

Grace W. Ho
ARE 6148 – Curriculum in Teaching Art
Lesson 3 – Needs, Interests, Participants
Discussion: What is comprehensive art education?

A comprehensive approach to art education should “fit and work” to effectively meet the contemporary needs and interests of the participants involved. If the approach addresses (1) needs (e.g. standards, growth of learners, role of educators), (2) interests (e.g. life experiences, personal goals, cultural connections), and (3) participants (e.g. learners, educators, community) such that these and other factors work together well (i.e. effectively), it would be comprehensive. These factors require a framework that will support and allow the pieces to “fit and work.” The approach should produce results that are worthwhile, successful, valuable, favorable, useful, and other synonymous qualities that reflect positive outcomes when we aim for effective education.

So, how do I ensure that my approach is effective?

“If we are to study an educational program systematically and intelligently...” (Ralph Tyler via Curriculum Packet, p. 1), curriculum planning would be anchored by considerations of Intent (aims, goals, objectives), Content, Organization, and Administration (Curriculum Video and PDF).

I would also “rethink curriculum” and consider a comprehensive approach that outlines 5 Key Components of the Development Process, as proposed in this week’s readings (Stewart & Walker, 2005). Unit Foundations (UF) is the first Key Component, as it establishes (a) enduring ideas to begin the approach; subsequent elements include (b) rationale, (c) key concepts, and (d) essential questions. The other 4 Key Components are Content, Instruction, Assessment, and Design. Other considerations are recognizing curriculum orientations (child, society, subject), types of curriculum (explicit, implicit, null), and associated historical perspectives.

In trying to make it “fit and work” here is a broad conceptual approach to art curriculum for my students. The academic year begins with practice-based lessons during the first semester: students learn about and use (re-use “old” & uncover “new”) materials and tools, techniques and skills for making art, as individual assignments. During the second semester, study units are experience-based: students explore (i.e. try-out, research, experiment, etc.) ideas as individual and/or group projects using the art making practices and knowledge they have learned. Throughout the year, we discuss what we’re learning and make connections with life experiences. At the end of each semester, Open Studio sessions are optional and available for students who want extra time to create (without a lesson), with the materials I provide and/or those they bring in. Finally, Open House at the end of the year allows friends and family members to view artworks (portfolios, individual work, group projects) created by all the students and our class discussion notes recorded on large sheets of newsprint paper. This end-of-year event showcases students’ work (finished and in-progress) and thought processes at various stages of growth, development, and learning.

Are my students learning and understanding as a result of my curriculum design? Reflectively,

I would aim to better focus the connections with life experiences by exploring those that are relevant, diverse, and important for my students. I would begin by establishing enduring ideas to anchor my planning of Unit Foundations.

References

Stewart, M. & Walker, S. (2005). Rethinking Curriculum in Context. *Rethinking curriculum in art*. (pp. 7-21). Worcester, MA: Davis Publications.

Stewart, M. & Walker, S. (2005). Making It Count: Unit Foundations. *Rethinking curriculum in art*. (pp. 23-37). Worcester, MA: Davis Publications.

Curriculum Packet. PDF retrieved from

<http://lmscontent.embanet.com/UF/ArtEd/ARE6247c/lessons/lesson3/CurricPacket2013.pdf> .

Roland, D. *Introduction to Curriculum*. Video retrieved from

<http://streaming.video.ufl.edu/~are6247/intro2curric.wmv> on September 9, 2013.