence further instruction and learning.

The Six Components

The six components are as follows:

1. Aligning lesson objectives and lesson assessment
2. Constructing strong rubrics
3. Collecting assessment data
4. Visualizing data
5. Analyzing data
6. Reflecting on next steps

Aligning Lesson Objectives and Lesson Assessment

The preservice teachers learn quickly and early on in the credential program that specific action verbs used in lesson objectives help them target what is being assessed and how they might collect the assessment data—formative and summative. Fisher and Frey (2011) explained this connection well when they asserted, "The key is to ensure that the assessments align with the purpose of the lesson" (p. 128). The idea here is that the selected assessment should provide information that helps to determine if the lesson objective has been met. An art critique assessment may provide information for a completed piece of art but would not necessarily serve to assess an art journal assignment.

Constructing Strong Rubrics

As a class, preservice teachers look at both holistic and analytic rubric examples and several ways to make the rubrics strong—including clarity in expectations and weighting priorities. They are challenged to answer what they will minimally accept for meeting each objective. If they know the answer to that, they can then build their rubrics starting with what they will accept. If student work is less than acceptable, then there will be gaps and the scoring column on the rubric is labeled something less than acceptable, perhaps "Needs Work." If student work provides more than the expectations for acceptable, then there will be enhancements and more details in the rubric column labeled with a term such as "Good" or "Strong." There may be additional columns in the rubric depending on the lesson objectives and expectations for mastery. Discussions and examples address the notion of including the students in the construction of the rubric and using the rubric for peer reviews, group reviews, and teacher feedback.

Collecting Assessment Data

Preservice teachers have already formed an initial understanding for formative (ongoing) and summative (culminating) assessments in a prerequisite course. However, there is great value in having them remind each other about the differences and how together these assessment approaches can help inform teachers about the ways in which teaching and learning are occurring.

Depending on the objectives, the collected data can "provide direct evidence of student learning" (Maki, 2002, p. 1) and can be in multiple forms. For example, spoken or written words, portfolios that demonstrate and monitor student growth over time, portfolios that showcase student development at a given point in time, course-embedded assignments, sections or requested prompts in an art journal, observations of student behavior and abilities, and visual demonstrations of techniques are all ways to gather assessment data.

> **"Their reflections on lesson assessment have expanded beyond daily notes about what occurred to include what will be done next to support and improve instruction for their students."**

Visualizing Data

What do preservice teachers do with data once they have it? In this area, they needed some guidance. Therefore, after the presentation, review, and discussion of different rubric structures, the preservice teachers are given an in-class exercise of two lesson objectives and assessment data for those objectives. They are shown how to create a bar or column chart in Word. Inserting a chart in a Word document automatically opens an Excel window into which the preservice teachers put assessment data for one of the two objectives. As they enter data into the appropriate spreadsheet cells, they can see how the data change the chart's display of the results in Word. (Refer to the step-by-step directions in the How to Visualize and Analyze Your Data section at the end of this paper. This approach also works with Google Docs/Sheets and Pages/Numbers.) Once the assessment data are in chart form, with proper labels, the preservice teachers have a much easier time reading and subsequently analyzing the data. Some preservice teachers are already aware of how to create a chart in Word with the use of Excel, but for the majority this exercise produces an "aha moment." Completing the chart takes only a few minutes, but it makes a huge difference in being able to interpret the data. By providing easy, clear steps for creating a chart in Word, preservice teachers have a straightforward way to produce a visual representation of the assessment data they have collected.

Analyzing Data

Using their newly created charts, preservice teachers are asked to analyze the data and provide written comments of the analysis. Their charts offer effective ways to tell the story of the data. They are asked to briefly discuss what the numbers tell them as an educator. What appears to be a strength? What are areas that need work? Are there any instructional concerns emerging?

Reflecting on Next Steps

Based on their written analysis, the preservice teachers are then asked to offer suggestions for what might be done to change or improve the lesson to support student learning. What could be added, rearranged, eliminated, or adapted in the lesson and its delivery? Marzano (2007) challenged educators to consider tracking student progress and provided two important questions to support this: "Will students be provided feedback (e.g., a quiz, test, or informal assessment) on an academic learning goal? Will students be asked to record or reflect on their progress on learning goals?" (p. 182). After working independently on their responses, the preservice teachers are put into small groups and asked to share their results and suggestions.

Converting their assessment data from lesson objectives into a chart gives preservice teachers a visual point of reference for thinking and reflecting on the strengths and areas of need for their students. The chart sparks responses that lead to thoughtful reflection about how to adjust their instruction. "The teacher's responsibility is connecting content, process, and product. Students respond to learning based on readiness, interests, and learning profile" (McCarthy, 2014, para. 3). Being able to adjust, realign, or redesign the learning as needed becomes part of the total process of teaching for these preservice teachers and directly aligns with the NAEA Position Statement on Instruction, Assessment, and Student Learning in the Visual Arts (2015) and the NAEA Position Statement on Pre-service Education and its Relationship to Higher Education (2014).

Since the introduction of the data assessment exercise assignment, the preservice art teachers demonstrate a better understanding of assessment. Their reflections on lesson assessment have expanded beyond daily notes about what occurred to include what will be done next to support and improve instruction for their students. The data assessment exercise may also have contributed, in part, to increasing the preservice teachers' scores on state teaching performance assessments for licensure.

Current preservice art teachers are already well into the 21st century. Considering 21st-century educators, Gasoi and Hoffman (2017) asserted that "teaching and assessing skills gained through the arts, as well as other creative processes across other disciplines, will become the norm" (p. 1). This notion is not new. Robinson (2005) and Pink (2006) both emphasized the importance of our students having the ability to be creative and flexible; work with a variety of tools, including digital media; think globally; and collaborate well with others. The norm is here. ■

Assessment Data Exercises

Note: The following exercises are aligned with content standards found in Curriculum Development and Supplemental Materials Commission. (2004). Visual and performing arts framework for California public schools, kindergarten through grade twelve. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education. (Standards, current when this paper was originally written, have since been updated, but the process remains the same.)

Visual Arts

Objective 1: Principles of Design

Artistic Perception: Each student will be able to accurately **locate** and then **explain** verbally at least three of the seven principles in a selected work of art (1.1, 1.2). Quantitative components.

Assessment, Objective 1: Assessed using selected image and written online responses via Google Classroom.

Class size: 27 students

Assessment Data Results, Objective 1: Basic Explanations Written Work

1. Locate
   Needs work–14, Acceptable–10, Strong–3

2. Verbally Explain
   Needs work–17, Acceptable–8, Strong–2

Visual Arts

Objective 2: Painting

Creative Expression: Each student will be able to **demonstrate** skillful **use of line, shape, and color** in an original acrylic painting (2.1). Qualitative components.

Assessment, Objective 2: Assessed with an analytic rubric addressing the skill levels demonstrated for line, shape, and color in an acrylic painting.

Class size: 21 students

Assessment Data Results, Objective 2: Studio Art Assignment Rubric

1. Use of Line
   Needs work–5, Acceptable–9, Strong–7

2. Use of Shape
   Needs work–8, Acceptable–8, Strong–5

3. Use of Color
   Needs work–11, Acceptable–7, Strong–3

How to Visualize and Analyze Your Data

Task: Create a chart in Word (which opens an Excel spreadsheet) and replace the sample words and data in the Excel spreadsheet with the assessment information from the provided lesson objectives. As these changes are made they will automatically show up on the chart in the Word document. Use the sample lesson objectives and assessment data for either Objective 1 (Obj. 1) or Objective 2 (Obj. 2) and do the following:

1. Create a chart that depicts the findings of the data for the given objective. In your Word document, place your cursor where you want the chart to appear.

2. Word ⟶ Insert ⟶ Chart ⟶ Column (defaults to column chart)

   *Note: The chart template can be changed later, if desired.*

   An Excel window will automatically open. Both Word and Excel are open.

   The chart is in Word and its data connection is in Excel.

   a. Delete Category 4 row.

   b. Replace Series 1, Series 2, and Series 3 with Needs Work, Acceptable, Strong

   c. Replace Category 1 with Locate (Obj. 1) or Use of Line (Obj. 2). Replace Category 2 with Verbally Explain (Obj. 1) or Use of Shape (Obj. 2). Replace Category 3 with Use of Color (Obj. 2).

   d. Insert the correct data numbers below.

   e. Your chart will automatically update in your Word doc as you make changes in Excel.

   f. Add a chart title (for Obj. 1, use Principles of Design 1; for Obj. 2, use Painting Line, Shape, & Color).

3. Analyze the data. Briefly discuss what the numbers are telling you as an educator. What are students' strengths? Which areas need work? What are your instructional concerns? What, if any, changes are necessary?

4. Based on your analysis, reflect and offer suggestions for what might be done to change or improve the lesson. What could be added, rearranged, eliminated, adapted, or considered for further options in student choices?

In the space below the chart, respond to questions 3 and 4 with at least one thoughtful, well-written paragraph. Then, if working in a group, pair share with your group when instructed.

Completed Sample Charts
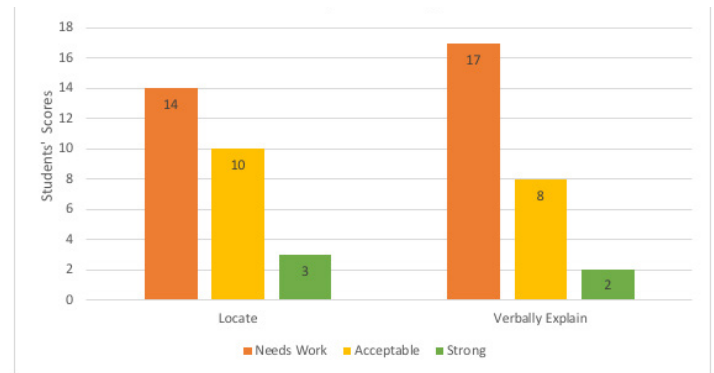
Sample column chart for Objective 1: Principles of Design
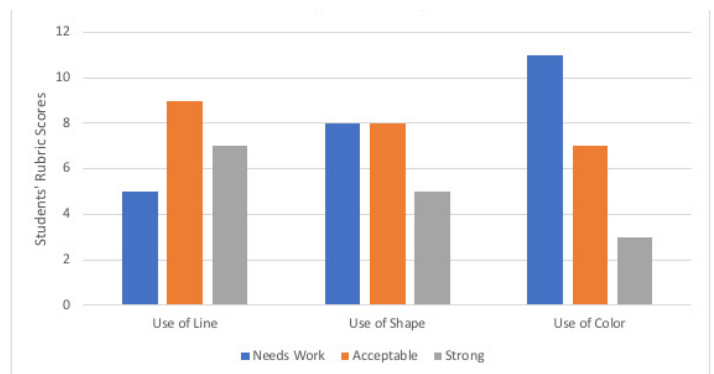
Sample column chart for Objective 2: Acrylic Painting

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Assessment WHITE PAPERS for ART EDUCATION

A Participatory Model for Assessing Teacher Candidate Dispositions

Leslie Gates

> "If I believed dispositions were important, then I needed to offer students opportunities to grow in this area—based on assessment and feedback— throughout the program."

This paper provides a brief literature review related to dispositions and offers an assessment model that engages art teacher candidates in collecting and analyzing evidence of their professional dispositions. Engaging teacher candidates in *assessment as learning* simultaneously serves as one model for assessing studio habits and/or other dispositions of preK-12 students.

Dispositions

Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick (2008) promoted habits of mind as perhaps the most important skills students will take from classrooms into the 21st century. Additional lists of dispositions (e.g., Pink, 2005; Tough, 2012; Wagner, 2012) have become abundant in educational literature. The most useful definition of dispositions I have found is "a cluster of preferences, attitudes, and intentions, plus a set of capabilities that allow the preferences to be realized in a particular way" (Salomon, 1994, as cited in Costa & Kallick, 2014, p. 19). Words commonly used synonymously with dispositions include *habit*, *tendency*, *capability*, *mind-set*, and *aptness*.

There are various types of dispositions. Some dispositions/habits, such as the habits of mind (Costa & Kallick, 2008), are "thinking dispositions," while others are "habits of the heart" (Lines & White, 2013) or "professional dispositions" of respective fields (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2013). Some lists, such as the Studio Habits of Mind (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2013), are thinking dispositions that relate strongly (although not exclusively) to specific content areas.

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Beyond articulating dispositions, these scholars strongly emphasize their value. For instance, Hetland et al. (2013) stated that although the Studio Habits of Mind were not explicitly being taught and thus part of the "hidden curriculum" in art classes, these "important kinds of cognitive and attitudinal dispositions" are the "real curriculum," significant to continuous learning in the arts and in other subjects (2013, pp. 6-7). In 2014, Costa and Kallick argued that there was agreement in the field of education on the essential nature of dispositions in teaching and learning, yet a large gap remained between that belief and an explicit focus on dispositions within curriculum, instruction, and student assessment.

Background

A few years ago, I realized this gap existed in the teacher education program I coordinate. Despite my personal belief in the importance of dispositions, the content of the art education methods courses I taught ignored dispositions almost entirely.

I knew dispositions were important because when tasked with writing student recommendation letters, I found myself relying heavily on evidence of student dispositions. A student's commitment to producing high-quality work, for instance, might set them apart from classmates more than grades, knowledge, or technical skills. In the world beyond college, wanting to work with a person seems just as important as being able to do the work. Recommendation letters are perhaps the most important (and typically final) assessment about each future teacher I work with. I consider these letters assessments because in them I cite evidence and make professional judgments about a student's abilities. I offer this type of evidence based on an assumption that their future employer or school believes "intelligent action in the world is what counts most" (Costa & Kallick, 2014, p. 2).

However, throughout their courses, students were not receiving feedback about their dispositions/habits with the regularity that they received feedback about their knowledge and technical skills related to both their teaching and artistic practice. This was especially true for students who displayed positive professional dispositions and thus raised no concerns among the faculty or cooperating teachers who worked with them. Typically, I attended to a student's dispositions only if they exhibited undesirable ones. Even then, such conversations were often difficult, in part because the dispositional expectations for our program were not formalized. Without clearly stated dispositional expectations, students were more likely to feel that the meeting was a personal attack based on my opinions rather than an educative conversation about areas of focus for professional growth. If I believed dispositions were important, then I needed to offer students opportunities to grow in this area—based on assessment and feedback—throughout the program.

Rationale

I was interested in attending more systemically to student dispositions, aligned with the university's accreditation effort. However, I was convinced there was value in changing my practice for reasons beyond the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) requirement to assess candidates' professional dispositions.[1] I wanted to (1) articulate more clearly to the students the dispositional expectations I have, (2) assist students in identifying and collecting evidence of such dispositions, and (3) engage students in analyzing their growth, including setting disposition-related goals. Moreover, I wanted this process to happen over time rather than as an episodic assignment that might have fulfilled the accreditation requirement but would likely have lacked the transformative nature possible if students were to engage in this work repeatedly.

Therefore, I decided that engaging students in assessment as learning would be well-matched to fostering the desired dispositions of teacher candidates. Assessment as learning "occurs when students reflect on and monitor their progress to inform their future learning goals" (Department of Education and Training, 2013, para. 2). This model was designed so that students' participation in the assessment was educative; my role was to engage them in the process, not to declare a final assessment of student dispositions and then reward or penalize students with a grade.

A Model for Assessing Dispositions/Habits

I knew I had to clearly articulate the desired dispositions of teacher candidates in the art education program. Even if your student population does not include teacher candidates, you can still consider the dispositions you desire of your students. The dispositions may already exist (such as the Studio Habits of Mind) or you may need to engage in a process of articulating others. I began by collaborating with a university administrator to review an existing university document that listed professional dispositions for teacher education candidates. I then incorporated minor revisions to make the list more specific to the art education program. Following a rally of White supremacists in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017 (and similar events throughout the country that promoted discrimination), I made one major revision to the list by adding language about students respecting the diversity and civil rights of others. This language was present in the state's Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1992) but was missing from the university's document at that time.

As a result, I authored the document "Professional Habits of Millersville University Art Education Students" that outlined five major dispositions/habits, each of which was supported with numerous examples of related actions. What follows are examples of each disposition and a related illustrative action.

Art educators communicate effectively.
- Example: We communicate individual needs and requests early to respect one another's time.

Art educators have a commitment to learning.
- Example: We exhibit curiosity about art and the profession of education.

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[1] The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) requires teacher education programs to "ensure that candidates use research and evidence to develop an understanding of the teaching profession and… measure… their own professional practice" (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, Standard 1, Component 1.2).

Art education students fulfill their professional responsibilities.

- Example: We fulfill commitments to our peers during collaborative tasks/assignments.

Art education students produce high-quality work.

- Example: We present our work with both confidence and humility, knowing we have worked hard toward specific goals and that experience and feedback will allow our ideas to evolve and grow.

Art education students respect the diversity and civil rights of others.

- Example: We are not silent; we take action when we identify institutional policies that perpetuate systemic injustice.

Next, I designed a way for students to engage in an ongoing assessment of their dispositions. In order for students to assess their own professional dispositions, they would need evidence. I decided that although I had some evidence based on my observations of the students in class and in the field, students had additional evidence. Engaging them in the process of collecting and documenting the evidence not only mirrored what would be required of them as teachers (collecting and documenting evidence of student learning), but allowed for a fuller understanding of their dispositions beyond what I could directly observe. As a result, I designed the following task:

Collect evidence of these habits-in-action and turn in a Collection of Evidence folder at multiple points throughout the semester.

1. Consider appropriate evidence. For each habit, ask, "How do I know it when I see it?" in order to identify what might constitute sufficient evidence of the various habits.

2. Collect documentation of the habits. Documenting the habits may require that you journal thoughts or write about experiences you have had. Other habits may require you to photocopy sketchbook pages, print emails, etc.

3. Organize and analyze your documentation. Use the five professional habits as an organizational tool to present the documentation. Analyze the documentation for strengths and areas of growth.

4. Reflect. Submit a brief reflection (one to two pages) on your professional habits and identify goals/areas for growth.

In this model, students curated collections of evidence (Figure 1) of their professional dispositions and then analyzed and reflected on whether and how the evidence demonstrated various professional dispositions. The students used this analysis to set professional goals. Depending on the student population you serve and the desired dispositions, the type of evidence will vary widely (e.g., recorded critiques, sketchbook pages, work that was abandoned). The process, however, is the same: Students analyze this evidence in relationship to the desired dispositions and use their analysis to set personal goals.

While students were collecting evidence, I also documented student dispositions by writing notes to myself in class. I designated a notebook in which I would quickly scribe things of note or quotes from students. I documented, for instance, "Ari wasn't afraid to
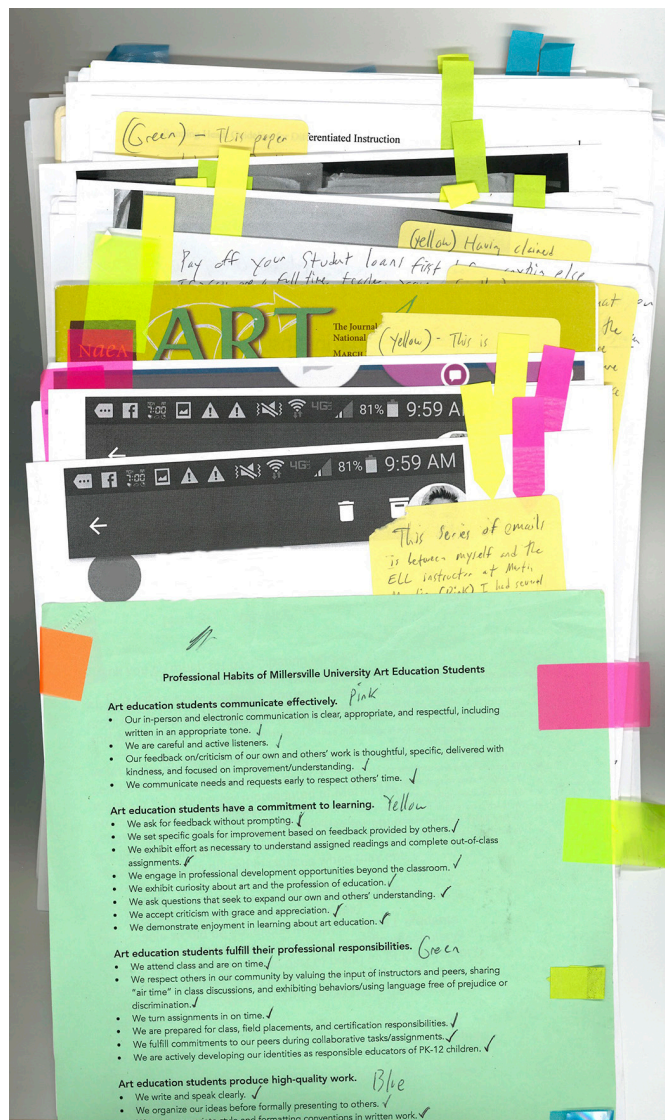

Figure 1. Collection of evidence. An example of evidence that one student collected, organized using colored tags, and annotated using sticky notes.

voice her opinion even when it disagreed with her classmates" and "Sarah seemed to demonstrate comfort with ambiguity and commitment to continuous learning when she suggested to another classmate, 'I don't think it's a bad thing to not have all the answers.'"

At multiple points during the semester, students submitted their growing collections of evidence and reflection statements and goals. In return, I added to their collection by offering my observations and responded to their goal statements. This created a continuous feedback loop between the students and me.

Assessment as Learning

In my experience, students who struggle to complete this assignment do so for one of two reasons. First, some students have difficulty determining acceptable evidence of habits. We lean into this challenge by thinking about the Studio Habits of Mind and working together to answer the questions "How do you know (the habit) when you see it?" and "How might you document that?" Students then apply

that thinking by asking the same questions about their professional dispositions. Using the Studio Habits of Mind provides a conceptual bridge for students and gives them practical assessment strategies for their future classrooms.

The second struggle occurs when students acknowledge the absence of these dispositions and/or the presence of less desirable dispositions. In one student's case, I previously struggled to communicate my concern about her spotty attendance, late work, and minimal engagement with assignments. When I rolled out this assessment process, something clicked for her. She wrote:

> This has been one of the hardest, yet most thought-provoking assignments I have had to date. While trying to gather evidence, I found it extremely hard to try and find physical sources for many of the categories. However, I went on to journal and write about many of the categories. In doing so, I raised and answered questions about myself that I have never thought of before. These questions are necessary for growth as a professional and an artist when asked at this point in my career; however, some of the answers to these questions were not in my favor if answered honestly. This assignment gave me an in-depth and honest look at my own habits, both good and bad, and it has opened up a pathway for improvement and further personal and professional growth.

This assessment as learning process contributed to substantial professional learning for this student and many others. Explicitly stated dispositions, students' participation in collecting and analyzing evidence of those dispositions, and continuous feedback have closed the gap between my belief in the importance of dispositions and the fostering them of dispositions in practice. ■

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Assessment WHITE PAPERS for ART EDUCATION

SECTION V
Visual Arts Assessments: Case Studies From the Classroom and Beyond

Assessing Children's Artistic Development Through Creative Response Journaling

Debrah C. Sickler-Voigt

"Journals offer tactile platforms for preservice art educators to exhibit their understanding of children's artistic development from their personal perspectives."

Preservice teachers are curious to know the methods practicing art educators employ to teach and assess students. When first studying children's artistic development, many feel amazed as they learn students' artistic capabilities and see how students can thrive under the guidance of effective art educators. Teaching a standards-based art curriculum skillfully and with care requires art educators to be familiar with developmentally appropriate media, processes, subject matter, and assessments. Art educators must also consider children's individual capabilities and personal interests, as all students are unique. To begin their journey in planning developmentally appropriate curricular tasks and assessments, I introduced preservice teachers to international children's artworks that span early childhood through adolescence and had them study diverse development theories (Duncum, 1997; Fineberg, 2006; Kindler, 2004, 2010; Kindler & Darras, 1997; Lowenfeld, 1947; Sickler-Voigt, 2020; B. Wilson, 2004; M. Wilson & B. Wilson, 2010). By examining children's artworks in conjunction with development theories, they could identify what developmentally appropriate children's artwork is and how learning outcomes can be influenced by students' cognitive, physical, and social/emotional development (College Board, 2012).

Background and Methods

The College Board's (2012) report on children's artistic development articulated the need for scholarship that addresses the correlation between contemporary arts education practice and the implementation of the National Visual Arts Standards. The report stated: "There appear to be fewer resources available that explain

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the ways in which the latest research in cognitive, social, and emotional development in children and young adults may inform the instructional practices of arts educators" (p. 4). Given this call to action, I applied for and received a full-semester sabbatical to conduct a case study for which I developed learning modules for teaching children's artistic development inspired by the National Visual Arts Standards and contemporary theories and practices in art education. I analyzed a database of over 10,000 children's artworks from more than 70 countries and designed modules that teach about artistic development in early childhood, middle childhood, early adolescence, and adolescence. Each module includes inspirational children's artworks, development milestones informed by current and established theories, and standards-based lesson plans and assessments. To share my scholarship with the greater public, I also created a multimedia website titled "Big Ideas in Children's Artistic Development" (https://arted.us/development.html).

> **"My study's primary question was: How do preservice art educators present and assess their understandings of children's artistic development through the development of creative response journals? I provided a member check to ensure that I represented their ideas correctly."**

This White Paper provides examples of how preservice art educators utilized journals to assess children's artistic development. Working with journals encouraged the preservice art educators to process the online resources on children's artistic development and make personal connections to educational theories, seek data from diverse sources, and retain and apply what they have learned (Sickler-Voigt, 2007). Such practices offer art educators the necessary skills to implement curricular possibilities that foster student creative productions based on their full artistic, cognitive, physical, and social/emotional abilities.

The preservice teachers compared how I organized my research and learning modules as advocated by the College Board (2012) with Lowenfeld's (1947) model of children's artistic development. Comparing and contrasting contemporary approaches in children's artistic development with Lowenfeld's model assisted preservice teachers in understanding how artistic development theories have evolved. I selected three journals from the class to study in further detail, based on their descriptive contents and varied styles, and conducted interviews with their makers, Becky, Bobby, and Emily, during the spring 2018 semester to learn the preservice teachers' insights and reflections after completing the project. My study's primary question was: How do preservice art educators present and assess their understandings of children's artistic development through the development of creative response journals? I provided a member check to ensure that I represented their ideas correctly.

Assessing Children's Art With Enlightened Eyes

Elliot Eisner (1998) cogently articulated how art educators should develop enlightened eyes to study our discipline: "In the visual arts, to know depends upon the ability to see, not merely to look" (p. 6). Preservice art educators must learn how to see and assess children's art with enlightened eyes. Seeing plays an important role in developing visual literacy skills. The Association of College and Research Libraries (2011) explained: "Scholarly work with images requires research, interpretation, analysis, and evaluation skills specific to visual materials. These abilities cannot be taken for granted and need to be taught, supported, and integrated into the curriculum" (para. 4).

The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (2014) writing team examined standards and arts practices from diverse countries to identify best practices in the visual arts. Similarly, the preservice art educators began their studies by assessing the qualities of international children's artworks from the virtual gallery I created so they could establish a baseline understanding of what children's art looks like at various ages and notice similarities and differences in their aesthetic choices, materials, and perceptions. The preservice art educators learned that quality art examples are not synonymous with being "flawless." All children should have creative choices, feel challenged, and be motivated to put forth their best efforts to make art. For their journals, the preservice teachers integrated examples of children's artworks from school observations, ones they created in their own childhood, artworks created by children they know, and ones from online children's galleries. Their collections represented what children at particular ages typically achieve. They remained cognizant that some students have advanced skills and others have not yet reached proficiencies that same-age peers have attained. Searching for visual representations of what children can achieve in early childhood, middle childhood, early adolescence, and adolescence became an informal assessment practice because the preservice art educators had to see and trust their intuitions as they selected representational examples of children's artworks. They began to recognize the distinct qualities they share with other children's artworks from the same or different ages. As they moved beyond their initial perceptions and informal assessments, the preservice art educators contemplated artworks' meanings, formal characteristics, and the guiding principles and/or big ideas that inspired their productions.

Self-Reflections Through Creative Response Journaling

A response journal describes learning tasks for which students (preservice teachers) respond to an instructor's prompts in a journal in written and artistic forms (Chappuis et al., 2012). Journals offer tactile platforms for preservice art educators to exhibit their understanding of children's artistic development from their personal perspectives. As Eisner (1998) explained: "Human knowledge is a constructed form of experience and therefore a reflection of mind as well as nature: Knowledge is made, not simply discovered" (p. 7). The response journal pages became spaces for preservice teachers

to transform their initial perceptions and decipher meanings from visual evidence, theories, and practices into new sources of information in artistic and written forms. The journal assignment offered sufficient structure to guide their self-reflective studies with a holistic scoring rubric and a checklist, while it provided open-ended choices for communicating their findings independently. The preservice art educators identified developmentally appropriate learning tasks that included art production activities and art inquiry methods. By having the freedom to choose their media, each page became a creative and self-reflective space to showcase their selection of children's artworks and present their personally driven understandings of children's artistic development.

"This sharing of information transformed the private act of journaling into social learning tasks. Seeing content in peers' journals sparked further idea development."

The preservice teachers actively shared their knowledge as a class through ongoing formative assessments. They reviewed classmates' in-progress journals and provided each other with feedback through scheduled "gallery walks" around the classroom before the journals were due for summative grades. I also communicated with them during these activities to provide informal feedback. This sharing of information transformed the private act of journaling into social learning tasks. Seeing content in peers' journals sparked further idea development. They asked each other questions and offered suggestions to emulate successful qualities and make improvements as needed. They interacted as a supportive community that learned and grew from each other's advice and creations. As articulated by Chappuis et al. (2012): "Long-term retention and motivation increase when students track, reflect on, and communicate about their learning" (p. 248).

Becky drew realistic children's portraits at various ages and illustrated theories as tangible evidence of children's capabilities (Figure 1). On her early childhood pages she drew a portrait of a young child and wrote: "Look at me! I can create scribbles & lines & shapes complete! Look at me! This is fun. Come draw and play 'til it's complete!" She explained how assessing children's artistic development through her journal helped her retain what she had learned better because she could transform abstract ideas into concrete products for long-term retention, a method that suits her learning style. Becky described how the project first came to life for her during a school observation when she readily identified characteristics of an early childhood artwork on display. The journaling process made her aware of artistic development criteria that she could use as a baseline when assessing artworks by same-aged children.

Figure 1. Rebecca "Becky" Fraser explored abstract ideas about children's artistic development theories through realistic drawing exercises.

Figure 2. Bobby Shuey collaged symbols (clocks, keys, and birds) that referenced childhood memories she shared with her grandmother beginning on the introductory page of her journal.

Bobby developed collaged journal pages with symbols and artifacts that represented childhood memories she shared with her grandmother (Figure 2). The collage process assisted her in organizing her ideas about development theories. She included numerous artworks that she created from early childhood through adolescence in diverse art media. She made connections through written reflections about the children she babysat and described how they "loved to get messy!" when painting. When teaching her first art lesson to 5- to 10-year-olds, she explained: "I could see all the different skill levels from the kids." Bobby noticed their various abilities as one student could string beads with greater ease than a classmate who was 3 years older. Her observation reaffirmed how each child has different abilities. She stated that incorporating her own art and that of children she knew "made it [the assessment experience] more personable."
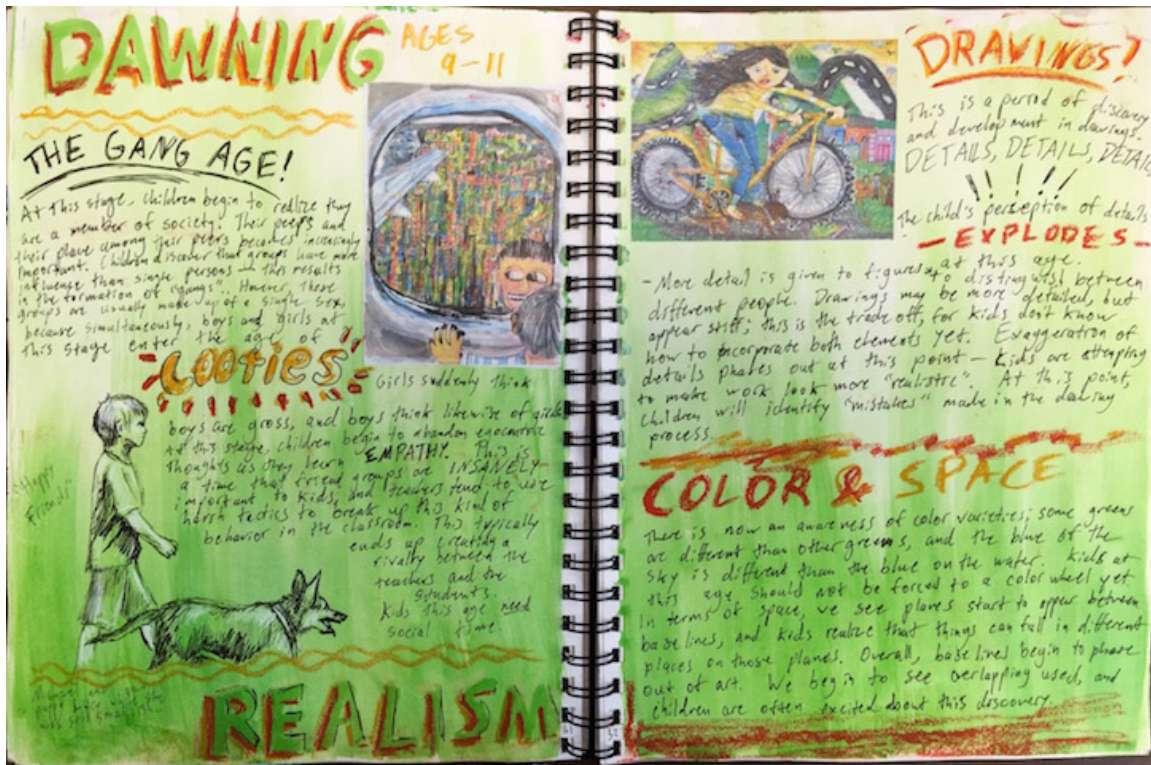
Figure 3. Emily James combined a sketch of her younger brother with ICEFA Lidice artworks and written reflections to study children's artistic development.

Emily included original sketches, art reproductions, and iconography to represent children's distinct ages. For example, she created a scribbled font to indicate early childhood and an elegant controlled one to represent adolescence. She regularly drew her younger siblings and described their characteristics (Figure 3). Growing up, her mother stressed the importance of family, and Emily decided to study her siblings for the project. "If I can see it in my siblings, I can understand it more," she explained. Reflecting on her brother's development, she noticed how movement was an integral part of his learning process and her own as well. Given this information, as a future art educator, she plans to incorporate learning centers throughout her classroom and encourage kinesthetic activities so that students will be able to move their bodies and remain on task as they learn.

Implications for Art Education

Having created response journal entries about children's artistic development with enlightened eyes and self-reflective mindsets, the preservice art educators produced concrete artifacts that they can continue to utilize to prepare developmentally appropriate art curricula and assessments that align with visual arts performance standards (National Coalition for Core Arts Standards, 2014). They discovered how producing visual representations in a single space was a viable means to study topics in art education in depth. Their creative investigations offered practical strategies to examine and interpret visual evidence, theories, and learning practices to understand what preK-12 students can achieve. The study demonstrated how exploring assessment possibilities through creative journaling is particularly useful for art educators who retain information best by transforming abstract ideas into concrete symbols and making personal connections that help them remember and apply what they

> **"Exploring assessment possibilities through creative journaling is particularly useful for art educators who retain information best by transforming abstract ideas into concrete symbols and making personal connections that help them remember and apply what they have learned."**

have learned. The journaling tasks encouraged self-reflection, a skill that can be applied to daily classroom practices, as well as teacher performance assessments and professional teacher evaluations. When asked to reflect on assessment in art education, the preservice art educators identified areas in which they would like to continue to grow. This included learning more about how to encourage preK-12 students to self-assess their own progress to feel personally connected to learning tasks and produce better quality outcomes. They also wanted to augment their fluency in aligning different types of assessments with diverse learning goals. The preservice teachers' quests to know more about assessment can serve as stimuli to develop further studies that link assessment theories and practices with creative response journals. ■

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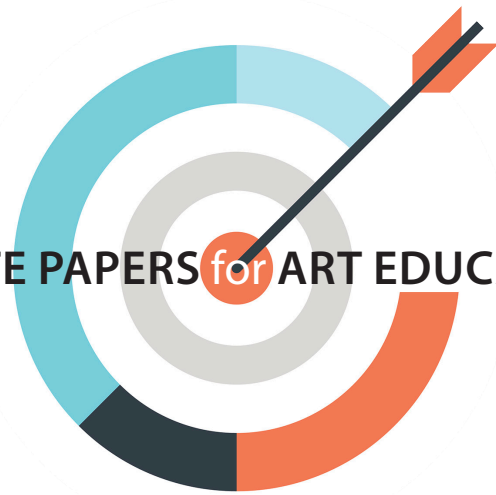Wilson, M., & Wilson, B. (2010). *Teaching children to draw* (2nd ed.). Davis.

![NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION]

Assessment WHITE PAPERS for ART EDUCATION

SECTION V
Visual Arts Assessments: Case Studies From the Classroom and Beyond

Poetry as Embodied Self-Assessment for Visual Art Learning

Jun Hu

"Poetry can provide the visual arts with an embodied aesthetics that combines artistic qualities with depth of critical thinking for students."

Proposing that poetry can make complex thinking sensible and holistic, I use six Chinese couplets for assessment purposes and indicate six steps for art learning that was developed during an annual field trip course that is part of our art teacher training program with around 40 undergraduate students at Hangzhou Normal University (HNU), China, every spring term since 2015. The course is approximately 3 weeks long and we travel 5,500 kilometers along a route rich in cultural heritage and natural wonder known as the historic Silk Road. Working within the framework of the field trip's tight schedule, each student studied an individual aesthetic experience that linked their creative artmaking strategies with practical pedagogical applications (Hu, 2018).

Student poetry played a significant role in our summer course. All six couplets that the students applied to create their poems take water-and-moon as their metaphor and are written in a symmetrical pattern. This is a unique feature of classic Chinese poetry that is attributed to the square shape of Chinese characters and their single syllable pronunciation (without exception). Visually and acoustically structured through symmetrical formalization, a Chinese couplet is called Duilian (对联). It literally means *contrast linking*, and when differences are intuitively discerned out of the sameness, it provides immediate meaning-making, which extends beyond language and linguistics. Thus, during the visual art learning process, its poetic effect offers students a form of embodied aesthetics (White, 2011, p. 145) that can be a tool for intuitive self-assessment.

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Poetry as Assessment With Historical Connotations

Self-assessment is crucial to visual art learning. Firstly, because the art experience is personalized, any external assessment is insufficient and deficient; secondly, because an individual's creativity is inexhaustible, any acquired criteria of assessment are too static for an open-ended process that is multidirectional and with infinite possibilities. During a recent curriculum reform I applied poetry as a means of self-assessment and realized that it activates embodied aesthetics through metaphors. I think this is possible because it is conceptually pliable within its poetic ambiguity.

For a thousand years of rich cultural history, Chinese artists have taken "poetry as hidden painting, and painting as visual poetry" (Guo Si, 11th century; trans. Lin, 1969, pp. 81–92[1]). This tradition has culminated in Literati Painting, the highest genre of traditional Chinese art, by cherishing Poem-Calligraphy-Painting in one piece of work, which very often understood poetry to indicate depth of learning, intellectual maturity, and creativity of the artist. In line with this tradition, poetry served as assessment for visual art learning. For example, as recorded in Ching Hao's "A Conversation on Method" (10th century; trans. Lin, 1969, p. 92[2]), when the old master decided to test the learner's maturity in painting, the master assigned him the task of improvising a poem. Therefore, my question is: Can this tradition be revived in a contemporary context?

I propose that poetry can provide the visual arts with an embodied aesthetics that combines artistic qualities with depth of critical thinking for students as they learn to use this form of self-assessment throughout the learning process.

For the field trip course experiment, I designed a curriculum that included six steps of learning that comprise three rounds of turn and re-turn, or, said another way, three rounds of divergence and then convergence: Each lead to students' critical thinking. For students' self-assessment of each step, I either wrote a classic couplet or borrowed one from a great ancient poet with the metaphors of the moon and water that denote an experience (Dewey, 1934) through poetic effect.

The curriculum encourages a student's desire to make sense of an extraordinary aesthetic experience during the trip. Often these were happened while viewing an ancient artwork, a natural wonder, a craftwork made by local artisans, or even a local food, as long as it aroused in them enough curiosity to inquire, to make art, and to develop an art teaching strategy (Hu, 2018, p. 22).

Step 1. Introspection:

止流为鉴，不劳拂拭

Still running water for reflection,

doing away with the trouble of wiping a mirror.

The student reviews the process of how an extraordinary aesthetic experience comes into being. To get there, the student needs to reach beyond the capacity of language or linguistics that affords a flow of concepts, and instead has to open up to memory by reactivating their embodied experience both in the past and at the present.

Step 2. Enduring understanding:

沧海独渡，唯见明月

Sailing alone on boundless sea,

you see the moon brighter than ever.

Once it is remembered how the conditions of that aesthetic experience came into being, the student needs to remember the experience through their bodily memories and write about these memories. These are typically represented through a line of a sentence with minimum words (a poem is encouraged).

Step 3. Connecting to the art world:

三潭印一月，非一亦非异

Three reflections of the moon in three pools,

they are neither the same nor different.

The assignment here is to search art history and visual culture artworks that activate the same or similar aesthetic experience under certain kinds of conditions, but in a heterogeneous context.

Step 4. Artmaking experiment:

一月映三江，"千里共婵娟"（宋·苏轼）

Reflected in different bodies of water,

the same moon is looked up at by people thousands of miles apart.

(The latter part by Shu Shi, Song Dynasty)[3]

Instead of searching for historical artworks as in the previous assignment, the student activates the same aesthetic experience by their own lived act of personalized artmaking.

Step 5. Elegant problem:

"举杯邀明月，对影成三人"（唐·李白）

"I raise my cup to the Moon for her to join me.

With the Moon, my Shadow, and I: We're people three."[4]

(Li Bai, Tang Dynasty)

The assignment is to distinguish and synthesize the conditions of the previous artmaking process into a workable prompt for art teaching, such as "Use__ to __ so that__," including the measures (what tools and material to use), the strategies (how to process), and the goal (what aesthetic experience to activate).

Step 6. Workshop experiment:

"此时相望不相闻，愿逐月华流照君"（唐·张若虚）

She sees the moon, that her beloved is seeing, too;

She wishes to follow the light beam to shine upon her beloved one's face.[5]

(Zhang Ruoxu, Tang Dynasty)

At the final stage of the curriculum, each student checks if an "elegant problem" has been established in the assignment and

offers effective conditions for peer student participants to create heterogeneous artworks that reactivate the same or similar aesthetic experience in their individualized contexts.

All six couplets take water-and-moon as a metaphor. In East Asian traditions, water is a metaphor for reflection, while the moon is a metaphor for the designatum, or meaning. Figure 1 illustrates how the water-and-moon metaphor is used from a slightly different perspective in each couplet.

Figure 1. *Meanings of Water-and-Moon Metaphors*

	Metaphors	Reference meaning
Step 1	Running water	Conceptual thinking
	Still water	Intuitive reflection
Step 2	Bright moon on vast ocean	Cognition of the aesthetic experience
Step 3	Multiple reflections of the same moon	Multiple art expressions of the same aesthetic experience
Step 4	The same moon reflected in bodies of water far apart	Individualized art expression of the same aesthetic experience
Step 5	My shadow cast by the moon	The initiative power of that aesthetic experience
Step 6	To follow the light beam of the moon to shine upon her lover's face	My emotional impulse to share that aesthetic experience

Assessment With Intuitive Precision

Unlike English poetry, classic Chinese poetry is always uniquely formalized in a symmetrical pattern with paired lines of equal length and an exact equal number of Chinese characters (Jiang et al., 2012). Chinese characters are pictograms with hundreds of pictographic and ideographic symbols, either pronounceable or not; and each Chinese character has a single syllable with the acoustical effect of either / (平、Ping) or \ (仄、Ze). When a classic Chinese poem is read, the symmetrical formalization enables differences to stand out of sameness and reversions out of non-reversions in the contrast of visual signs and acoustical effects inherent in Chinese characters, which is an intuitive meaning-making process in a mixture of signs. It is in this way, situated in the embodied experience of water-and-moon, that students can apprehend with "intuition" the requirement of each assignment beyond conceptual representation and with a "precision in philosophy" (Deleuze, 1991, pp. 13, 29).

Ezra Pound (1934) commented on the achievement of classic Chinese poetry as "simply language, charged with meaning to the utmost degree" (p. 36). Unfortunately, some inherent features of Chinese poetry are untranslatable. For example, the third couplet for the assignment connecting to the art world is translated as:

Three reflections of the moon in three pools,

they are neither same nor different.

And the fourth couplet for the assignment artmaking experiment:

Reflected in different bodies of water,

the same moon is looked up at by people thousands of miles apart.

The metaphors are strengthened by the ideographic Chinese characters of "一"(one) and "三"(three, metonymy to many) placed in inverse order and opposite position:

三潭印一月…

一月映三江…

This eye-catching repetition and inversion implicitly and immediately underline the sameness and the differences between the two assignments. Instead of searching for multiple historical artworks (三) as in the third assignment, the fourth demands the student to create their individual artwork (一). The complexity of the requirement is conveyed through the ideographic Chinese character, which possesses the visual power that phonetic language does not. The characters of 三 and 一 visually illustrate the complexity between multiplicity (三) and individuality (一).

The Chinese number of 三 (three, metonymy to many) is made up of three consecutive 一 (one). All, 三, artworks found or created during the course should each, 一, be "numerical and discontinuous" in its form of art expression; however, all, 三, the artworks should be "continuous and qualitative" (Deleuze, 1991, pp. 79–80) in expressing the same, 一, content of aesthetic experience. Thus, in a visual way, poetry supports precise apprehension of the "三／一" complexity of assessment in a minimalist style.

With precision situated in poetic ambiguity, apprehension of the criteria for assignments are embodied, because it counts on intuitive visual and acoustical effect, and memories of the past experiences. Students find this strategy easy and attractive due to its ability to make complex critical thinking possible without wordy expression.

Proximate Precision Through Systematic Evolution

The six couplets are indicators of three rounds of two successive decisive turns in reverse direction (Deleuze, 1991, p. 29): the turn and the re-turn in division and convergence as diagrammed in Figure 2.

Figure 2. *Six Steps: Three Rounds of Turn and Re-Turn*
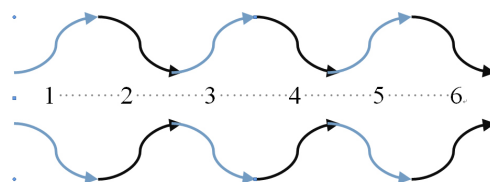
Setting out from a given aesthetic experience, the turn occurs when lines diverge increasingly toward a division in order to differentiate the conditions of that experience, which is the process of discovery; the re-turn is where these lines converge again toward a recomposition of the aesthetic experience in a particular and individualized context of conditions, which is the process of creativity. Discovery supports

creativity, while creativity testifies discovery. The following student case study on Zimeng Cheng identifies how she applied the six couplets to indicate the three rounds of turn and re-turn, and used embodied aesthetics as an intuitive assessment.

Cheng was amazed by the cozy and adorable quality, or Meng (萌) in Chinese, of sheep, which are round, fluffy, and slow moving (see Figure 3). She decided to make Meng the theme of her study. *Meng* is a new adjective that became a popular catchword in China when it was created on the Internet a few years ago.

Figure 3. Zimeng Cheng, *Sheep on Slope*, 2017. Photograph courtesy of the artist.

After the "introspection" (the turn, Step 1) to discover the conditions of this aesthetic experience of Meng, Cheng naturally arrives at the "enduring understanding" (the re-turn, Step 2) expressed as "An object is Meng when it is round and big in body, yet relatively short and small in limbs."

To "connect to the art world" (the turn, Step 3), Cheng found a variety of historical art objects, each in a different way illustrating Cheng's enduring understanding, such as the sculpture of Venus of Willendorf of the Paleolithic age (see Figure 4), and additional contemporary artworks.

Figure 4. *Venus of Willendorf*, BC 22,000–24,000 (User: MatthiasKabel / CC BY-SA, http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0).

"The curriculum of three rounds of turn and re-turn is both fun and functional. It is fun because the critical thinking does not rely on conceptual thinking alone, but centers on the poetic effect as an intuitive indicator and assessment."

To testify her discovery of the conditions of Meng, Cheng chose the character of 西 (Xi), meaning *west*, for her typographic design, which alluded to our travels to Western China. As her artmaking experiment (the re-turn, Step 4), she transformed the square character into a round one to make it Meng (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Zimeng Cheng, typographic transformation of character 西 , 2017.

After the previous two sessions of turn and re-turn, Cheng felt confident writing the "elegant problem" (the turn, Step 5) for her peers: "Pick up a Chinese character and use a sketchbook (APP) to transform the main body of the character into a round shape that gives the expression of Meng." It resulted in heterogeneous Meng Chinese characters designed by Cheng's peers during the following art workshop (the re-turn, Step 6; see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Six Peer Students' Work at Cheng's Workshop.

Through the three rounds of turn and re-turn, Cheng began with her aesthetic experience of cozy and adorable sheep. She ended up visually inquiring into the new adjective of *Meng*—an original typographic design of Chinese characters—and a practical art teaching strategy.

Cheng reflected that the curriculum of three rounds of turn and re-turn is both fun and functional. It is fun because the critical thinking does not rely on conceptual thinking alone, but centers

on the poetic effect as an intuitive indicator and assessment. It is functional because her learning process is clearly structured in a systematic way, which supports a student-centered art learning process. Since each step postulates the subsequent, and the subsequent step substantiates the prior, the six steps comprise a systematic evolution that is continuous in the enduring understanding (Step 2) while heterogeneous in the historical actualization (Step 3), as well as in personal artmaking (Step 4) and pedagogical application (Steps 5 and 6).

Implications for Art Education

This curriculum reform could have two implications for art education. One is that poetry can support precise intuitive assessment without the need for a definition. Since the aesthetic value of the visual arts is often indefinable, it is crucial that we seek for an alternative way to reach precision in assessment.[6] The other is that the indefinable precision can be reached approximately through systematic evolution in a way similar to calculus in mathematics. As calculus approximates precision through differentiation and integration, this curriculum approaches precision through three rounds of divergence and convergence that supports student-centered self-assessment.

After sessions of experimentation with approximately 40 students each year for 5 years, the course has prepared around 200 candidate preK-12 art teachers with confidence in pedagogical creativity, and has shared among them 200 innovative and practical art teaching strategies. ■

Endnotes

1. 郭思《林泉高致》： 诗是无形画，画是有形诗, quoted by Guo Si in "A Father's Instructions," 11th century, incompletely translated by Y. T. Lin in *The Chinese Theory of Art* (1969, pp. 81–92).

2. 荆浩《笔法记》, incompletely translated by Y. T. Lin in *The Chinese Theory of Art* (1969, p. 80).

3. The second line in the couplet is a quote from "…但愿人长久，千里共婵娟…"《水调歌头·丙辰中秋》 by ShuShi (苏轼, 1037–1101).

4. Excerpt from Li Bai (701–762), *Beneath the Moon Drinking Alone*, translated by F. C. Yue, http://chinesepoetryinenglishverse.blogspot.ca/2013/03/beneath-moondrinking-alone-li-bai-o.html

5. Excerpt from Zhang Ruoxu (660–720), *Spring River in the Flower Moon Night*, 张若虚《春江花月夜》, translated by the author.

6. The indefinable and precision are often contradictory, but it is in every artist's experience that precise identification of the authorship of a piece of artwork is possible through indefinable impression of their style.

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Krista Nichols
White Papers Summary and Reflection
Summary is in plain text and *my reflection is in italics.*

The White Papers assigned for this week's reading were all about Assessment. The papers talked about current and well established practices and theories for assessment. Right off the bat, these papers were telling the reader that no two teachers are alike in their art background, their experiences or skills. Not every educator feels the same way about assessment either. Some are well versed while some have experienced a lack of training in assessment. When teachers move away from assessments and evaluations their lessons do not fully engage students and prevent them from taking risks. In these papers, art educators have shared their effective use of assessments in the classroom.

In Part 1 and 2, the NAEA has chosen to focus on strategic goals of community, advocacy, learning, research and knowledge, and organizational vibrancy to introduce assessment for art education by combining qualitative and quantitative assessments. These types of assessments allow art educators to gain insight into what is being assessed and use other kinds of assessments to suit the needs of the student. They also talked about team-building and mentoring in assessments to ensure quality results during portfolio reviews, self-reflections, etc.

*I understand the frustrations expressed by the papers in this section. Art is so personal and subjective - so how is the best way to go about assessment? When dealing with assessments, there is a tendency to assess what is seen in a students' work or observed in their way of working. The result diminishes the nature of art making and student learning and is a big fear of mine. I liked the three recommendations provided in this section, the third stuck out to me in particular: "**Each teacher should be empowered to assess what matters most, including the ways of working in the ambiguous subjective, and the emergent stages of creative idea development.**" This is something I think I can master as an educator. I know I am capable of nurturing creativity and providing positive feedback to help students reach their learning goals. I can think of a semi-related example that I am practicing right now. This year I am lucky enough to be teaching a preschool dance class. There are only 4 students, and 3 of them are happy to be there, and eager to learn. One, for whatever reason, is not as happy. She seems shy and the first week wouldn't even come into the dance studio but sat just outside the room in her dad's arms crying. After class her father said that near the end she had started to dance a bit outside of the room and I knew I would be able to get her to participate but it would take time. I felt that in addition to being shy, she also may have had separation issues, so the next week, I told her dad to drop her off and leave immediately. She cried and screamed at first, but I told her everything was going to be fine and that we were there to have fun. I sat her in the corner and asked her to take care of my special scarf and if she felt like she wanted to dance with us that she could. The tears stopped after about 5 minutes and while she didn't dance that week I could tell she was interested, and she hadn't cried the rest of the class so I saw an improvement. Last week, dad dropped her off to class again and she and I made some small talk before class and she seemed excited to be there. She shut down again once the other*

students got there but there wasn't a single tear. She sat in her safe corner with my scarf and a few times I personally went over to invite her to dance with us. She declined every time but I could tell it was a hard decision to say no. I'm certain that in a few weeks she will be dancing with the rest of us. If I were grading these students, at this young age, she would be on a different scale. She isn't at her full potential yet, but I am **assessing what matters most,** which is: every week she is making small improvements and becoming more brave. I'm proud of her progress and the day that she does get up and dance with us is going to be a major victory for her.

Part 2 was particularly upsetting to read. I get why we need to complete edTPA and that it's all just part of "the system" but to me, this section basically said that edTPA is going to be mentally abusive and we're just going to have to deal with it. They should have just omitted the section on Maintaining Positive Dispositions. If you have to remind us to use **motivational phrases like "I can do this!"** and admit that there is a **vast workload** with this process, and ask us to **identify possible obstacles that can hinder performance and seek ways to eliminate or reduce negative thoughts through methods such as deep breathing, healthy lifestyle choices, and utilizing mentors,** then doesn't this process seem like it's hurting people? These are the techniques my therapist tells me to use when I'm spiralling downwards. This country is facing a teacher shortage. I feel as though if we were trying to hire more teachers, then the process shouldn't be what some would consider abusive. I don't know what that would look like, maybe giving candidates more time to complete the process, but if it's to the point where we are being reminded by "the system" to practice proper breathing exercises, and telling us how to live our lives by making healthy lifestyle choices, then I feel that perhaps this process is too rigorous and discourages good applicants from completing the program.

Part 3 is more about the why and how assessments are important for the student. This section identifies strategies for art educators to plan and implement quality assessments to maximize student potential. It is only right for students to understand how to use assessments, understand and be able to explain what is being assessed, why it's being assessed and how it is being assessed. In doing so, students can learn to use these assessments to guide their learning to better achieve their goals that will be measured through summative assessments. NAEA has provided principles of assessment in order to guide, focus, and direct students' knowledge, skills, and dispositions. These principles should be included in all lessons.

Principle 1: Assessments must measure what was taught and be linked to the educational objectives or outcomes. Assessments should be considered simultaneously with academic standards, curriculum content, processes and skills, and methods used for instruction. I translate this to following a well written rubric. If the rubric aligns with the curriculum and objectives, then the students' performance and capabilities will be addressed. The assessments covered in the rubric should cover the content, knowledge, processes, dispositions included in what was taught in the lesson.

Principle 2: Assessments must be repeatable within and among various groups of learners. Meaning, reliability of scores. Therefore, in order to track student achievement over time, the teacher must be reliable in their assessments. "Grading on a curve" for one particular class will not result in accurate and reliable scores.

Principle 3: Assessments must be fair. *This should not need much of an explanation. To avoid biases, educators must examine the cultural, racial, economic, or gender biases in assessments. All students must be treated equally in the classroom.*

Principle 4: Assessments must be ongoing. *Frequent recurring assessment provides a basis for understanding students growth and learning over time. Much like my preschooler who is too shy to participate, art students are not the same students at the end of the school year as compared to the beginning of the year. While my little dancer won't dance yet, I have no doubt that she will be dancing by June. It wouldn't be fair to assess her based on the kind of dancer she is in June, but rather assess her on how far she has come over the entire school year. In an art room, using formative and summative assessments provides meaningful contributions to student learning.*

Principle 5: Students must have time to learn what is being assessed. *It should not be assumed that all students will understand an idea or assignment immediately. Providing all students with adequate time, in addition to materials, content, and instruction gives everyone time to learn but also refine what was learned and develop as artists.*

Principle 6: Assessments must allow students to demonstrate what they have learned in numbers of ways. *For me, this means that it is imperative to give students options on how they wish to communicate. Allowing them to work in different mediums but everyone is providing evidence to support the same idea allows for students to show their skills.*

Principle 7: Assessments must be easy for students to understand and easy for teachers to administer. *This seems like another no-brainer. If the teacher has shaky assessments or there is a need to clarify tasks during instruction then students can't be expected to understand what is required of them.*

Principle 8: Assessment data and results should be used to inform students and to guide curriculum development, teaching performances, and assessment evaluation. *Teachers must provide students with their results in a timely manner and the feedback must be constructive and allow students to understand what they have done well in addition to areas for improvement.*

Principle 9: Assessment methods and tools should vary. *Students won't develop as artists if they only work in one or two mediums. Allowing for exploration and experimentation is crucial.*

Principle 10: Students have rights and responsibilities as participants in assessments. *All students should be treated with respect. The teacher should take into account the personal needs of students.*

In Part 4, methods were provided for art educators to analyze learning outcomes, make interpretations, and report assessment results. The section highlighted how art educators collect their evidence - including student work and analyzing assessment data to interpret results. Portfolios were identified as being an effective method of allowing educators to document and reflect on the work that students do. The Portfolio is broad, but allows for enough evidence of student learning across all fine arts content while also being specific enough to inform classroom practice.

I like the idea of a portfolio practice, because it allows students to evaluate their own achievements. There is a clear record of the students' learning process, and assessment of portfolios measure the students' understanding of knowledge, skills and concepts appropriately.

Part 5 presents case studies from art educators' effective uses of assessment in various and diverse settings. This section introduces the idea of art educators becoming lifelong learners themselves who are proficient in the visual arts beyond the classroom.

When I was in high school, our art teacher gave each student a sketchbook to be used for whatever we wanted. A place to put down ideas, to sketch, to use as a planner, etc. Since then, I have continued to use journals and sketchbooks throughout my academic career and life to document ideas and practice my craft. I was happy to learn that preservice teachers were using journals to transform their initial perception and decipher meanings from visual evidence, theories, and practices into new sources of information in artistic and written forms. Communicating this way is freeing and takes me out of my headspace and into the pages for a period of time. What I hadn't considered with this method, is what was suggested in this section which was that what had been developed in the preservice teachers journals could be utilized to develop curricula and assessments. Exploring assessment possibilities through journaling can be useful for teachers who retain information visually (100% me). Taking abstract ideas from the journals and making personal connections to help me remember and apply what I have learned is the best way for me to work. Art students benefit from journaling as well because it allows for self reflection.