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A Study of Art Education Strategies for Remote Learning During the Pandemic

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During the Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

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In the wake of COVID-19, educators had to adjust their curriculum and pedagogies to create an environment of learning while their students couldn't come into the classroom. As teachers and students alike adapted to this new distance learning, they encountered many obstacles which made it difficult to teach and to learn compared to what they were used to in a traditional in-person classroom setting. This thesis document compiles my research about the advantages and disadvantages of remote learning before, during, and post-pandemic. The research component of this project consists of the commentary of four art educators who share what they experienced and learned from teaching remotely during the pandemic; what they think can continue in the in-person classroom setting; and how remote learning can continue to evolve and be successful after the pandemic.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

My interest in remote learning began when I was thrown into the distance learning environment as a college student during the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. I had little experience in a remote or online class before that time and my experience jumping into remote learning was difficult. Since I was studying art education, I wondered about my teachers' experience and how remote learning changed during the pandemic. Because most schools in the United States were required to shift to remote learning, I explored existing research about reoccurring themes around mental health struggles, connection, isolation, technology, and hope for the future. I also gathered commentaries and insights from four art teachers about remote learning. My own personal reflections as a student during the pandemic contribute to the commentary about distance learning.

Remote learning offers many advantages to in-person learning. The most important advantage, I would argue, is the accessibility for students to learn online when in-person options may not be available to them. This was evident during the pandemic when students and teachers couldn't meet in-person in order to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus. There are elements of remote learning that can also be used with in-person learning such as technologies, applications, and programs that can help students have greater access to resources on their own time and can save time for teachers as they grade and review student assignments online. Online platforms can also give students in a class access to other people who may not be able to physically be with the class. The lessons educators learned from remote teaching during the pandemic can be utilized in the future to improve education and accessibly for student learning.

Art education is a unique school subject because it involves creativity and creation. In a remote environment, there are unique challenges surrounding art education that are not as

evident in other subjects. A big challenge is the use and distribution of supplies for students who are taking a remote art class. Art education instructors had to navigate these challenges during the pandemic. This thesis explores the background of remote and hybrid learning and the various responses of art teachers to remote learning in 2020 and 2021. The research questions throughout this investigation are: (1) What are the advantages and limitations of remote learning? (2) What were the challenges of remote learning for art teachers during the pandemic? (3) How can the experiences of teaching remotely be applied to art curriculum and teaching?

Remote learning emerged because of a need to teach students who lived in distant areas that were far from schools and because of the promise that technology held for hybrid teaching. A hybrid teaching model allows students to access learning materials from home that would otherwise be delivered in the classroom, allowing more time in the classroom for questions, problem solving and discussions. For students in rural areas, remote learning required finding ways and resources that would allow remote students to access the same learning opportunities as students who lived in more populated areas and could participate in the classroom.

In order to keep students and teachers safe during the COVID-19 virus pandemic, in-person classroom learning wasn't possible. As we look at remote learning as an option for the future, educators and curriculum creators should consider how remote learning can make education—and specifically art education—more accessible for students. There may also be economical and education advantages for remote learning or a mixed remote and in-person model of instruction. In addition to making education accessible, digital delivery of instruction or remote instruction may have learning advantages for some students.

This thesis explores the advantages and disadvantages of remote learning through the unique lens of a pandemic. The COVID 19 pandemic of 2020 to 2022 provided an extreme case

study of remote learning that forced schools and teachers into delivering instruction in new ways. The pandemic gave particular urgency to the question of what the best learning environment and method of instructional delivery for students is. Educators know their students and classrooms better than anyone else because of the relationship and proximity they have to their students. It is my hope that this thesis will give art educators insights into the advantages, challenges, and disadvantages of remote learning so as to be able to gauge what, if any, approach to remote learning or in-classroom learning is the best instructional tool for their students' education for their particular educational contexts and the needs of their students.

The research component of this project consists of the commentary of four art educators who share what they experienced and learned from teaching remotely during the pandemic; what they think can continue in the in-person classroom setting; and how remote learning can continue to evolve and be successful after the pandemic. It also includes my own personal reflections about my experiences with remote learning as an art education graduate student. This thesis points toward important issues that need to be addressed as a result of the remote instruction prompted by the pandemic. These issues include student learning loss, inequities in learning resources, the social, emotional, and learning mental health of students, the evolution of learning technologies, and teacher professional development and self-care.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The emergence of remote learning revolved around students being able to access learning that they could not get in an in-person setting and the educational advantages of allowing students to access learning materials from home that would otherwise be delivered in the classroom, allowing more time in the classroom for questions, problem solving and discussions.

This chapter will reflect on the history of how and why remote learning emerged and how educators were able to use technology to expand their instruction to students outside of a traditional in-person setting. There are advantages and disadvantages to remote learning compared to traditional in-person learning and this chapter will explore some of the pros and cons of why an educator or student may choose remote learning to gain knowledge.

The COVID-19 pandemic was a unique time for educators as they were forced to transition to a remote setting for their teaching. In addition to the advantages and disadvantages of a regular remote learning setting, the pandemic made remote learning the default mode of instruction for most students in the United States. It both expanded the scope of remote instruction and brought into play many new elements that were previously unknown to remote learning. This chapter will explore some of those elements that many educators experienced during the pandemic, including the effects of mixing home and school culture, how art educators coped with the increased stressors of moving to a remote teaching environment, the effects of mixing home and school culture, and remote learning after the pandemic. This chapter examines research literature in order to compare remote learning experiences before and after the pandemic.

History of Remote Learning

The term "remote learning" refers to the student participating in the learning process outside of the classroom. During the COVID-19 pandemic, educators learned how to facilitate remote learning as school closures prevented students from coming physically into their classrooms to learn. Students stayed home and learned remotely. This was not the first-time remote learning took place, however. Historically, educators explored remote learning to allow

greater access for their students who may have had limited resources to participate in their in-person classroom.

In effort to increase accessibility for students to learn, educators have looked for ways to bring learning to the student. If students cannot come to the classroom, then educators can try to bring learning to the student. There may be a multitude of reasons why a student isn't able to attend in-classroom learning and will need to resort to remote learning. The history of remote learning shows us that distance may be a reason. If students are locked in very remote areas, there may not be a large enough population to support a school for in-person instruction. In addition, a hybrid teaching model makes learning materials available digitally so that materials that would otherwise be delivered in the classroom can be accessed remotely, allowing more time in the classroom for questions, problem solving and discussions.

The University of Queensland in Australia is an example of an isolated geographical location. In 1910, this university was founded to make schooling possible for the rural population who were too far apart to meet in-person. Other resources were also created to serve the needs of students in rural areas. The first School of the Air opened in Alice Springs on 8th June 1951. The number grew to thirteen schools catering for more than two thousand children over an area approximately half of Australia (Robson et al., 1991, p. 2).

The School of the Air distributed learning materials to students over a vast geographical region. The importance of teacher and student interaction was as important then as it is now, so educators experimented to create new technologies to foster more interaction. "In 1980, South Australia was experimenting at Elliston Special Rural School using a handset, loudspeaker, telephone, slow-scan television and a facsimile machine" (Robson et al., 1991, p. 2). The ways

these educators used technology to overcome distance allowed students to participate in learning from their remote locations.

In addition to large geographical regions prompting the emergence of remote learning, there were also resources made available due to the interest and convenience in learning remotely. Australia again shows an example of students wanting to learn remotely because of geographical location and because of student interest. Lester stated:

> In 1988, Australian Flying Arts School (AFAS) conducted a survey to gauge interest in an external art program. By November 1988, 550 responses were received. This initial target group was identified as those individuals who, having exhausted the current range of course offerings, were seeking an accredited course in the visual arts as a basis for their future professional practice or as a means for future articulation into affiliated or higher education courses. (Lester, 1993, pp. 27-28)

In the United States, remote learning offered by higher education became more common than remote learning for elementary and secondary schooling because of student interest, financial capacity, convenience, flexibility, and accessibility to learning that may not be offered in-person. In various higher institutions in the United States, studies show that "due to the growing availability of distance learning at these institutions, the percentage of undergraduate students taking online classes increased from 15.6 % in 2004 to 43.1% in 2016" (Song et al., 2021, p. 17). One driver of this change was that more students could participate in classes at a lower cost to the university.

In addition to flexibility for students, remote learning also showed advantages for educators seeking to reach a greater number of students for their classes. One teacher in the early 2000's originally taught an art education class in-person. Due to the need to accommodate more

students in an introductory art education course, the instructor at Midwestern State University offered the course, which was designed for general education students, as an asynchronous online class. Each semester, the course was taught to over one hundred students. The teacher said, "In 2012, the course was offered in a hybrid format, including both online and in-class components. The following year, the course was conducted entirely in an online environment" (Song et al., 2021, p. 18).

Technological Advances

In addition to accessibility, flexibility, interest, and convenience for students and educators to reach more students, an important component of the history of remote learning revolves around advances in technology that enabled remote learning to even be possible. Robson et al stated:

> In the early 1900s in Australia, the use of a "handset, loudspeaker, telephone, slow-scan television and a facsimile machine" allowed students and teachers to communicate in real time and establish those connections that are essential in creating an environment conductive to learning. (Robson et al., 1991, p. 2)

Educators used the technology that was available to them to create engaging remote learning classes. As technology continued to evolve and improve, educators were able to incorporate higher-level audio and visual components to their remote learning lessons. "Print, slides, and video were the most popular methods of facilitating a distance education degree. Computer programmes were considered favourable" (Lester, 1993, p. 34). With the invention of the computer and the internet, remote learning became more accessible to students for real-time remote instruction than ever before.

Advances in technology paved the way for remote learning to become a reality and immersive like an in-classroom environment. For example, in 2010 a virtual platform was created called the second life (SL). Second Life allows users to participate with others in an immersive environment where they feel like they are next to each other but are, in reality, in separate locations. A use for this second life in art education could include students and educators working together to create art virtually over a distance. Educators would have the ability to create curriculum for remote learning while using the second life (Liao, 2008). This "second life" is a technology that hasn't been utilized much in mainstream remote learning, however a number of art educators have used it as a creative platform (Stockrocki, 2014; Taylor, 2009). However, the technology continues to expand if educators see the need for this type of virtual immersive environment to meet their teaching goals for their students.

As technology has advanced, institutions understand that additional resources for educators will make the remote learning experience more fulfilling and successful for educators and students. In 2016, there were over 17,000 members in the National Art Education Association who were art educators across the United States. In order to support these members in their professional learning and teaching, the NAEA created the webpage, NAEA Virtual Art Educators (https://virtual.arteducators.org/). This digital space was created "for art educators to access professional learning opportunities and resources. The site includes a growing library of hundreds of live and on-demand recordings of archived webinars, virtual conference sessions, videos, workshops, and other resources" (Sabol, 2022, p. 131). Additional resources and an increase in teacher knowledge about how to conduct distance learning classes will continue to improve the remote learning experience for students.

Distance Learning Prior to 2020

Before 2020, teachers were able to thoughtfully and mentally prepare for remote teaching. The pandemic in 2020 caused schools to transform practically overnight from in-classroom learning to remote learning, or what could be better termed as "emergency remote education" (Jacobs et al., 2020). The scramble to continue providing a high-quality education while doing it for a remote audience in ways that many teachers had never done before created many limitations for teachers and students.

Before 2020, there were many advances in technology that made remote learning more accessible for more people. When schools switched from in-person to remote learning due to the pandemic, there was already a plethora of applications and technological resources available for many teachers and students. One of the main barriers for some teachers was that they hadn't previously taught using the technology, so teachers had to work to learn what was available and how to become more familiar with the technology. Even teachers who had previously taught remote classes pivoted to make their classes more mainstream for their students. Song et al said:

> Before the pandemic, my online courses used an asynchronous format, focusing on text-based and video-based communications. However, after the pandemic outbreak, every course was offered online, so I added weekly synchronous class sessions via Webex, a video conferencing tool similar to Zoom. Previously, I used text-based communication to give feedback to students. I started using a multilayered feedback delivery system inspired by Filimowicz and Tzankova. I became actively engaged in using new software and technologies. For example, I added a web page–making activity using Adobe Spark, in which the students reflected on net art pieces by contemporary artists. Net art or web art is a form of art based on the internet (Song et al., 2023, p. 42)

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Many students already used social media and other tools to communicate outside of school before the pandemic, such as Facebook and mobile phones. This basic knowledge of mobile communication allowed students to collaborate with their fellow students when the lockdown happened. A student shared their experience, "We took our initiative to use separate mediums of communication to make sure we could still collaborate and solve problems … this daily interaction with friends made the days more manageable" (Yates et al., 2020). Even though students couldn't see their friends face-to-face at school, they could keep in touch through social media and that helped some during a time of social distancing. One study showed that students enjoyed creating artwork together in an online space. In addition to creating artwork together virtually, students enjoyed the sense of autonomy they experienced in e-learning (Quinn, 2011).

Remote Learning During the 2020-2022 COVID Pandemic

The history of remote learning was shifted radically by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Instead of being an optional academic methodology or innovation, it became the norm for education to be delivered both in the United State and abroad. This changed everyone's view of remote learning since teachers, students, and school leaders were suddenly expected to become adept at using digital platforms for instruction.

With the transition from in-person to hybrid to remote learning, instructors experimented and learned how to conduct a remote class through trial and error and had time to adjust class management and teaching strategies effectively. They reflected on their experience of student's tendencies in the class. One instructor commented,

Some students attempted to copy project examples and classmates' written art reflections. In response, I ceased uploading examples for most art projects; the project samples could have discouraged imaginative and original ideas on the students' part. Also, the

discussion board settings were changed so that students could only view classmates' text

after posting their reflections. Reflecting on these outcomes, I recommend that online art

educators revisit their curricular structure and strategies regularly. (Song et al., 2021, p.

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As scholar and education leader Robert Sabol notes, **"Educators have been called upon to**

answer fundamental questions about the nature of education and its goals and purposes. They

have been tasked with identifying the best means through which education can be maintained

and delivered to all students" (Sabol, 2022, p. 1). Responses to the pandemic, including

technological aided remote instruction was complicated by how quickly pandemic conditions

changed. Remote instruction during the pandemic brought important educational issues to the

forefront, including student learning loss, students social, emotional, and learning mental health,

the evolution of technology, and teacher professional development and self-care. With the

COVID-19 pandemic, students experienced their schools' remote learning from their homes or

were home schooled. For the traditional students, their in-classroom teacher became a virtual

remote learning teacher.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Remote Learning

An overarching theme throughout my remote learning research is the need for connection

between students and teachers. If remote learning can meet that need for connection through

technology or other elements, then the class is viewed as more successful than if remote learning

isn't able to foster those connections. As the emergence of new technologies and the ability to

deliver learning content have become more available, remote instruction has allowed students to

learn outside of the classroom. There are multiple reasons why a student or teacher may opt for

remote learning over in-person learning. This section will review the pros and cons of remote

learning. Educators know the needs of their students and each educator uses their own teaching philosophy to meet those needs. The parts of remote learning that may work well for one educator may not coincide with the philosophy or strategy of another educator.

Advantages of Remote Teaching and Learning

Remote learning creates accessibility for student learning. It has pros as well as cons in helping students and teachers in the classroom. Because of the digital nature of home-based distance learning, teachers can utilize digital platforms and applications in many ways. There are different features inside the applications themselves that lend to new ways of learning. Chat rooms, blogs, polls, and breakout rooms allow educators to think in different ways about how to teach their students. There are also asynchronous solutions that allow students to access material at any time. Cziboly and Bethlenfalvy stated:

> The online space also offered a few work forms that are not accessible offline. Responding to a question, writing messages and blog entries, or conducting a quick poll were all possible in the chat feature of these platforms; this allowed everyone, even the more usually silent participants the opportunity to contribute simultaneously. We also found some online platforms that offered interesting possibilities for working collaboratively. (Cziboly & Bethlenfalvy, 2020, p.648)

Chat rooms allowed teachers and students to discuss what they were learning about. This is especially valuable during remote learning as students didn't have access to the physical artwork itself. Students are able to see the artwork on their computer screens and comment with fellow students in chat rooms simultaneously by having both windows open on their computer screens. This is an advantage of remote learning in communicating and learning about artwork (Lai, 2002). Art in the classroom setting could also be shown over a projector as the teacher would

move from slide to slide. In a digital learning space, however, students could study the artwork at their own pace on their computers and could reference back to the piece later.

Another helpful feature of the digital platform in remote learning involves the webcam. One teacher in a drama class used the webcam "to show 'objects of a character' to the camera to trigger discussion. Many applications have drawing and annotation features that help with interaction during the remote learning experience. Zoom has a drawing feature that could enable collective drawing while screen sharing. And Facebook has a feature to comment on posts and images which can be accessed by everyone in the classroom (Cziboly & Bethlenfalvy, 2020). The collective drawing feature in Zoom allows students to work collaboratively in real time over a digital space.

An aspect of remote learning that has had a positive outcome is the flexibility that allows students to spend more time on coursework. During in-person instruction "students sometimes need to work more quickly to engage with and make art. Working from home, students have more time and flexibility to observe the artwork, engage with the source materials, reflect, and experiment with their artmaking" (Reich-Shapiro & Scarola, 2023, p. 18). Being able to work from home gives students more time to process and reflect on the artwork and artists they were learning about. Teachers discovered from their students' feedback that there were unexpected advantages to remote learning. There was "time to explore and process artwork in more depth, flexibility to engage with artmaking through multiple modalities, and opportunities to share the experience of artmaking with their families" (Reich-Shapiro & Scarola, 2023, p. 16).

New technologies allow educators and students to learn new skills as they engage in remote learning. In addition to the convenience of working from home, students are able to include their families in their art making and learning. This allows students to share their home

culture through their art as well as the added benefit of engaging their families in learning about art and other subjects that students are learning in their remote classes.

Educators are also able to utilize resources that wouldn't normally be available in a traditional classroom setting. For example, if teaching an in-person class, educators may need to organize a field trip to see artwork, but through remote learning, educators can direct their students toward virtual resources such as virtual museum exhibits, and virtual meetings with artists (Reich-Shapiro & Scarola, 2023, p. 16). Educators who taught remotely before and during the pandemic could use digital platforms to invite artists into the classroom virtually. Artists that might not otherwise be able to attend an in-person classroom or workshop because of travel or scheduling difficulties were able to share their artwork and experiences with students. One study conducted used a discussion board between students, teacher, and an artist that they were studying. These discussion boards were open to all students and allowed students to feel that they had one-on-one conversations with the artist who would respond. Students participated more and there were open discussions between teacher, students and artists that would have been more static during a one-time visit in an in-person setting (Akins, et al., 2004).

Challenges and Disadvantages of Distance Learning

As there are certain advantages to students learning at home, there are also certain difficulties and challenges. As previously mentioned, one of the advantages to distance learning was the flexibility for students to work on their assignments at their own pace. This can also be a disadvantage for students and teachers because if there was a lack of motivation or time management skills, students could procrastinate and run into difficulties, especially when working collaboratively with other students. Students complained to one teacher that it was difficult to not procrastinate their work because it was dependent on their fellow students to send

them things to work on. If the other students didn't send it to them until Friday or Saturday, and the assignment was due on Saturday, they wouldn't have much time to complete it, and it also took up their time on the weekend (Lai, 2002).

Giving feedback to peers online can be more difficult than in an in-person classroom setting. With in-person, peers can see others' body language and there is a social aspect of chatting casually before and after class which leads to learning and informal feedback. In a remote learning environment, there are no casual and informal settings for students to give this kind of feedback and have social interaction unless it is incorporated into the virtual classroom. Still, as it is incorporated into the virtual classroom, peer feedback becomes more formal as it becomes part of the class. "As a whole, the asynchronicity of this course presented both benefits and challenges. Students may have simultaneously enjoyed increased self-directed learning and flexibility while struggling with the lack of opportunities to connect with peers" (Song et al., 2021, p. 19).

One limitation of distance learning is the lack of art supplies and materials that students and teachers would normally have access to in an art classroom. However, there are many digital tools that allow students to continue art creation. Less access to needed supplies required students and teachers to figure out other solutions in their art education. Even in the classroom, teachers might put limitations on what students could do for certain art assignments, but with distance learning, those limitations are more apparent. However, there are digital technologies that foster art creation that do not require traditional art supplies.

Another disadvantage of remote learning includes the lack of connection between peers and how that could lead to students feeling isolated from others and left behind. "This negative aspect of online instruction is particularly pronounced when students try to balance school

coursework, part-time jobs, and family responsibilities" (Song et al., 2021, p. 21). As teachers have noticed this negative aspect of remote learning, they have looked for ways to prevent student isolation. Song et al stated:

> First, adding opportunities for face-to-face communication between student and teacher via Zoom or office visits is helpful. Second, building a learning community and peer connections is of the utmost importance; students can support each other's learning process, offering encouragement and constructive criticism. (Song et al., 2021, p. 21)

With the knowledge of how remote learning may affect student connections and lead to isolation, educators can incorporate tools into their remote classes to encourage student interaction and connection between peers and between students and the teacher.

A hurdle for remote learning is internet connectivity and available school funding for technology. With the technology, there needs to be adequate internet connectivity for students to be able to connect virtually in real time. Data from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) "reported [in 2018] that 14 percent of school children aged 6 to 17—equating to roughly 7 million students—lived in homes without internet connectivity" (Harlow et al., 2023, p. 32). For those students who have reliable internet connectivity, they can connect easily to their remote learning classroom. But for the roughly 7 million students who do lack internet access, remote learning will not work as an accessible mode of learning. "For schools to be functional and successful in remote and hybrid modalities, teachers and their students must have dependable internet" (Harlow et al., 2023, p. 33).

Remote Learning During a Pandemic

Remote instruction and learning during the pandemic brought many educational challenges to the forefront of school policy, administration, finances, and teaching. These

challenges included the health of teachers and students, student and teacher social and emotional health, mental health for both teachers and students, professional development of teachers, technology, and school funding.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced schools to transition to remote learning beginning in March 2020 and introduced a new set of challenges and learning opportunities for educators and students. Educators and students dealt with the fear of the pandemic while overcoming feelings of isolation and lack of connection between peers, students, and teachers. There was also a lack of resources for students as they couldn't use the classroom resources. Teachers who hadn't taught in a remote setting before had to adapt and make do with little training and had to scramble to transition their in-person lessons to a virtual setting. There was limited time to prepare and change in-person lessons to remote lessons. Teachers and students had to adapt to the remote setting which required learning and improving their use of technology and new applications that they hadn't used previously (Sabol, 2022). As the world went through the pandemic together, there was a sense of community and many educators shared successes and teaching strategies to help each other. Instructors created lessons that were more flexible for the situation and for their students' needs, both mentally and academically. And teachers modified their classroom management strategies to adapt to the remote setting.

There were a lot of unknowns in the first few months of the pandemic in 2020 as schools tried to keep up. Many students had never been exposed to remote learning before the pandemic. Teachers did their best to "create a supportive classroom setting in a virtual environment, recognizing that students were coping with numerous stressors, including grief, illness, income loss, food and housing insecurity, daycare and school closings, and inadequate access to technology" (Reich-Shapiro & Scarola, 2023, p. 16).

With all the additional stressors caused by the pandemic, teachers did their best to support students in their remote classrooms. Song et al. shared:

> We found that the students needed emotional support and a sense of belonging while engaged in virtual learning during the pandemic. Factors related to the uncertainty of the situation both in and outside the classroom, difficulties in accessing digital technologies, and the lack of personal connections with others influenced their engagement in e-learning. (Song et al., 2023, p. 47)

But despite the differences in what teachers and students were used to, students were still able to expand their knowledge and experience the world in whatever that looked like during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students continued to make artwork even if it was based on a different set of experiences from previous years (Hildebrandt, 2021). Teachers in art education were able to help their students learn while they were at home, despite the difficulties with online instruction, student connection, and limited supplies.

Teacher Well-Being and Safety

Students weren't the only ones who had fears and a strain on their mental capacities to cope with the unknowns of the pandemic, teachers also struggled to cope. One teacher shared her experience in helping students cope. She said:

> I opened diverse communication channels to support my students emotionally, including emails, texts, phone calls, discussion boards, and group chats. As a result, I would spend 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. in front of my computer responding to students' needs… I made a list of things on which I needed to focus and identified those requiring lesser focus. Moreover, I set small goals that made me feel my achievements and success, no matter how little. Similar to my classes' communication strategies, meetings with other colleagues and

collaborating as a team to share online learning knowledge supported me in maintaining

my resilience in teaching. (Song et al., 2023, p. 47)

Teachers dedicated hours to helping their students succeed in the new and unfamiliar remote learning environment. Sabol stated:

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, students waited until the next day to ask questions.

With distance learning, teachers' days have been extended and students have expanded

their learning day well beyond the traditional hours during which school was in session.

This created an internal conflict causing increasing levels of stress and anxiety among

teachers. It forced many teachers to reexamine their commitment to their profession and

amount of time they were willing to provide to support their students. Abuses of open-

ended access to teachers eventually led some administrators to implement policies

limiting accessibility to teachers and communications with them to normal business

hours. (Sabol, 2022, pp. 129-130)

The pandemic also raised concerns about teacher safety and well-being. Despite feelings of isolation, teachers did their best to use the resources at their disposal to foster feelings of connection among students during the pandemic. A teacher said:

We transformed our curriculum, adjusted our expectations, and tried our best to teach art

despite the isolation. I struggled to communicate with students and reassure them that art

classes would go on even though the art room was closed. Teaching art virtually is still

not the ideal way to work with students; however, by engaging in two-way conversations,

offering suggestions on how to improve their work, and being supportive with each other,

the stress of isolation [was] lowered. (Montero, 2021, p. 14-15)

Communication between teachers and students was important during the pandemic to bridge those feelings of isolation. Another teacher shared their insights:

> Using multiple communication tools, such as discussion boards, peer-feedback sections, breakout rooms in synchronous sessions, group chats, online office hours, individual feedback, and individual meetings, my students and I [shared] our thoughts and emotions. In addition, the students expressed that weekly emails, individual meetings, and weekly office hours positively supported them in overcoming negative emotions stemming from feeling less connected to others. (Song et al., 2023, p. 47)

Many teachers found themselves needing to give more time and energy towards their computer screen to maintain student engagement as teachers couldn't simply keep eye contact with everyone over a webcam. Some teachers found that they were actively engaging with their computer screens in order to keep their students' attention during class time. It was a struggle to maintain their students' attention while knowing that any moment their students could easily transition to social media or email without them noticing (Cziboly & Bethlenfalvy, 2020). Since learning and discussions were done digitally, there was also, at times, a lack of social cues which could sometimes be frustrating in getting ones point across and could even lead to "ambiguities in etiquette and politeness" (Lai, 2002, p.36).

Student Learning, Well-Being, and Safety

To stop the spread of the virus, people were encouraged to self-quarantine if exposed to the virus. Large-group gatherings were essentially prohibited, and many people stayed indoors or away from others outside of their immediate household. This was a drastic change from what students were used to where they would greet friends and peers several hours a day, five days a week at school. As schooling moved to a remote setting, students were limited to seeing only

family members in their households which created feelings of isolation. In 2022, Wright, shared their thoughts on missing in-person interactions during the pandemic:

> During the pandemic, students and teachers missed this sense of communal disorientation: the giddiness of communal embarrassments, blushes, laughing, getting lost, and finding new ways back. The students missed out on happy sidetracks and accidents, looking over their shoulders at other students' work, the playful and sanctioned stealing of ideas, and the ebb and flow of communication and competition. While judiciously checking our checklists, we all missed out on the nuance of a classroom. (Wright, 2022, p. 24)

Home schooling taught by parents allows parents to interact with their children face-to-face. But the distance learning done during the COVID-19 pandemic didn't allow teachers to be in their student's homes or to have face-to-face interaction. Instead, digital platforms, such as Zoom, were used for classroom discussion and interaction. Students who might have felt uncomfortable in a classroom setting to ask questions or contribute to discussions might have felt more comfortable in a digital setting. In contrast to some students who thrived with the flexibility of doing schoolwork whenever they wanted to, some students found the workload overbearing and lacked time management skills to get everything done. This limitation led to students feeling like the workload was too heavy even with added email help from teachers. Students felt there was a heavy workload and that they couldn't take advantage of emailing their teachers because they were two busy with work and family (Stankiewicz & Garber, 2020). Many students felt overloaded by all the assignments coming their way from their various remote classes with some reporting they would do homework for nine hours a day after getting over their remote classes.

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Other students reported forgetting what time they should log on to their virtual classes (Yates et al., 2020).

In March 2020, at the beginning of remote learning, a teacher, C.J. Connor, shared how the novelty of teaching online had worn off after day two. After getting used to using Google Meets, C.J. Conner felt that the features on online platforms weren't as effective as in-person instruction – such as using the mute button instead of encouraging students to listen. The computer screen became the area of focus for both teachers and students rather than seeing other people's faces (Evans et al., 2020). Online conferencing platforms allowed teachers to continue meeting with their students, but there were limitations as many teachers and students weren't familiar with the online platforms and they weren't used to seeing a 2D image of someone as they spoke. There were also difficulties if webcams didn't work, and only one person could speak at once to be understood. Yates et al. shared:

> Collaborating on unfamiliar platforms, e.g., Zoom, 'felt unnatural' because only one person could talk and teachers dominated: 'No one talks on online classes except the teacher,' classmates turned off videos and microphones and didn't participate: 'people tended to not speak (be muted) or show their face therefore it was hard to communicate or interact with them' and some students simply did not attend. (Yates et al., 2020, p.66)
>
> Feindler et al. in 2022 shares how school districts worked to help students:
>
> While learning was a concern as schools closed, the physical well-being of students led the list of concerns for many. Using statistics from the U.S. Department of Education's School Lunch Program, 52 percent of students receive lunch from their schools during the school day; with schools closed, these students lacked that source of food. School districts scrambled to find ways to feed these students, and Congress appropriated $5

billion in funding for school nutrition programs and delivery through the CARES Act

stimulus package passed in March 2020. (Feindler et al., 2022, p. 119)

Learning During a Pandemic

If a global pandemic had happened thirty years ago, online classes would not have been

an option for students to continue their schooling, yet thanks to the advances in digital

technologies and previous experimentations in distances learning before 2020, schools were able

to continue instruction. Surprisingly, there were several advantages to having a newly reformed

style of teaching for both teachers and students. As teachers worked to create an environment

online while remembering that building relationships were important, their students continued

building relationships as well. Students learned how to learn in an online environment. Teachers

worked to foster learning opportunities over a remote environment for their students and to lift

students up. Students also helped to lift teachers during the pandemic (Roy, 2020).

The most positive feedback from teachers was when they worked to create connections

with students. Teachers did their best to continue building relationships even though the in-

person discussions and feedback were not possible (Evans et al., 2020). As teachers and students

continued in lockdown and with online learning, there were also advantages related to how and

when students could study. This greater flexibility allowed many students to learn time

management and to self-motivate to get things done. The construct of remote learning and online

resources available allowed students to choose what they would study, when and how they

would study and could therefore spend more time on areas that needed greater attention (Yates et

al., 2020). One teacher created a club outside of their classroom hours for students to submit

artwork and share what they created with other students:

After one day of inviting students to join this club, 65 students signed up. By the end of

the school year, there were 72 members. Before COVID-19, this club averaged 12

students who met once a week before school for 30 minutes to sketch on their own. This

new virtual club was a huge success as students rapidly submitted pencil sketches, iPad

drawings, and photos of their work. (Montero, 2021, p. 14)

Not only was this a way for students to feel included and create connections with others, but it

also fostered collaboration on how to improve their artwork. The teacher further explained:

Students asked each other what iPad apps they were using or how they could shade an

animal so realistically. These conversations promoted a sense of community and

belonging. My feelings of isolation lessened due to the relationships [formed] with these

Sketch Club students. (Montero, 2021, p 14)

Some educators incorporated feedback between a student and their peers into the virtual

classrooms. Creating a community during remote learning was critical in gaining student

participation and had its challenges. One teacher recognized that "despite the fact that students

actively participated in the synchronous classroom setting online, I noted that students hesitated

to provide critical and negative real-time feedback to peers" (Song et al., 2021, p. 19).

There were advantages to remote learning that were made evident during the switch to

distance learning. McComb et al. stated:

The skills required to think critically and create are the same as traditional studio lessons,

but the tools are different in what they can do and produce. This opened the door to

multimodal thinking, modifying teaching and learning…The use of hyperlinks, videos,

and apps, combined and integrated into classroom websites, offered a cohesive

asynchronous digital curriculum for high school students, affording learning experiences

otherwise not possible in a traditional classroom. (McComb et al., 2022, p. 47)

Remote Technological Innovations and Art Education

Several teachers realized that using technology to show a demonstration had advantages

in remote leaning because students all had the same close-up view of their screens and could see

the demonstration that the teacher presented in the video. "With the entire class witnessing a

print or bookbinding process, any student [could] ask a question during the demo. This

[prompted] discussions and immediate clarification in real time" (Sutters et al., 2022, p. 40). In

addition to the advantages of using technology to increase student access, students were also able

to use technology to virtually collaborate without needing to be in the same location. "Using

various applications, groups could collaborate effectively, as they shared ideas in real time. They

also met virtually and shared their screens while planning" (Lifschitz-Grant, 2022, p. 35).

Teachers learned that they could integrate technology into their lesson plans and classroom

management strategies in creative and effective ways for student learning, collaboration and in

collecting feedback and assignments from students. LaJevic said in 2021:

> Working through new teaching routines and technologies, I was challenged to design
>
> artmaking activities based on materials available to students. Coincidently, the course
>
> explored contemporary art forms, such as photography, performance art, and
>
> nontraditional materials, during the second half of the semester. This worked out well
>
> because students had access to smartphones with cameras, their bodies, and found
>
> materials while confined to their homes. For each class, students were expected to review
>
> my prerecorded, not-so-perfect, narrated PowerPoint presentations on Canvas. The
>
> presentations included a review of the art materials/processes, relevant contemporary

artists, ideas for the K–12 art room, and mini-studio assignments. Students typically

created two artworks per week, dedicating 60 minutes to each, and then shared their work

on a discussion board and participated in a critique. (LaJevic, 2021, p. 11)

Resource Challenges

Another difficulty that was unique to remote learning during the pandemic was a lack of

resources for students. This included materials that students would usually have access to in the

classroom but were not able to have because they couldn't meet in-person at school. Difficulties

also included other resources such as inadequate internet connection for students to connect to

their remote classes and inadequate food for students who had previously received meals from

the school during the day but could not because of school closures.

During the pandemic, there was also the question of how to continue certain types of art

education which might not utilize specific digital platforms, such as art mediums that required

specific supplies. The limitations of supplies and materials led to opportunities for students to

creatively problem solve. One student who needed video equipment during a university

shutdown ended up using her own resources at home to create a studio in her bedroom. She

created props which she could move around as needed for her photo shoot assignments. Other

students who didn't have the props that they would have otherwise had in their classroom, turned

to performance art (Hildebrandt, 2021).

Limited resources were also a negative aspect of remote learning during the pandemic

because students and educators didn't have access to the resources available in an in-person

learning environment. In 2023, Reich-Shapiro & Scarola shared their experience with remote

learning:

In a remote learning environment, without access to the materials and resources available in our campus classroom to facilitate students to fully engage in artmaking, students needed a different kind of support to prepare their own materials, independently explore resources, and experiment their way through creation without the physical proximity of their classmates or teachers to chat with as they generated ideas. Because of this lack of resources and personal feedback from peers and instructors, feedback and reflection were relegated to post creation in written and virtual class discussions. (p. 18)

During the pandemic, teachers creatively found materials that their students could use in substitute for classroom art supplies. Several teachers shared that:

The first step in remaking our course for remote learning was to create a list of essential and inexpensive art supplies that our students might have at home or could easily acquire: construction paper, watercolor paints, oil pastels, markers or pencils, and glue… The next step was to find online resources that would spark their imagination—a virtual museum exhibit, a live streamed dance or music performance, a storytelling video—and design learning activities that could easily be completed at home with materials they had available to them, including materials such as buttons and cardboard boxes. Over the next six semesters, we implemented the redesigned curriculum. We encouraged students to make art with the people in their lives. (Reich-Shapiro & Scarola, 2023, p. 18)

If students didn't have supplies at home, they had to be creative or go without. Teachers encouraged creativity and flexibility in their students to create meaningful artwork during this time. Krauss & LaRiviere, in 2022, shared how their students used resources at home:

While some students had plenty of art supplies at home, for others, locating basics such as paper and pencils proved to be a hardship. Faced with this challenge, teachers had to

design lessons students could complete using the materials they had on hand. More importantly, these lessons needed to inspire students' imaginations and cultivate their innate creativity… Students used household items such as brooms, clothespins, and juice bottles to create the bodies of beings. Action figures and doll accessories became props that helped their pieces come alive. (Krauss & LaRiviere, 2022, p. 56)

Technology Challenges

In March 2020, as students were sent home from school and instructed to learn remotely, there were more struggles besides the fact they would be learning from a computer. Some students didn't have the technology at home. Even if students were issued a laptop or Chromebook from the school to use, there was the question of Wi-Fi and internet bandwidth. As students and parents moved from in-person school and work, there were more people at home using the same internet for responsibilities that they were expected to do. Thomas Graves shared his experience at the time as he transitioned from in-class teaching in London to remote: He realized that many of his students didn't have access to WIFI so even if they were motivated to complete his assignments, they may or may not have the means to even access his instructional videos or attend a virtual class. He recognized that many of his year 10 students didn't have iPads or computers and those who didn't would do the best they could with their phones to complete assignments (Evans et al., 2020).

The internet became a necessity in remote learning during the pandemic, and if students didn't have that resource at home, they didn't have equal access to learning. "Some students had limited access to digital devices or internet services due to their socioeconomic backgrounds. Having to balance job schedules, family obligations, and education during the pandemic, some students required flexible and alternative learning opportunities" (Song et al., 2023, p. 46).

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One difficulty for teachers was the technology platforms themselves. Being unable to see student's body language during classes created a new challenge for teachers. "Distant faculty must learn to teach effectively without cues from body language. They also need to understand students' lifestyles, cultures, and experiential worlds. While all teachers should work to understand their students, distance makes this need more challenging" (Stankiewicz & Garber, 2020). Even with these challenges, teachers could use chat rooms, discussion boards, webcams, and other digital technologies to create meaningful correspondences with and between students.

Student and Teacher Interaction

Florence Kemp wasn't sure how helpful their online lessons were for their students during the pandemic remote teaching experience. Kemp felt that remote learning lacked the needed social connection for effective learning and that there weren't opportunities in the remote environment to foster those social interactions (Evans et al., 2020). An important limitation was a change in how teachers and students were used to connecting with each other. A large part in student learning involves empathy. A 2011 study concluded that although remote learning has many uses within different applications to foster learning, it lacks the needed social connection and collaboration to create those relationships between teachers and student for learning (Quinn, 2011).

Still, during a pandemic that required at-home learning, teachers did their best with what they were dealt. Zoom—an online conferencing application—became a wide-spread tool for distanced communication with the stay-at-home order throughout the world. Teachers and students alike had the opportunity to ride the fast-digital learning curve to adapt to a new learning environment using Zoom and other web-based applications. A teacher shared how they

knew from previously teaching in a remote environment that being available was essential and expected by students, so they strove to respond quickly to students (Roy, 2020).

Overby in 2022 shared how teachers celebrated their successes by setting up pick up times at the school for students to obtain their supplies. Teachers worked together to solve problems in their teaching curriculum to use cell phones that students had available to them to teach a digital photography class (Overby, 2022).

Transitions to Online Learning During COVID-19

Initially, teachers had to scramble just to get their online lessons ready in two weeks to continue teaching when the pandemic first shut everything down. Then after some time and experimentation with the new remote learning system, teachers were able to adjust and adapt their lessons into the remote environment a little more smoothly. Overby shared:

By Monday, teachers were isolated at home, figuring out how to teach art classes over a computer to students who had no art supplies. That fall, teachers were all better prepared to teach remotely. While district officials thought the schools would go back to a hybrid setting at some point, they ultimately decided we should be remote the whole semester. Students still did not have access to most equipment and supplies, but art teachers created units that covered the content's big ideas and kept students engaged. (Overby, 2022, p. 48)

Teachers didn't have their usual classroom supplies where students would normally come to a school classroom to learn. Instead, they used what their students had available at their respective homes. In these cases, Yates et al. share that these learning activities were:

Designed or adapted with students' contexts in mind with adaptations using resources within the home and using digital technology to approximate authentic experiences.

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Examples of using home resources included designing and cooking restaurant-style meals for home economics, a lockdown challenge for outdoor education (including outdoor cooking, making a how-to video and risk assessment). Science teachers had students use household products to safely carry out chemistry experiments. Digital technologies were used as a representation of authentic experiences: A virtual frog dissection for biology, using Zoom for a debate and using the computer camera to set the stage size for a solo drama performance were three notable examples. (Yates et al., 2020, p. 47)

During the pandemic, teachers were expected to transition from in-person classrooms and lessons designed for in-person instruction to a remote learning and teaching environment and were given two weeks to adapt their curriculum with little to no training or instruction on how to do so. This was a monumental task and teachers had to put in extra hours and creativity. Many teachers did their best with what they were given and adapted to new and uncomfortable ways of teaching. Montero shared how teachers collaborated during the pandemic:

Teachers and staff did their best to support each other during the transition.

Online staff meetings cropped up overnight, and emails arrived with expectations for delivering our curriculum as required. While educators were expected to become online teaching experts, students and parents were supposed to understand and embrace learning virtually—all with little or no training. (Montero, 2021, p. 13)

As time passed, teachers sought out resources and trainings to prepare themselves for the continued remote mode of teaching. Song et al. shared their experience with technology in remote learning:

Although I utilized Blackboard and Canvas as standard communication tools for class announcements and grading, online teaching suddenly became a new challenge.

Promptly, I signed up for several online training courses to understand better platforms

for designing online courses. (Song et al., 2023, p. 43)

Many teachers looked for additional resources to help them with the switch. For example, the

National Art Education Association put together a remote tool kit for teachers. "For the period

from April 1, 2020, until August 31, the National Art Education Association (NAEA) Remote

Learning Toolkit received a total of 65,101 views. The toolkit includes resources in the form of

educational frameworks" (Sabol, 2022, p. 132).

NAEA created various resources to support teachers and students for the new 2020–2021

school year. Sabol in 2022 stated:

In August of 2020, NAEA published two seminal documents to support art educators in

their preparation for opening the fall semester. Tips for Returning to the Visual Arts and

Design Classroom (NAEA, 2020a) and Tips for Teaching Visual Arts and Design in a

Distance-Learning Environment (NAEA, 2020b), were published as part of its Preparing

for School Year 2020-21 program. These publications were designed specifically to

provide art teachers with professional guidance in preparing to open the school year

under conditions created by the COVID-19 pandemic and to provide suggestions for

designing and managing learning in the visual arts through distance learning platforms.

(Sabol, 2022, p. 131)

The documents were created in August, which was five months after the transition to remote

learning. Up to that point, educators worked with colleagues and their districts, along with a fair

amount of experimenting in their own remote classrooms in order to teach their students online.

Even with added support, a study "indicated that only 16.1% of the participating teachers

thought they had received adequate training for remote teaching during the summer of 2020 for

fall 2020 implementation" (Song et al., 2023, p. 40). In addition to a lack of resources at the beginning of the pandemic, educators lacked adequate time to transition from in-person to remote teaching. One educator, Kyungeun Lim, explained:

Although I had already taught art classes online before the pandemic, transferring existing in-person courses to online formats within two weeks of the pandemic's start was a challenging experience. I designed the courses and moved in-person activities and lectures to online platforms…Responding to the changes, I pondered several questions: Where can I get support for my courses and students? How can I help myself develop resilience in teaching and supporting students? Where can I get support for myself emotionally? (Song et al., 2023, p. 46)

These were valid questions educators may have asked themselves during the pandemic and were not answered right away. The lack of time and training for teachers to transition to remote teaching left many gaps for student learning. "In the initial rush to move to online, we learned that there were far too many independent tasks that stalled student learning. Without the interactions with teachers and peers, families struggled to fill in the instructional gaps" (Montero, 2021, p. 15). In addition to gaps in student learning, art education took a hit as administrators focused on core subjects. "As administrators scrambled to respond to the pandemic and what and how to provide instruction, arts education was further marginalized, forgotten, and/or simply overlooked" (Feindler et al., 2022, p. 121).

As teachers and students experienced the effects of the pandemic together, the shared difficulties and experiences created a sense of community. Teachers banded together to share best tips for teaching remotely, and students sought out other students in their classrooms in order to connect and relate with how others were doing. Kantawala in 2023 explained:

The COVID-19 pandemic forced educators to adapt to unprecedented challenges while

reimagining traditional methods by integrating creativity into virtual environments.

During this time, the arts have been pivotal in fostering a sense of community and

resilience by allowing students and teachers to process experiences, explore identities,

and build meaningful connections with others. (Kantawala, 2023, p. 4)

With so many unknowns, Kantawala continues that the pandemic:

Accelerated the need for knowledge sharing, collaboration, and innovation to address

challenges associated with the shift to virtual teaching planforms. This need then extends

to sharing best practices in various aspects of remote collaboration, rapid innovation,

emotional support, resilience, and professional development, thus emphasizing the

ongoing importance of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. (Kantawala, 2023, p.

4)

Collaboration among teachers was a great help during the lockdown in some instances.

Another teacher shared how they worked with a colleague over Zoom calls to collaborate on how

they would teach online and to also vent over the difficulties involved in moving to remote

instruction over such a short period of time (Kraehe, 2020).

Learning from Remote Learning Post Pandemic

Wanting to differentiate between distance learning pre-pandemic and during the

pandemic, two teachers, Bozkurt and Sharma, worried that people would only remember the

difficulties of the pandemic and wouldn't learn from the experience of remote learning in

moving forward towards making distance education more effective (Jacobs et al., 2020). There

were many limitations that formed during the pandemic period of distance learning some of

which include: "the digital divide experienced by learners; the uneven impact on families,

including inequity and social justice; the need for more student-centered learning; and the need for educators to be familiar with, and have some training in, online pedagogies" (Jacobs et al., 2020, p.23).

Teachers worked hard to create meaningful lessons for their students during the transition and understood that there were a lot of new stressors on students and teachers alike. Because of this, teachers were more flexible in their classrooms and sought to prioritize student wellness over rigid lesson plans. "By prioritizing our relationships over the traditional curriculum, I found myself willing to let go of controlling students' output…Assessment became focused on how the student demonstrated skills and techniques, not how well they met the original design prompt" (Overby, 2022, p. 47). Some teachers encouraged their students to continue to participate in school and wanted their class to be a meaningful experience, so they adapted their lesson plans to reflect on what students were experiencing. Overby shared how they modified their class to meet students' needs:

> I redesigned my curriculum to directly connect to what students were experiencing…
> Because we were all working from our homes, students would figure out what they
> wanted to communicate and then experiment with the technology to which they had
> access. Technical skills were developed as students worked through their idea rather than
> practicing a skill and applying it to a project prompt. In contrast to past years, the
> curriculum started to become emergent and flexible in design. (Overby, 2022, p. 48)

Teaching and Learning Flexibility

Remote learning allowed for flexibility in when students could study, and it also alleviated the stressors that many students experienced due to the world circumstances. The stress of school, done at their own pace, allowed students to continue their studies during an

unprecedented time. "Students realized they had more time to work on school-based assessments so they could work at their own pace which relieved stress. This was something that students would like continued" (Yates et al., 2020, p. 15). Hopefully in the future, teachers and students will be able to use what was learned during the pandemic and continue some of the advantages of online learning, such as online discussion boards to foster student connection and online grading.

The flexibility in lesson plans and the decision to incorporate personal and meaningful assignments into the curriculum led to a deeper level of student artwork that pleasantly surprised many teachers who were impressed by their students' efforts. Krauss & LaRiviere in 2022 shared:

> Creating art in this improvised way requires significant higher order thinking. To interpret directions without teachers' supervision, students had to make inferences and test theories. Students had to survey their surroundings, evaluate their options, and make critical decisions to find appropriate materials. To respond to personal prompts, students had to internalize art concepts and apply them to their own worlds. In the online setting, the reflective process became central. For Creative Classrooms teachers to evaluate their students' work, students had to demonstrate what they had made and explain how they had made it, thus engaging in metacognition. Students cultivated an awareness and understanding of their own learning processes. (Krauss & LaRiviere, 2022, p. 57)

Some of the curriculum flexibility led to a decrease in student participation, however. Learning expectations were adjusted to account for inequality for students who didn't have online resources. This had negative effects on participation. "Teachers saw decreased student participation in areas with a greater proportion of low-income students and appear to have held

lower standards for some students, such as those in more rural areas" (Feindler et al., 2022, p. 118).

One teacher, Laura Webb, was astonished to find that some of her students participated better in a remote learning setting than during in-person instruction. Her student, John, became more self-motivated and submitted work ahead of time (Evans et al., 2020). Another teacher, Roy, shared:

Many students rose to the occasion and thrived during social distancing and remote learning. But for others, the face-to-face interaction of the classroom was preferred. One teacher also noticed the preference for regular face-to-face interaction among their students. They received feedback from their students that the face-to-face interaction helped reduce their desire to procrastinate their schoolwork. (Roy, 2020)

Learning from Technological Inequalities

As teachers switched to remote teaching, there was a difficult problem with internet connectivity. Teachers that wanted to offer their classes synchronously required enough internet bandwidth at their homes to be able to teach remotely. "The swift pivot to remote teaching during COVID-19 brought much attention to the already existing inconsistencies of home Wi-Fi access, causing many teachers to lament their internet issues" (Harlow et al., 2023, p. 33). Some teachers had to creatively find places where they could safely use the Wi-Fi available in their communities. There were issues with "routers, wiring, electrical transformers, and other home equipment caused connection and financial issues. One of the most revealing responses was the emergence of fast-food parking lot teachers who worked inside their cars at local eating establishments to access Wi-Fi" (Harlow et al., 2023, p. 34).

Even when teachers did have good internet connectivity at home, their remote classes also required that their students had good internet bandwidth in order to participate in their classes. "Finally, educators expressed the need for better internet connectivity, more resources for facilitating distance teaching, and noted that the most significant challenges related to student engagement and access to technology" (Feindler et al., 2022, p. 120).

Because of the nature of remote learning, there is a physical separation between students and their teachers. That distance makes it difficult for teachers to create a personal connection with their students like they do in the classroom. "Educators often fear a loss of human connection when working with students through a virtual platform" (Song et al., 2023, p. 42). Educators may see a 2D image of their student on the screen if they share their video in a Zoom or Teams view, but it isn't the same as seeing their students in-person. In 2022, Wright shared:

> For the past year, the class has run online. Students worked from home, using easily accessible materials, tools, and methods of attachment: wood skewers, glue guns, foam core, and so on. The classes ran asynchronously, but I hosted live classes every week at the same day and time. They were optional, and I recorded them. Students attended, but as classes were optional, they felt no obligation to show their faces or even use their voices. (Wright, 2022, p. 23)

In addition to this difficulty, students during the pandemic had all their classes in a remote setting and had the added stressors surrounding the pandemic.

Mixing Home and School Culture

During the pandemic, one of the challenges students faced was managing school in their home setting. Many parents limited screen time for their children, but with the pandemic, and online learning, students were on their screens more (Hantrais et al., 2020). During the stay-at-

home lockdown, screen time became a thing that included school time. There was a meshing of school and home cultures as teachers would digitally enter the living spaces of each of their students, and those students digitally entered the living space of their teachers. Any younger siblings at home could run in and out of students' screens, or younger children of teachers could easily and frequently interrupt lessons.

Adding to the distractions at home, there was also the difficulty of adequate Wi-fi or computer access at home (Hantrais et al., 2020). If students weren't issued a computer to work with at home, a home computer might have been used by parents faced with working from home. Parents also had to juggle the new demands associated with the pandemic. There was a divide between families that could cope well and those who didn't have the resources. Some families struggled to adjust to the new demands during the pandemic, such as finding health information and transitioning to an online space for work and school. Other families managed the changes and new stressors well and even found time for hobbies or spending time with family members who they quarantined with (Hantrais et al., 2020).

Many parents want to monitor the content that their children are exposed to, over the internet and otherwise. Hantrais et al., in 2020, stated:

> Before the pandemic, parents had time to implement technology use for their children and find balance for time spent together. During the pandemic, parents had added challenges of managing technology use for their children because of screen time required for remote learning. (Hantrais et al., 2020, p. 31)

Remote learning created a unique situation where a teacher working from home would put their camera on in a virtual meeting with their students and students could see the teacher's living space. On the other hand, teachers could also see into their students' homes and this

mixing of school and home culture was different from what was seen in school. McComb et al., in 2022 shared how cameras and webcams were helpful:

> Adding cameras and webcams to the kintsugi artmaking process allowed students to effectively modify their private spaces, making their work public to peers also taking the class. This private valuing of process and product merged into a shared experience as students used digital technologies to document, journal, and present their journey within a virtual classroom space. This experience of living with the project while social distancing produced an intimate artistic setting that emphasized the meaning and therapeutic process of kintsugi, which would be unattainable in a traditional classroom. (McComb et al., 2022, p. 46)

Because everyone was required to isolate, students were at home with their family members who also had school and work responsibilities. Having cameras on during remote instruction allowed teachers to see their students' faces and also created a direct view into their students' living situations. "Many teachers realized that, for some of their students, home life was a serious barrier to learning due to lack of materials; other students were experiencing chronic trauma" (Krauss & LaRiviere, 2022, p. 57).

Students did not always have full access to computers or to the internet. "In addition, unlike other planned distance learning or home-schooling arrangements, parents were faced with juggling work and facilitating remote schooling with little to no planning time" (Feindler et al., 2022, p. 120).

Distance learning also allowed family members to participate in student's classes and assignments. LaJevic shared:

To my surprise, as students made creative choices in their artmaking, many involved

family members. After posting her reverse graffiti artwork online, a student wrote: My

dad happened to be sitting next to me as I watched the lecture; heard the word "power

wash," so forget it. We did a bunch of experiments with stencils and different surfaces....

It was actually a ton of fun to be power washing in my pajamas with my dad this

morning. Had we been meeting in our regular on-campus instruction, I realized that this

family involvement in learning and artmaking likely would not have occurred. (LaJevic,

2021, p. 12)

Another benefit to students learning from home was that students could share their home

culture with their classmates. Krauss and LaRiviere shared how students using materials at home

was a benefit towards their learning:

One of the greatest benefits of using materials from students' home environments is that

doing so invites students' cultures directly into their work, from the materials they use to

the themes they choose to depict. The term culture includes more than just heritage; it

also includes values, shared attitudes, family practices, and the everyday experiences that

shape us. In the spring of 2020, students used a variety of household materials, religious

objects, decorations, food, and music in their artwork. These artifacts give educators

information about the values, attitudes, family practices, and everyday experiences that

make up this student's culture. Often, the invitation to bring cultural lessons into the

classroom is relegated to a single day, month, or unit, but distance learning brought

students' culture to the forefront on a daily basis. (Krauss and LaRiviere, 2022, p. 57)

Educators and Remote Learning During a Pandemic

Many teachers had to make the change to remote learning during the pandemic, even if they didn't have previous experience teaching in an online platform. This created many opportunities for growth and discovery among teachers and students.

Teachers went to great lengths to prepare for the shift to remote learning during the pandemic and many of them used their own resources outside of the school budget to make the transition for their students as smooth as possible. With the shift to at-home teaching, teachers needed good internet bandwidth to be able to reach their students. A study conducted by Harlow et al. showed problems for educators regarding their internet at home:

> Two common problems reported in the data included (1) a slowness or dragging of home Wi-Fi or (2) their home internet needing more bandwidth to allow for the uploading and downloading of large video files. To compensate for slowness, teachers mentioned personally paying to upgrade their home internet or having to ask shared household members to use home internet less. Some participants worked early in the morning or at night when there was less competition for bandwidth. Some teachers even reported working in the middle of the night. (Harlow et al., 2023, p. 34)

Most teachers from larger cities or towns were given financial compensation for their internet expenses at home, but if teachers were from a small rural area, they often had to pay out of pocket to do their jobs. Harlow et al. shared:

> Respondents teaching 100% remotely or hybrid from their homes in fall 2020 were further asked if schools provided them with financial assistance for home internet. Only respondents from large-sized towns (1%) or metropolitan areas (3%) received any new financial support for their home internet service in fall 2020. With multiple family

members working from home and multiple children participating in remote instruction, the size of some teachers' data plans was a constant source of frustration—for their emotions and their wallets. (Harlow et al., 2023, p. 34)

Even through there was continual frustration with the difficulties of remote learning during an extremely stressful time, many educators looked for the positive and were creative in engaging students in new, virtual ways. Heckel in 2022 shared their insight:

Now that all my students have Chromebooks, I decided to have them travel virtually by conducting online research to create their own postcards inspired by the national parks. Additionally, students were able to revisit lesson materials asynchronously if they needed clarification, which allowed them to learn outside of the classroom. (Heckel, 2022, p. 37)

Teachers realized that they were the gateway for learning for their students. The lessons they created were tools for students to learn and think critically in new ways. Ansuini et al. stated:

The COVID-19 pandemic, however, forced us to consider access in a new way—where educators are the architects of our learning environments, and access is a set of conditions that we constantly create. Teachers build lessons and construct the ways we deliver content… The pandemic and move to online education forced every teacher to confront a new pedagogical environment. At that moment, access became a nonnegotiable action because of every student's need to access the learning environment. (Ansuini et al., 2022, pp. 47-48)

Teachers had to deal with new technologies as they transitioned to remote learning. They had the added pressure of having to teach so that students could understand while also being expected to master the applications that they hadn't used before. Many teachers created their own content to replace in-person instruction so that students could see demonstrations that would

usually be seen in class, or they created online lessons so that students could view them later.
Heckel shared their experience creating lessons for remote learning:

> My first demo video lesson took me several hours to record because I had to teach myself
> a screen-capturing program, and I had to start over several times because I messed up my
> words. After accepting the fact that it did not have to be perfect, I got the point—the
> important part was connecting with my students and communicating the purpose of the
> assignment. (Heckel, 2022, p. 37)

Many instructors would not choose remote learning if given the choice between in-person
and remote learning. There is great value in meeting in-person to make connections with students
and many teachers were hesitant about the remote learning format that they had to adopt.
Lifschitz- Grant shared:

> As someone who values face-to-face interaction, I was initially reluctant to move online.
> Yet I had to adapt and find ways to meaningfully engage my students. In learning new
> platforms and how to utilize existing technology more fully, I was able to provide
> experiences where students continue to learn and collaborate. Even without access to the
> array of materials found in the traditional classroom, my students discovered ways to
> manipulate materials and work on ideas important to them. (Lifschitz-Grant, 2022, p. 36)

Many teachers used online training resources that were available to improve their
teaching. An educator, Ms. Lee, shared what the state of Maryland created:

> [We created] over 250 hours of virtual professional learning in the days and months
> following the onset of the pandemic. These sessions covered a variety of topics including
> hybrid learning, sustaining relationships with students, families, and communities amidst
> shifting schooling formats, and the cultivation of anti-racist practice. (Grier, 2022, p. 238)

As teachers recognized and experienced how difficult it was to switch to remote learning, they worked with other educators to offer support and to collaborate on best practices for their students and their classes. Heckel in 2022 shared:

> Throughout my district, my art colleagues and I shared our lessons and digitally displayed our students' artwork in collaborative slideshows. We met regularly online in our department meetings to support and encourage one another. This pandemic has inspired incredible motivation to collaborate, and it seems we are communicating with each other more than we might have when we were in closer physical proximity. (Heckel, 2022, p. 37)

A teacher shared how "ironically, social distancing brought us together, out of our virtual silos, affording us opportunities to augment, modify, and redefine how and why we use technologies, thus enhancing and transforming our teaching practices" (McComb et al., 2022, p. 48).

Since teachers had spent time in-person with their students before the move to remote learning, teachers had already made connections with many of their students and could understand how the pandemic affected their students in negative ways. Everyone in school had to shift to remote learning together so there was a communal feeling of empathy between students, teachers, and peers. In 2022 Song observed that:

> I realized that my students do not want me to provide a perfect solution to their problems. They want my attention, care, and willingness to help. Combining synchronous and asynchronous methods was helpful in preventing students' isolation within class interactions. (Song, 2022, p. 44)

Teachers did their best to show support for their students while also taking care of their own mental health needs. Yet even with all they did, it was difficult for many teachers to witness their students struggling during the pandemic. "Being a teacher in a pandemic [was] fraught with complexities. To receive these artworks and read their artist statements [was] hard to do; these students were going through so much uncertainty" (Overby, 2022, p. 49).

Many teachers felt they were talking to their screens all day and didn't feel much human interaction from their students. In 2022, Wright, described their experience:

> I taught to my screen, critiquing submitted work with little or no immediate response. I could not look across the room to see if students were making mistakes or bringing forward work that was working well. I could not sense students' frustration by their bodily signals, furrowed brows, pacing, fidgeting, or heads in their hands… As a teacher, I had difficulty connecting with the students, with no eyes to look into. I had difficulty conveying humor in my lessons, as the tonal shifts and gestural cues that signify a comedic moment were often not picked up online. (Wright, 2022, pp. 23-24)

Remote Learning After the Pandemic

There are many differences between remote learning before the pandemic and remote learning during the pandemic. These differences include the time educators had to prepare their lessons. Before the pandemic, educators had more time to practice using the technological tools necessary to conduct remote learning. They tailored their lessons knowing they would be taught remotely, whereas educators during the pandemic had in-person lessons prepared which they needed to modify to fit inside the remote learning setting. Several teachers lamented how "We had two weeks to prepare and adapt our hands-on curriculum course for remote learning. The transition was sudden and shocking for students and faculty, especially amid the frightening

situation developing in New York City" (Reich-Shapiro & Scarola, 2023, p. 17). Even for those educators and institutions that had a history of teaching classes remotely, the scramble to modify lessons from in-person to remote was difficult and educators felt unprepared for the transition. Another teacher shared how their university had "a long history of providing distance education. However, even with long-term expertise and excellent technology support, many faculty members felt unprepared for virtual art teaching when all classes were abruptly moved online" (Song, 2022, p. 43). Most schools gave their teachers two weeks of staying at home after the pandemic shutdowns to modify their classes. "The timetable for implementing a new system of education delivery was rushed, and neither districts nor teachers were prepared" (Feindler et al., 2022, p. 120). This made a huge difference between remote learning under normal circumstances and during the pandemic.

A large difference between remote learning before and during the pandemic was the sense of isolation and lack of in-person connection for many students and teachers. Although the interactions of remote learning didn't foster as much social connection as the face-to-face classroom interactions that students and teachers were accustomed to, remote learning still provided interaction which lessened the effects of social distancing and isolation. "Isolation became manifest in a physical, geographic sense of (social) distance and artistically as students lacked the social dynamic experienced within the studio…a sense of community was created in the online course to counter isolation" (Sutters et al., 2022, p. 39).

Remote learning had increased in the years leading up to 2020. "Even before the pandemic, online modalities in U.S. public education had surged significantly in recent years. Online and hybrid forms of instruction have become essential methods of curriculum delivery in higher education settings" (Song et al., 2023, p. 41). The pandemic allowed many educators to

experience what it is like to teach remotely. Instructors worked with colleagues to share best

practices and to create a better remote learning environment for their students. Many educators

learned through trial and error about effective strategies for teaching remotely. The experience

during the pandemic also taught educators that there are aspects of remote learning that could be

helpful to implement even after returning to in-person instruction.

As the pandemic continued into the 2020–2021 school year, many schools returned to in-

person learning and occasionally offered a hybrid format where some students were in the

classroom and some students joining virtually. "Beginning in fall 2021, when our campus was

gradually reopening to in-person learning, one section of the course was offered in a hybrid

format" (Reich-Shapiro & Scarola, 2023, p. 16). This option of a hybrid format provided

accessibility for many students who felt unsafe returning to the classroom. If students were

exposed to the virus, they could stay home and quarantine while still being able to participate in

the classroom. Now, post-pandemic, the option to allow students to Zoom into their class rather

than miss school if they can't make it to the classroom for any reason (such as illness, or other

circumstances) will help students from falling behind in their coursework. Hybrid learning is also

an option for schools that may experience increment weather during the winter when snow fall

doesn't allow for safe transportation to schools.

Today, art education teachers can continue to use elements of their remote learning into

their in-person classes. For example, by setting up virtual visits to museums or conversations

with artists, money and time will be saved on travel for field trips, and artists would not have to

travel to visit a classroom in-person. "The structure of the asynchronous seminar art projects

allowed students to explore the museum exhibits and works of art at length without externally

imposed restrictions of time and space that would have shaped their in-person learning

experience" (Reich-Shapiro & Scarola, 2023, p. 21).

With the forced integration into online technology that allowed educators to teach in a

remote learning environment, teachers had to learn the technology that some educators may have

viewed as not as essential in teaching. In 2022, Heckel stated:

> This experience will certainly have an impact on my teaching methods moving forward. I
>
> will be sure to mine more resources from Google Arts & Culture, as well as from
>
> museum, local, and national arts organizations websites. I am now more open to trying
>
> new lessons in the classroom, even if they might not turn out the way I planned. Maybe
>
> my mandatory technological upgrade will make me more informed about what is
>
> important to my students, because I finally understand what all the excitement is about
>
> regarding the latest technology! (Heckel, 2022, p. 37)

Using the latest technology will help students with what they are learning in the classroom and

will open new pathways for thinking as they are encouraged to use the technology in meaningful

ways towards learning what they are doing in class. Krauss and LaRiviere shared:

> We believe it is our duty to incorporate the lessons learned during our quarantine into our
>
> teaching practices going forward. Based on this evidence, we have identified four
>
> principles that we recommend incorporating into future educational practices: (1)
>
> Whether or not students have art materials at their disposal, teachers must design lessons
>
> that use students' personal perspectives as the impetus for their art. (2) To boost students'
>
> metacognition in the same way they did during remote learning, teachers must include
>
> reflective practices as part of every project. (3) Without a direct view into students'
>
> cultural lives, teachers must create as many opportunities as possible to engage with

students' cultures and identities. (4) Teachers must address the stress and trauma caused

by the pandemic, as well as the everyday stress and trauma students carry with them.

(Krauss & LaRiviere, 2022, p. 58)

Another lesson learned during the pandemic was the importance of flexibility in teaching

to encourage deeper thinking for students in their learning. In 2022, Dik et al. shared:

The pandemic created space for educators to embrace a more process-based approach to

artmaking, particularly making use of the responding and connecting areas of the

standards where students can individually evaluate, critique, and make meaning about art

(their own or others). (Dik et al., 2022, p. 162)

Teachers can also look for ways and opportunities to create connections between students and

teachers outside of the in-person classroom using technology. As the pandemic continued into

the spring and fall of 2020 "arts educators had to work with students in online and hybrid

instructional situations throughout the country. Often, this meant finding ways to help students

engage in art making, presentation and performance that was individualized, and sometimes,

student led" (Dik et al., 2022, p. 161).

As teachers consider how to best use different management and teaching strategies in

remote learning, they should establish clear expectations for their students to limit

misunderstandings.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The methodologies I used in my research include qualitative research and narrative

research. These research methodologies focus on individuals' lived experiences. Qualitative

research originated from colonization as explorers from the west researched indigenous peoples

to understand their way of life. There are many methods that are used under qualitative research,

some of which include: politics and ethics, participatory inquiry, interviewing, visual methods, and interpretive analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Qualitative research is a way for a researcher to gain a greater understanding about a culture of a group of people, a corporation, a situation, event or any type of grouping or thing involving people that could have a culture or similar type of structure to it.

Narrative Research

One of the methodologies found under the umbrella of qualitative research is narrative research. This type of research focuses on telling stories and personal narratives of individuals' experiences. Narrative research worked well with what I sought to learn about remote learning because the experiences of individuals is my focus. Asking someone to share their story is the best way to understand about someone's experience (Anderson, 2014). Through narrative research, I read and learned about the stories and experiences of art educators as I learned what modifications they had to make during the pandemic. I anticipate that as teachers reflect on their experiences from distance learning and the struggles and triumphs surrounding the pandemic, they may find greater meaning and themes from my research that will be insightful.

As narrative research focuses on an individual's experience, one of the ways researchers learn about another's experience is through interviews and hearing that person's story, point of view, and feelings about a particular subject. An important part of this research is in the voice of the researcher and the interviewee. Both create the story as they help the reader feel what they have both felt (Anderson, 2014). I focused my research efforts on finding articles that were written by art educators to gather and learn from their narrative experiences.

The experiences I had during the COVID-19 pandemic are unique to me and is my own personal narrative. As I have interviewed my friends and family about their experiences, not

necessarily relating to education, I have learned that every person will have a different story about an event that was basically the same—a global pandemic. The stories people tell reflect the core of their knowledge. It is their experience and puts them as an active participant in the research (Anderson, 2014). The collection of all of the narrative stories is the true narrative but sharing every individual's experience is beyond the scope of this thesis. Instead, I endeavored to find themes in several narratives to add to a pool of meaning and understanding about art education and the move to distance learning during the unpreceded time of the pandemic.

Each person will experience life differently from others, even if they went through the same events. And each person reacts to situations and might feel different emotions about the same event. Narrative research strives to understand an individual's experiences through their point of view. Even with data from many individuals, each story in my research was different and added meaning to the narrative.

I sought to use qualitative research and narrative research as I learned about the effects of remote, distance, and online learning on teachers and students. I feel that these methodologies worked well and allowed me to learn about the events involving art education during the pandemic. Because I didn't have a class of my own, these methodologies allowed me to learn from teachers and their experiences as they adapted to remote teaching and then transitioned back to the in-person classroom in hybrid, in-person and remote settings. This was helpful because I was able to gather stories from more than one teacher through the questionnaire. And through researching articles, I learned about the advantages and limitations of distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic and how those advantages and limitations may influence remote learning after the pandemic.

Methods

        Qualitative researchers seek to understand the world they live in and often use multiple

methods which sometimes results in them being described as a scientist, naturalist, fieldworker,

journalist, social critic, artist, performer, jazz musician, filmmaker, quilt maker, essayist, and the

list can continue depending on what method the researcher uses inside of qualitative research

(Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). One method that I used in my study of distance learning and how it

has affected art education involved sending a questionnaire to art educators about their

experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. I didn't have a classroom of my own to gain

firsthand knowledge of remote learning experiences that educators had, so I relied on the

experiences and knowledge of other art educators to get a glimpse through their eyes.

        In addition to historical and scholarly commentaries about remote learning and the data

gathered from teachers, I include my own reflections about distance learning as a graduate

student during the COVID 19 pandemic. Key questions that guided by reflections were: (1) What

are the advantages and limitations of remote learning? (2) What were the challenges of remote

learning for art teachers during the pandemic? (3) How can the experiences of teaching remotely

be applied to art curriculum and teaching?

Chapter 4: Interviews

        Schools in the United States were required to shift to remote learning during the

pandemic, creating an ideal situation to study the affordances and limitations of remote learning.

I explored existing research about reoccurring themes around mental health struggles,

connection, isolation, technology, and hope for the future. I also gathered commentaries and

insights from four art teachers about remote learning. My own personal reflections as a student during the pandemic contribute to the commentary about distance learning.

Interviews

To gain better insight into the experiences of several teachers, I emailed a questionnaire (entire questionnaire found in Appendix A) to art educators who transitioned to remote learning during the pandemic. My goals were to: gather educators' experiences in a narrative research format; get firsthand accounts; include how the insights teachers learned about remote learning during the pandemic could be used post-pandemic; and add to the knowledge about remote learning. My questionnaire was sent to teachers who attended the 2021 National Art Education Association Convention in New York City and to teachers in the Alpine and Provo school districts in the state of Utah. I received four responses back. Although the quantity was not as many as I hoped for, the quality of the responses gave great insight into those four teachers' experiences and added to the research of other art educators found in academic articles. This chapter includes reflections on the insights and quotes from these four educators who agreed to having their names and experiences shared in this thesis.

Consistent Challenges of Teaching During a Pandemic

Some educators looked back on their experiences of teaching remotely during the pandemic as being very difficult, but they want to move forward with optimism. Marea Haslett is a Visual Arts teacher at Forsyth Central High School and Forsyth Virtual Academy in Cumming, Georgia. She shared her experience about the initial transition to remote learning. Haslett said:

> As most teachers, we just jumped in to solving the problem initially. I called students, calmed their fears as much as possible, delivered sanitized supplies to their homes, and we just got through it. My biggest focus in the beginning was the physical and mental

well-being of my kids. The hardest part was helping my AP kids finish their portfolios. That shift took quite a bit of work, but we got through. (M. Haslett, May 10, 2022)

For those students who had a good support system, they seemed to be able to handle school during the pandemic. As Michael Hood, a teacher and director of instrumental music and photography in the high school level, remarked, "the kids who always do OK—or well—still did, the strugglers struggled mightily" (M. Hood, May 9, 2022).

Teachers had to keep their students engaged and learning without classroom supplies. Teachers also recognized that some students were in situations with limited resources and had other concerns besides their school assignments. Some students lacked food and safety. Anna Davis, an art teacher at the high school level, shared her experience as she tried her best to support students who she knew were struggling. Davis said:

There were a lot of kids that did not feel safe at home, were not getting regular meals, were struggling with abuse. One of my students reached out to me, and I was truly afraid he was going to commit suicide that night. It was terrifying for him and for me. (A. Davis, May 9, 2022).

Many teachers turned to what they already knew and worked to create a remote learning curriculum and resources. Haslett said:

After the spring of 2020, I wrote the online course for Visual Arts 1 for our district. So much of the course's success depends on the quality of the demonstration videos. Those are constantly being edited. Also, I am always looking for ways to connect with kids. That's always the biggest hurdle. (M. Haslett, May 10, 2022)

Schools and school districts sometimes changed standards for students to accommodate learning difficulties encountered during the pandemic. For example, Anna Davis shared her experience as a teacher during the pandemic. Davis said:

> I felt like I had put in so much effort reaching out and putting content on Canvas, but the district basically said that no one would fail that quarter, and after that announcement, about 75% of my students just stopped caring and trying. There were a few kids that still wanted to learn, and a few of my kids that were still taking an AP test or submitting an AP Portfolio, but most of them just quit. It was super discouraging. I was doing a lot of reaching out, but not getting a lot of feedback from them. (A. Davis, May 9, 2022)

When the internet worked for teachers and students, there were often issues with the applications that were used. "[We] primarily used Microsoft Teams, but sometimes needed to augment Zoom or Google Meet when Teams didn't work, which was a least once a week" (M. Haslett, May 10, 2022). Teachers would often integrate more than one application in their remote teaching. Davis said, "Primarily I used Canvas, but I also used Zoom fairly often, as well as Gmail" (A. Davis, May 9, 2022). Some teachers created their own resources and videos to address the topics they wanted to cover in their classes. Haslett said, "When putting together units, I typically put all my notes and videos in a PowerPoint to share with students. When needed, I can make a screen recording and post it to YouTube if I need to save space" (M. Haslett, May 10, 2022).

> The lack of connection with students made it difficult for educators. Haslett said:
> The biggest negative [was] that it is very difficult to get to know the kids. I [learned] a tremendous amount about my students just by seeing their face every day. I [could] connect with them, build a trusting relationship with them, and help them along their

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journey through school and beyond. That [was] lost with virtual learning. Virtual learning

[created] silos of individual projects and subjects. [There was] minimal connection. (M.

Haslett, May 10, 2022)

Many teachers missed teaching in-person and would prefer that over remote learning.

Bart Francis teaches Ceramics, Commercial Art, Printmaking, Honors Art, and AP Art in grades

10-12. He shared how this impacted him. Francis said:

I still don't like [remote teaching] and avoid it at all costs. I'm convinced that something

is lost by removing the personal interaction you get from meeting in person. It's better

than nothing but not a great substitute for teaching in person. (B. Francis, May 9, 2022)

Teachers found it difficult to get student feedback in real time that they were accustomed

to during in-person learning. Haslett said:

Teaching remotely has a lot of work on the front in (making videos, setting up

connections, etc.). However, after that, it's ok for kids who are self-motivated. The ones

who are not self-motivated or difficult to reach via email, messenger, or phone are very

difficult to assist. The quality of education is not as strong since everything is very one-

sided. In class, I depend on ongoing feedback to adjust lessons. Online, the feedback

comes too late to make adjustments. (M. Haslett, May 10, 2022)

Teachers would integrate opportunities for students to share their thoughts and create

connections in their remote lessons. Francis said, "even though we were not allowed to meet in

person, students were still given opportunities to create and express themselves" (Bart Francis,

May 9, 2022). But Francis felt there was "less student and teacher engagement in the process

[because] most students did not engage at all while they were fully remote" (B. Francis, May 9,

2022*).*

Reflections on Becoming a Successful Teacher and Remote Learning

Some students really thrived with the new remote learning format. Haslett said, "I think for some kids, the flexibility of schedules [was] very positive. Some students work better focusing on projects alone. It also can help them develop a practice of creating art within their regular schedules" (M. Haslett, May 10, 2022).

As teachers made the shift and recognized that they could be successful teachers in a remote teaching environment, they were grateful they had learned from the experience. Davis said:

> Some positive outcomes of teaching remotely [include]: A. It helped me understand and utilize Canvas much more—I NEEDED to use it, so it pushed me to figure it out. I learned that there was a lot more capability than I realized. B. I also learned about the power of Zoom and digital communication. I had always been of the opinion that online meetings were vastly inferior to in-person meetings, and I realized that that is not always the case. C. I had to really dial in on what is essential in my curriculum and cut out the excess, and I think that was a powerful thing to do and actually made my teaching better. (A. Davis, May 9, 2022)

Davis continued and shared about their initial reaction to transitioning her in-person course to remote:

> The initial reaction was alarm and worry— it was so unknown and new. But I had a positive attitude like, "We can do this." I put in a lot of work to put lessons up and reach out to students. I was on Zoom a LOT working with teachers in my district for my district job, meeting on Zoom with individual AP Art students helping them get their portfolios together and putting up lessons on Canvas. (A. Davis, May 9, 2022)

Because students and instructors now have experienced remote learning, they are better equipped to transition to a remote day when meeting in person isn't an option. Haslett said,

> Nothing replaces the value of teaching in person. The importance that we have in students' lives is vital. However, flexibility is the name of the game, now. As far as content of our classes, I think virtual and remote learning is here to stay. My hope is to find ways to engage students more to avoid depression and burnout. Teaching them how to be engaged, volunteer, get involved in clubs, etc. is vital for kids who are primarily online. (M. Haslett, May 10, 2022)

When educators set up in-person classes and include the materials for the course online, students will be able to access their coursework anytime and anywhere and have more time to work on assignments. Haslett said,

> I think the concept of "going with the flow" has become the new norm. With the videos and things setup on a digital platform, students can access class information from anywhere. This will not change. I think students will be in a constant state of hybrid from here on out. Many colleges already do this, so this is not going to change. We must adjust. (M. Haslett, May 10, 2022)

The experience of learning and using new technology will help educators have more empathy for students as students learn the applications that teachers use in the classroom, whether remote or in-person. Davis said:

> Even [if] not [teaching] remotely, it's good to have clear essentials and make choices about projects based on whether it is in line with those essentials. I also do training and seek feedback from students about Canvas to make sure that they understand how to navigate it, how to find information, and how to utilize it as a tool. I would establish

protocols for behavior and clarify expectations of what I will do and what they need to do. I would try to promote and reinforce ways to connect with each other online. (A. Davis, May 9, 2022)

Educators can also use elements of remote learning in their in-person classrooms by having students turn assignments in online. This saves time in grading so teachers can focus more of their time on creating lessons and building connections with their students. Haslett said, "Since 2020, I've had students turn work in online. We still view projects in class during critiques. But I no longer tote portfolios full of projects home to grade. I grade them online. It makes the feedback and process much more streamlined" (M. Haslett, May 10, 2022).

A positive outcome from the pandemic is that educators are working together and creating a community of collaboration to best help students learn. Haslett said:

Schools will continue to adapt to the needs of a community. What I fear is getting lost is the importance of school's current role in a community and in helping students adjust to society. I hope that we can keep those relationships as a primary goal for online learning. (M. Haslett, May 10, 2022)

As schools and educators consider remote learning as a means of granting accessibility to students, they can look to the lessons learned during the pandemic in how to foster and create connections with the students.

Davis said:

There are good Canvas courses and there are bad Canvas courses. In Alpine [School District], we developed some protocols and even templates for teachers to use as they are building their own classes. Having some clarity when a student has eight different Canvas courses they are using, is really helpful. (We put it on Canvas Commons–Alpine School

District Canvas Clarity). I think it is really important to have clear learning intentions, a clear calendar, and to revisit that often with success criteria for them to measure their progress. (A. Davis, May 9, 2022)

Clear expectations for students include how teachers want to conduct their remote learning classes. During the pandemic, many teachers felt they were talking to their screens and not in front of a classroom of students. Something that can help with that is to have students keep their cameras on during the remote lesson so that teachers can see their students. Michael Hood felt that an expectation he would have for his remote classes going forward would be to "make sure their laptop cameras were on. Make sure they had DSLRs or semi-pro cameras" (M. Hood, May 9, 2022).

Teachers should also recognize when remote teaching is not for them. Just as some students thrived with the greater flexibility during the pandemic and remote learning, some students did not and struggled. The same thing happened to teachers. Francis said:

I think that to be an effective distant educator requires a different skillset than teaching in person. I found that many of the things that I excel at and really enjoy about teaching in person (connecting with students both formally and informally, providing informal feedback and motivation to students) were deemphasized while the parts of my job that I really don't enjoy (grading, bookkeeping, connecting via technology with students, creating detailed step by step lessons) were all I did. My advice would be to set realistic expectations for what class will be without meeting in-person. It will be different and that needs to be OK. To be honest, if I had to teach remotely as a long-term solution, I would seriously consider finding another career. I'm sure there are things I would do differently including better use of technology. (B. Francis, May 9, 2022)

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Teaching remotely should be something that works for the teacher and their students. There are times when teaching remotely may be the preferred option, and there are also times when in-person is preferable. Educators and students should evaluate their own needs to choose the best option for them.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

My interest in remote learning began when I was thrown into the distance learning environment as a college student during the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. The theme of my investigation since then has been how remote learning was adopted by art teachers, particularly as it happened during the pandemic. My interviews and personal reflections were influenced by existing research about reoccurring themes around mental health struggles, connection, isolation, technology, and hope for the future. My own personal reflections as a student during the pandemic contribute to the commentary about distance learning. The research questions that guided this investigation are: (1) What are the advantages and limitations of remote learning? (2) What were the challenges of remote learning for art teachers during the pandemic? (3) How can the experiences of teaching remotely be applied to art curriculum and teaching?

Limitations of Remote Learning

Many teachers learned first-hand during the pandemic about the limitations of remote learning. A limitation that many teachers lamented was the difficulty in building social connections between teachers and students because of the lack of in-person interaction. Teachers would find themselves talking to a computer screen rather than a classroom of students with faces. There wasn't the casual social interactions and teachers had to put forth more effort to

create trust and meaningful relationships with students. Added effort in remote learning towards

something that required little effort in an in-person environment led to more teacher burnout,

especially during the pandemic. This limitation was observed by researchers during the

pandemic (Evans et al. 2020; Quinn, 2011). Challenges with social connections was also noted

by M. Haslett and B. Francis, who I interviewed. I also observed this limitation of building

connections with my own teachers during my experiences with remote learning during the

pandemic.

Technological Challenges

Another limitation of remote learning is a reliance on internet bandwidth for the teacher

and student. If students don't have good internet, it creates accessibility issues for students. This

was particularly evident for students of lower income or minority groups as noted by researchers

(Evans et al., 2020; Song et al., 2023). This limitation also affected teachers who weren't

subsidized by their schools and had to pay out of pocket for reliable internet to do their jobs, or

look elsewhere for good internet, such as local businesses where the Wi-Fi could be reached

from the parking lots. This limitation for teachers in remote learning was observed by

researchers (Feindler et al., 2022; Harlow et al., 2023).

My own experiences and those of the teachers being interviewed suggested the obvious

fact that remote learning requires a certain level of technology skill on the part of the teacher and

student. It can be intimidating to learn new technologies and feel the expectation to be proficient

while teaching something new. Researchers also noted that this was especially evident during the

pandemic when there weren't trainings yet on how to use certain applications and there was

limited time to become familiar with certain programs (Montero, 2021; Sabol, 2022; Song et al.,

2023). There are many applications and emerging new applications and digital tools that can

assist in remote learning, but there is a learning curve for users before the technology can be effectively used in remote learning. Teachers observed that once educators were able to learn and understand the technology, there are many possibilities for remote learning. However, distance learning requires more from the teacher initially in recording videos or uploading content, materials and resources to the course. This requires that teachers understand how to create these resources digitally (teachers A. Davis and M. Haslett).

Researchers observed that during the pandemic teachers were required to have good internet, and this could create a financial burden on teachers. Because they were teaching at home there was a lack of boundaries regarding when they could be contacted or expected to reply to messages. A challenge specific to art educators during the pandemic was whether their district or school would continue to offer arts education for their students as a required course because of the difficulties in delivering content. Teachers had to figure out how to create lessons that could apply to their students who had different supplies based on what was available to students (Song et al., 2023).

Art Supply Challenges

Research commentaries and the teachers I interviewed observed that during the pandemic, art courses were hampered by the lack of art materials available for students. Some teachers were able to get supplies to their students by coordinating pick-up locations where students could get their art supplies. Sometimes, this wasn't always possible, and students would have to use what was available to them. This limitation created a domino effect where teachers would need to adjust their curriculum quickly to have art assignments that would be feasible for the students to do based on the supplies students had available to them at home (Sabol, 2022). I

also experienced this as my teachers adjusted their projects assigned to us based on what we had available.

Even in a planned remote class, the availability of art supplies can be a limit to learning based on what the school has available for students. It may mean that there would be check-out procedures put into place so each student would have access to the supplies, or the remote class size may be limited to allow for students to check out the supplies available. This would be dependent on which medium was being taught in a remote class and may need to be reevaluated if the class would function more successfully as an in-person or hybrid class. One artist, Nina Katchadourian, modified her teaching so that students were given assignments that required them to use only the supplies available to them in their homes. This interesting innovation was consistent with her art practice, but also pointed the way toward turning a limitation into a creative experience (Graham & Goldsberry, 2024).

Teaching During the Pandemic: Challenges for Art Educators

Many educators during the pandemic were given the remarkable challenge of transitioning their in-person curriculum into a remote learning curriculum. Many didn't have experience in remote teaching and what they accomplished in continuing to teach their students was incredible. Each teacher has their own reason for why they chose to become a teacher. Many enjoy working with students and seeing their growth while building teacher-student relationships. Remote learning often requires more effort to foster those types of interactions between students and teachers. This was a large challenge for many educators during the pandemic as expressed by two of the educators who I interviewed, B. Francis and A. Davis. In other observations by researchers, teaching was less enjoyable as a profession because of that lack of connection and face-to-face interaction. Teachers often found themselves talking to a

computer screen rather than to faces of students. Teachers had to work harder to keep students engaged and couldn't know if a student had tuned out in their lesson. This was observed by researchers (Cziboly & Bethlenfalvy, 2020).

Advantages of Remote Learning

The example of Nina Katchadourian noted above is echoed in the teaching strategies of Jorge Lucero who used online learning platforms as mediums for visual art constructions and creativity. He would look at Katchdourian's work and observe that she gives us permission to use whatever we have around the house to make art. During the NAEA presentation, later published as *Principles of Pandemic Pedagogy*, Lucero, Gude, and Graham described using online learning platforms as a medium for artmaking (Lucero, Gude, &Graham, 2022) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QZ5tYZ3ZEts).

There are other advantages in remote learning that can be helpful for educators to consider when planning teaching and creating curriculum. There is a greater level of flexibility in remote learning on when time is used for learning. A class that is offered on-demand for students allows students to learn in the course at any time of day when it works best for them in their schedule. The teacher is also able to grade or follow-up with students during times that work into their schedule. Classes that are offered synchronously allow for saved time and cost in transportation. Digital trips to museums or artists visiting digitally into a classroom may be more feasible than physical visits. These advantages of remote learning were observed by researchers (Akins, et al., 2004; Reich-Shapiro & Scarola, 2023; Song et al., 2021).

Digital applications allow for more streamlined processes and allows all course content to be in one place – once learned by teacher and student – and saves a lot of time in accessing that content. Remote learning during the pandemic pushed educators out of their comfort zones

which led to creativity and innovation between colleagues to find solutions. These collaborations among educators was a noteworthy development that was observed by researchers that could lead to more collective use of teaching strategies among colleagues with shared interests and common challenges (Sabol, 2022; Song et al., 2023).

Media Arts

My experiences as a media art student and developer of media art content supports the observation that media arts often use digital technologies to create art. Evolving technologies continue to open new possibilities for digital art and media art. The media arts require a computer or other digital device so remote learning is already adapted to explore media arts literacy and media arts production. Thus, delivering content and collaborating in a digital space could be done without needing to adapt media arts curriculum too much from an in-person classroom – where students are likely on computers already – to a remote learning environment. I experienced this in remote learning as I used applications on the computer, such as Adobe Photoshop, Premiere Pro and Illustrator to create different artwork during my remote classes during the pandemic.

Art Curriculum and Teaching Strategies in Remote Learning

The pandemic brought many insights into how elements found in remote learning can enhance art curriculum and teaching strategies for distance learning. A reoccurring theme of needing greater connections between teachers and students encouraged many educators to explore different strategies for fostering intentional interactions between teachers and students to build relationships. As I reflected on my school experiences during the pandemic, I observed many of the strategies that educators implemented during the pandemic.

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Classroom Interactions and Distance Learning

Educators need to rethink how they can connect with their students in a remote setting. This may mean there isn't the casual conversations that take place before and after the in-person classroom. Researchers and my own observations noted that during the pandemic there are many other means wherein teachers can connect with students. One-on-one interaction can still take place over digital zoom calls integrated into the curriculum. Because remote learning allows for more flexibility with sharing information to students over resources such as videos they recorded beforehand, class time can be used to touch base with students about how they are doing in the class and about any questions students may have about the content of the class or how they are doing on their projects. Remote one-on-one interactions are also a way to build trust between teachers and students and to keep students accountable for what they are doing in the course each week.

With adequate time to create a remote curriculum, teachers would be able to organize the class and set clear expectations from the beginning for their students. Teachers can set expectations with their students that one-on-one interactions will be part of the remote class. This would help students know what was expected of them and begin to establish a relationship between the teacher and student from the beginning of the course. The use of short surveys, as explained in my experience during a hybrid learning class, build trust and foster a relationship between the student and teacher and don't require a lot of time from either. A quick digital survey uses different methods from an in-person connection yet is still successful towards building a teacher-student relationship.

My Experiences with Remote Learning During the Pandemic

My teachers were supportive and asked how I was doing, but there wasn't more they could do besides the check-in during class. I got through it, but many others had a much more difficult time. The added fears during the pandemic made remote learning much more difficult for me.

One of my art teachers implemented a one-on-one check-in via phone calls each week with each student. He would call each of us and we would talk about how we were doing relating to the pandemic, and then discuss what we were working on in the class and if we had any issues or questions. He adjusted his curriculum to meet the needs of each of his students individually based on our interests and stress levels. This was an effective way he showed that he cared about us and we were able to continue to have a meaningful teacher-student relationship.

Another one of my art teachers used a hybrid class format when it was safe to return to in-person learning. She used the method of a quick survey each week to gather student feedback. The teacher asked for a quick response to three questions which we would email each week about how we were feeling, what questions we had about anything relating to the course and if we were able to complete our assignments for that week. This was a quick way to gather feedback from students and keep students accountable and on task. My teacher responded back by the next day that they received the response and answered any questions. Most weeks I didn't have an issue, so the response back from the teacher was short, but it showed me that I had my teacher as a resource, and I felt more comfortable contacting her during the week if I did have questions or needed additional feedback.

When students and teachers returned to traditional in-person learning, I took an asynchronous remote learning class that was offered completely online. The teacher had

recorded lessons and uploaded them in the course for students to access. We had an online book with readings assigned each week. Every week the teacher would send out an email to check-in and remind us what was due that week. I knew that I could reach out to him if I had questions, and he held weekly office hours to offer additional help to students. I felt that the remote class was a success in my learning. It offered many of the advantages of remote learning. I was able to manage my time and had the flexibility to work on the course within my schedule. The digital applications allowed students and teacher to utilize the technology available. The necessary resources for the course were in one place, easy to access. And the weekly emails let students know they had support and could trust their instructor.

When classes shifted to remote learning, I was taking university courses in art education at Brigham Young University. All of my classes transitioned online. We used zoom, phone calls, and email to coordinate assignments and have lessons. There were a lot of unknowns about how my teachers would conduct class, and in the beginning, it was unorganized and difficult to understand what was expected of us as students. Soon it became exhausting. I felt like I had to be glued to my computer all day in class and in doing assignments. The added stressors of quarantining if I came in contact with someone who may have the virus made me worried and I experienced feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Teacher Experiences and Social Interactions

A teacher, B. Francis, who I interviewed, noted that clear expectations were important in remote learning. Educators also recognized the need for social and emotional learning in the arts during the difficult time of the pandemic and how to continue to help students after returning to in-person learning. This was also observed by researchers (Dik et al., 2022; Krauss & LaRiviere, 2022; Overby, 2022).

Social and Emotional Learning

Both the pandemic and the turn toward distant learning created concerns about social and emotional learning and the mental health of both teachers and students (Sabol, 2022). As dangers of the virus lessened and schools returned to a full in-person environment, there are opportunities to implement remote learning strategies to help students connect social emotional health to social emotional learning. Learning strategies can include using digital technology as a way to keep open communication between teachers and students. Some students may feel more comfortable sending a chat or email rather than speaking face-to-face in-person with a teacher. As teachers build connections and trust in-person and over a digital platform, students will understand that they have multiple resources where they can contact and connect with their teachers.

An art class can have the added benefit of relieving stress for their students and will contribute in their emotional and social learning. It was noted by researchers that art education has natural overlaps with social and emotional learning (Feindler et al., 2022). These connections or overlaps are an area needing more research. Art teachers have an opportunity to encourage creativity in the artmaking of their students and develop artistic literacy. The online art classes that I experienced during the pandemic included assignments that encouraged my creativity and imagination in coming up with art creation that I normally wouldn't have had time to do. Instead of time spent in the classroom, we were encouraged to use that time in creating. I went outside and photographed birds in my neighborhood and in the nearby mountains. I was able to curate an outside exhibition with the images of the birds that other people could view in a safe environment and with adequate distance from other people in their own time.

Possible Advantages of Distance Learning for Students

There may be reasons why a student would choose a remote learning environment over in-person classroom instruction. For example, some students thrived in the remote learning environment for various reasons. Perhaps they have anxiety from the demands of social interactions around the in-person environment. Perhaps they do well with more autonomy and time on their own and at their own pace in order to complete assignments. Students who may need more time processing different parts of the course may do well in a remote learning environment because they can grasp certain parts of the course quickly and move on, whereas there may be other sections or units that they need to spend more time on to understand. These advantages for some students was observed by researchers (Cziboly & Bethlenfalvy: Reich-Shapiro & Scarola, 2023, 2020; Roy, 2020). This level of flexibility and autonomy could be utilized in remote learning classes and teachers can help students as-needed individually or in small groups depending on the layout of the course and if it is offered synchronously or on-demand.

Returning to Normal Schooling

As students returned in-person to their classes as COVID cases decreased, administrators and teachers were aware that their students may have residual trauma from the pandemic. Educators had procedures set in place to help students return in a way that would help students reconnect with peers and teachers right away. Policies were put in place to allow for hybrid learning so students who were exposed to the virus could quarantine at home until they were safe to return to the in-person classroom. If students or their parents felt uneasy about their return to the classroom, they could continue to stay at home and still participate in class remotely. This allowed students to continue learning in their classes even if they weren't physically present.

This implementation was a direct reaction to the effects of the pandemic and was observed by researchers (Krauss & LaRiviere, 2022). A. Davis also observed a hybrid return to in-person learning within her district.

The pandemic pushed art educators out of their comfort zones in a multitude of ways which required them to find creative solutions to new problems. As art educators discovered new online applications that they could implement into their lessons, they would collaborate with their colleagues on successes and challenges. These connections created meaningful interactions and a sense of connection and collaboration during a challenging time and was observed by researchers (Kantawala, 2023; Kraehe, 2020). Just as the pandemic pushed educators to come up with new solutions, educators can continue to find innovation to improve their lessons for their students through the accountability they have with the connections with their peers and colleagues. Because transportation often takes time out of meeting time, strategies learned in remote learning can be used to help teachers connect and collaborate over digital platforms.

The added stress and unknowns due to the pandemic created varying levels of disruption for student learning as is discussed earlier in the Remote Learning During a Pandemic section of the Literature Review. There were indications of learning loss and a decrease in student achievement that will need to be remediated due to disruptions in student learning (Feindler et al., 2022). Remote learning can play a role in reclaiming some of the knowledge that was lost. Because of the knowledge teachers gained through experiencing teaching remotely, they are in a position to provide remote classes and/or remote learning strategies for students who need additional time to learn. These lessons could be used as make-up courses that are on-demand or could be offered asynchronously. The topics of learning loss and remediation are currently being

researched in various parts of the K-12 educational system. How art educators can contribute to this ongoing discussion is an area needing further research.

What We Learned

Art education success had been gauged by the end product, but according to art education leaders, such as Bob Sabol (2022), an emphasis on the art process and art literacy might be a better indicator of success. The National Art Learning Standards include Reflecting, Connecting, and Presenting as well as Creating as important categories. Students gain art literacy through studying art, presenting art, and connecting art as well as creating art. The experience and process of making something is also educational, whether or not the final product is successful. Art educators can foster classes that create more autonomy for students in their artwork. Because remote learning requires a greater amount of motivation on the part of the student to be successful, art educators can create clear expectations in their remote classes that students will be responsible for their own time in art creation and processes. This was observed from the response to the questionnaire by Bart Francis. This autonomy will be challenging for students but will push their creativity and ability to think critically about the art they are creating.

In a remote class, students get feedback from their teachers digitally. In a hybrid learning environment, students are able to use the flexibility in remote learning to work at their own pace, and also have the benefit of in-person learning of seeing their classmates and teachers in the classroom and building those social connections. It also allows students to get feedback about their work digitally and in-person. I observed this as a student in my hybrid classes. This type of learning allows students to learn and work on their own and come to the teacher with specific questions about what they are learning. In this way, students have access to the content, and are able to learn at a deeper level by having access to the teacher's experience and knowledge in-

person. This is especially valuable in an art classroom setting. Students can work on the process of their art creation and when digital images aren't adequate for fully seeing their work, teachers can see their work in-person.

Remote learning strategies can be used as a tool to facilitate one-on-one interaction between students and teachers in a hybrid course. An idea for this would be to have students attend in-person classes during the in-person part of the hybrid course where the teacher is able to instruct the class as a whole. In the remote part of the class, students would have time to work on their own while teachers could check in over a conference call with individual students or in small groups. This would allow teachers to work with students according to the student's needs and allow students the autonomy and time to work on assignments and projects during class time. Students could check in with teachers as-needed, thus the teacher, as a resource, would be available remotely, and the students would learn how to manage their time and resources according to their needs of the project. This would shift the responsibility of learning to the student and would encourage them to develop self-management skills as well as improve their art literacy through art creation.

Based on my research about remote learning and my own experiences during the pandemic in remote learning, I believe that remote learning offers benefits in autonomy and flexibility for teachers and students that are unique from in-person learning. I also believe that it is inferior to in-person learning if not executed with intentional strategies to foster connections between teachers and students. This conclusion is supported by teachers in the field who said, "students have more time and flexibility to observe the artwork, engage with the source materials, reflect, and experiment with their artmaking" (Reich-Shapiro & Scarola, 2023, p. 18). "Students may have simultaneously enjoyed increased self-directed learning and flexibility while

struggling with the lack of opportunities to connect with peers" (Song et al., 2021, p. 19). "I think for some kids, the flexibility of schedules [was] very positive. Some students work better focusing on projects alone. It also can help them develop a practice of creating art within their regular schedules" (M. Haslett, May 10, 2022). "However, flexibility is the name of the game, now. As far as content of our classes, I think virtual and remote learning is here to stay" (M. Haslett, May 10, 2022).

My own experiences with graduate study included experiencing the shift from in-person learning to remote learning during the pandemic. During the pandemic I continued my research and classes and observed first-hand what it was like to live and study during the pandemic as a student. I recorded my observations using video cameras and created an art exhibition, "Chronicling COVID-19" where I displayed six tv screens with videos of the effects of the pandemic in an exhibition in the Harris Fine Arts Center in March of 2021, which stayed on display for two weeks. I learned how to transition to a hybrid learning experience as it became safer to do so. I collaborated with other students in my graduate cohort via Zoom calls and text chats to stay connected and find support. I learned new digital applications and taught others how to use applications in my classes. I learned how to continue attending classes remotely while needing to self-quarantine at home. I gained new friends through my graduate cohort, teachers in my program and with others on the BYU Racquetball team. These friendships were valuable in motivating me to continue working hard and in building my confidence in my studies and finding new ways to progress and continue in lifelong learning. There were moments when I couldn't see these friends in-person due to safety concerns from the pandemic, yet the elements of remote learning allowed those connections to continue over digital platforms.

My experiences with distance learning, schooling during a pandemic, and graduate study taught me that remote learning is able to enhance the student's learning experience and also create added difficulties for student learning depending on how it is executed. The initial transition to remote learning was unorganized and confusing for me as a graduate student. As seen in the research of educators, there were difficulties in making the transition to remote learning and this made it difficult for students in their classes (Cziboly & Bethlenfalvy, 2020; Harlow et al., 2023; Feindler et al., 2022; Montero, 2021; Overby, 2022; Song et al., 2023;). Yet with more time and resources, teachers were able to make intentional decisions around remote learning and remote learning strategies in a hybrid and in-person setting which enhanced the student's experiences and learning. I experienced this during my graduate studies as my teachers used intentional remote learning strategies in their classes and curriculum of my fully remote classes and hybrid classes. As teachers consider how remote learning strategies can enhance their student's learning, they should remember the lessons learned during the pandemic around remote learning and intentionally implement strategies that were effective in creating connections and building a culture of learning in their classes.

Future Research

Despite the research and observations about remote learning during and after the pandemic, there needs to be more research done about the long-term effects of remote learning during the pandemic on student learning and engagement, whether they will have positive or negative outcomes. Researchers and teachers during the pandemic were only able to describe how they and their students responded to remote learning, and research is still being conducted on long term consequences or benefits of remote learning.

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More research needs to be done on the impact of remote teaching on student learning. As this research is done, there also needs to be more information on how to best help students who have learning loss due to the pandemic. Often, students who don't complete their required course work during the school year need to work on course work during the summer, whether in completing packets or attending summer classes. Remote courses can be a solution for interactive courses for students who have learning loss or who have fallen behind to help them complete required courses so they can still complete the requirements for high school graduation. Asynchronous classes with check-ins to continue connection and interaction between remote instructors and students can help students have the information necessary and also keep accountability with the student so they have a teacher mentor to help them complete the course.

Teachers who taught during the pandemic learned new ways of using remote learning through trial and error and successes. For teachers who are just entering the field, there should be ways to train them in in-person instruction and remote learning, so they have the skills to be successful. One way they can prepare is if they have taken a remote class. This will give them the empathy and insight into what worked well for them during a remote course as a student. The limitations in remote learning created many challenges for educators during the pandemic. However, as educators consider using remote learning strategies, there are many advantages to remote learning that were learned from those challenges during the pandemic.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire

Questionnaire:

In March 2022, learning moved from in the classroom to a remote setting. As we have spent the last two years navigating distance learning and returning to the classroom, teachers have learned first-hand how to facilitate learning in a less than traditional method. This survey is gathering information about art educator's distance teaching experiences in order to compile the knowledge of many into one place to better understand what practices in distance learning are most helpful for educators and students.

Please fill out each question to the best of your knowledge. By filling out the questionnaire and returning it to the email, you consent to allowing your responses to be used in a research study done at Brigham Young University about distance learning during the pandemic.

Name:
Professional Title:
Grade level you teach:
School you are a teacher at:

Question 1: Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, have you taught any classes using distance or remote learning? If yes, what internet platform was used? (Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.)

Question 2: What was your initial reaction to teaching remotely?

Question 3: After several months, what was you experience or impressions about teaching remotely?

Question 4: What were some positive outcomes of teaching remotely?

Question 5: What were some negative outcomes of teaching remotely?

Question 6: If it were necessary for you to teach remotely again, what would you do differently? Or the same?

Question 7: What elements that are usually unique to distance learning would you continue to use in your in-person classroom?

Question 8: Please share any other insights about distance learning or remote teaching that you would share to improve distance learning for other educators.

Question 9: What has your experience been as some classes have gone back to remote learning temporarily as Covid case counts change?

Question 10: Any other thoughts?