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ARE 6148 – Curriculum in Teaching Art
Lesson 6 – 10 Things Every Art Teacher Should Know About Curriculum Integration
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Do you want to be more than a "just a resource teacher"?
Do you dream of being part of a holistic approach to education?
Do you want to see art education integrated with other subject areas?
Well, if you answered (or thought to yourself), "Yes," here's a list of 10 things art educators should know…

1. **Changing needs and interests should anchor goals and objectives for integration.**
   "For art educators embarking on a journey into interdisciplinary waters, it may be comforting to recall that human understanding of the world is structured according to our changing needs and conditions" (Davenport, 2005, p. 4).
2. **Integration requires collaborative effort and work by a team of educators.**
   "Arts integration is a classroom pedagogy with the potential to transform our schools," wrote Donn Poll via a reply to a blog (Damkohler, 2011).
3. **Art teachers are indispensible, as part of this team.**
   Poll continued to blog, "We believe that arts integration makes arts education (and art educators, teaching artists and artists) more essential to education than ever" (Damkohler, 2011).
4. **Administrative support is necessary, as part of this team.**
   Stewart and Walker (2005) note, "having administrative support at the principal level was essential for successful curriculum integration" (p. 107).
5. **Committed teachers (of other disciplines/subjects) are essential, as part of this team.**
   > "Classroom teachers should enrich and enliven their lessons by integrating the arts, but we cannot expect them to simultaneously serve as classroom teachers and primary arts instructors. In order for students to fully meet the arts standards, schools must invest in qualified and effective art educators." (Damkohler, 2011)
6. **Common curriculum goals (including standards) and understandings (content and context focused on the big picture of life) should be set, as a team.**
   "The curriculum modules should promote lifelong curiosity about the arts by making the study of the arts disciplines engaging over time and ensuring that the notion of the arts transcending time is internalized by students…"(Coleman, 2012, p. 5).
7. **Budgetary limitations and projections should be assessed and addressed, as a team.**

"Budget issues and the reduction of spending for the arts has caused numerous schools to attempt to find additional sources to help support their arts programs…state funding…grants…private contributors…Funding the arts in education still remains a large and unresolved issue…" via Arts Integration (Wikipedia) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arts_integration.

8. **Adequate time and effort to allow for planning and implementation, assessments and evaluations, reflections and reorganizations, should be assessed and addressed as a team.**

   Stockrocki (2005) addressed issues, such as "Content and procedural concerns…time and place logistics…lack of space in the classroom…" (pp. 163-164), and continued to note that efforts at compromising, negotiating, "much good will and cooperation" (p. 165) are required.

9. **Curriculum integration is not easy nor will it be optimal: be prepared to train, practice, and participate as a team…win or lose.**

   "The ultimate goal of interdisciplinary partnership needs to be continuous exploration…Not every subject area and theme will connect in an integrated unit…Partnerships persist in spite of lack of ideal conditions and adapt their instruction in innovative ways" (Stockrocki, 2005, p. 166).

10. **Team successes should be most beneficial for the students.**

    "Overlap and integration of traditionally discrete content areas allow for more active brain functioning and connections. Integration…permits students with varying degrees of these intelligences to employ several simultaneously during classroom work…" (Stockrocki, 2005, p. 166). Stewart and Walker (2005) note metaphor and aesthetic knowing as two unique contributions of art to curriculum integration; students also gain "imaginative, innovative, and flexible thinking skills and approaches to problem solving" (p. 116).

Consider Robert Lang's integration of math with the art of origami. He points to a powerful tool and says, "The secret to productivity in so many fields, and in origami, is letting dead people do your work for you" (http://ed.ted.com/lssons/robert-lang-folds-way-new-origami). During his 15-minute talk, he explains how present-day application of math concepts transforms the original laws of origami into a new art form. Step by step, he starts from an idea, which is abstracted into a stick figure. With the abstraction on paper, and knowledge of dead people's prior circle-packing techniques, calculated folds and flaps take on sophistication to become new forms. Lang continues by sharing this new method as "Tree Maker" software, capable of producing complicated designs by computer. With bases and crease patterns, bugs, animals, toads, and other possibilities undergo innovative and creative uses as animated props for commercials. And, as if this wasn't enough, the origami algorithms extend into space (Japanese telescope), medical (heart stents from the blow up box), and automotive (air bags from circle-packing and math) applications. He concludes by saying, "Origami may someday save a life."

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