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An Artful Habitat: Creating an Environment
for Divergent Expression

Marilyn Edna Bambrough

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

Master of Arts

Mark Graham, Chair
Daniel Barney
Brian Christensen

Department of Art
Brigham Young University

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ABSTRACT

An Artful Habitat: Creating an Environment for Divergent Expression

Marilyn Edna Bambrough
Department of Art, BYU
Masters of Art

Over the last century, teaching techniques and philosophies have changed extensively in the art classroom. Teaching methods have spanned a range that stretches from highly rigid, to self-expressive, more learner centered approaches. In recent years, there has been a resurgence of interest and research regarding the role of creativity in visual art education. This research project focused on the qualities of effective art instruction using elements from a number of historical ideologies, with the intent to study creative development in students. The research used a case-study methodology informed by a reflective, action research methodology. Research was used to determine effective engagement, and discover teaching strategies using fun and playful exploration that motivate students to be as creative as possible, discover what they are interested in, and engage them in their own artistic research. The application of this research is to inform and improve my own teaching practice, and to explore the qualities of effective learner centered art instruction for middle school age students.

Keywords: case study, action research, art education, engagement, emergent curriculum, creative development

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

No one person completes a work of this nature, solely by his or her own efforts, and this thesis was no exception. It was accomplished with the tremendous help, guidance, and support of numerous people. I would like to thank Mark Graham for his guidance, patience, and belief that I could accomplish this work. He was always ready to give direction and valuable insight to my questions. He was unfailing in his efforts to help our entire cohort succeed, and I am very grateful to him.

I am also very grateful to Daniel Barney for his willingness to share knowledge, insight and direction. He was often a source of inspiration and a sounding board for concerns. His understanding of curriculum made his suggestions and insights invaluable.

I express my great appreciation to the members of our cohort, with whom I shared both growing pains and success. I learned from them, grew to respect them, and was lifted by them. We bonded in a unique way to create friendships that I hope last a lifetime.

Lastly, I am ever grateful to my wonderful family. I thank my sister Aileen, who took her first weeks of retirement after working 45 years, to be my editor. I thank my sister Ann, who listened to me. I will forever be grateful to my angel daughter, Angela, who took over my role as head cook and maid, so I could write while meeting job responsibilities. I thank my husband, Bryan, who supported me unfailingly and made tremendous sacrifices so that I could have this educational opportunity; and to all of our four beautiful daughters who believed in me and let me know they were proud of what their mom was trying to accomplish.

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Chapter One: Introduction

“What is unique about human learning is its dedication to possibility. When we human beings learn, the act of learning carries us beyond what we have encountered and propels us into the realm of the possible.” -Jerome Bruner

Background

When I walk in a classroom, I know what to do. I have worked as an artist and educator for over 30 years. So, when I walk in a classroom, I know how to engage the children and model for them how to think like an artist. It was not always this way, however.

My first real teaching experience came when I was seventeen. The summer before I was to leave for college, I was asked to teach a group of five-year-olds in our church Sunday School. Believing I was good with children, I was sure this would be fun. With a well-prepared lesson in hand, I ventured into my first encounter. I was astonished to find complete mayhem. One little boy in particular, whom I will refer to as Timmy, had just started coming to our church with his family. He ran throughout the room, tried climbing on walls, poked and irritated other children, and refused to take his seat. The lesson was a disaster in every way possible, as was the next and the next. Knowing I had to do something to change the experience for both the children and myself, I did the only thing I knew how to do at seventeen. I made a plate of cookies, walked them down the street to Timmy's house, and told him there would be more if he could stay in his seat the next Sunday. He was surprised and delighted at my bribe.

The next week, Timmy not only came, but he also brought a friend who wanted in on the goodies. With all the effort they could muster, both boys somewhat stayed in their seats. As word of our deal spread through the class, I found myself making cookies and deliveries, every week

after church. Amazingly, the cookies worked, and I soon found I had eight little friends. By investing in them, they invested in me. However, in my heart, I knew there was more. What was happening in class that was worth staying in their seats for beyond a bribe? It seemed they would not need to bug others if the lesson was more enjoyable. How was I engaging them in the lessons taught? Were they having fun learning so that they could experience growth and understanding? Did they know I loved them and enjoyed being with them? Those questions mattered to me, because the children mattered to me personally. I slowly began the journey of finding real ways of engaging the students in the things I was trying to teach. By the time I left for college in the fall, things in the class had changed a great deal. Although I still had much to improve on in my teaching methods, both the children and I had grown to love each other and looked forward to our time together.

I had been at college only a few months when my mother called to give me the heartbreaking news. Timmy had darted out in the street and was hit by a car. He had died on the scene. Making cookies every Sunday afternoon for weeks had seemed like such a burden at times; now it did not seem like enough. It was such a small act. Suddenly, I learned a great truth. Everything I had done as a teacher was about meeting a little boy's needs before he was called home, not just spiritually, but emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively. It was about helping him discover and rise to the best that was in him. It was about letting his family know that I cared and was invested in their son.

From that time on, teaching forever became learner-centered for me. Though many other factors are important, what the child needs and how he or she learns, is always central to my teaching. As an art teacher, I have come to believe that creative expression is at the very heart of a child's needs. I affirm we are all creative beings with not just a capacity to create, but a real

need to create. I maintain that children are not in art education solely for recreation, or therapy, or a break from math equations. They are there to be challenged, to develop their creative, cognitive, and problem-solving abilities in an environment that is enjoyable, and safe for self-expression, curiosity, and playful wonderment. George Szekely (2010) sees teaching as creating an environment or a situation where ideas flow with possibility. He feels the process of creating helps children make meaning and vital connections to the world around them. He also feels this is best accomplished in an environment where self-expression, curiosity and playful wonderment can occur. If students feel stressed, the playful wonderment and experimentations that Szekely talks about do not occur. I have found that if I am genuinely enthusiastic about what the students are learning, they become enthusiastic. If the students are having fun and if I have given them the skills to be successful at what they are doing, they will stay engaged and enjoy the learning process.

Problem

Children's art was first recognized as a viable art form by its own merits, around the turn of the century. Art educators such as Franz Cizek and Marion Richardson raised the status of child art because they saw in it many similarities to what was then considered primitive art (Efland, 1990). Educators began to recognize that children were capable of far more sophisticated artistic expression than was previously believed. Children's art was seen as fresh and expressive. Arthur Efland (1976) describes children's art as a "spontaneous, unsupervised form of graphic expression usually done outside of school by children for their satisfaction or in response to a need felt in an environment" (p. 37). He quotes Brent Wilson (1974) as defining children's art as, "spontaneous, play art of young people ... It has little of the polished lushness of classroom art" (p. 38-39). Child's art embraces the true interests and expression of the child

making it. Children make it for the fun and sheer joy of the experience without rules or expectations that must be followed.

The arrival of Sputnik in the 1950s, created a genuine fear in the American people. The race with Russia for technological superiority demanded an emphasis placed on math and science in education. Teaching the arts was slated much lower, and in some instances even considered a luxury or completely expendable (Kliebard, 2004, p. 266-67). It was not long, before creative exploration for development and growth, was reduced to holiday crafts, or as add-on assignments for entertainment and diversion, a break from academic rigors.

The School Art Style, as it has been labeled by art educators, is often considered an art form of its own (Efland, 1976). Efland suggests that Child Art and School Art are two different things entirely. He points out the distinct styles of art made in schools are unlike art made in other settings. Efland feels educators like Cizek, were responsible for inventing the school art style. He credits Wilson (1974) for pointing out that School Art does not exist anywhere but in schools and that it is an institutional style developed within schools (p. 37). He defines it as, “a form of art that is produced in the school by children under the guidance and influence of a teacher” (p. 41). He argues that School Art styles do not create possibilities for free expression for youth, does not teach students about artmaking methods beyond the context of school, and describes school art as “game-like, conventional, ritualistic and rule-governed” (p.37-39). The issue with school art is that it looks factory produced; it all comes off the same conveyer belt, one piece looking precisely as the other; there is no originality, individualism, personality, or diversity. All of the assignments look exactly as the teacher prescribed. The goal is to follow the teacher’s instructions, not to explore creatively.

This is not to say that the school art style is terrible, or serves no purpose. Efland cites Feldman (1970) who feels, “the purpose of art education is to help our students become more human through art” (p. 43). School Art can be used as a means to socialize children, which may or may not help them become more human or individual. Some schools do use art as therapy as it does provide needed divergence and recreation for the children as well as breaks for the teacher. Efland cites Cass (1974), as saying, teaching was listed as the third most authoritarian profession practiced. It was superseded only by police officers and the armed forces. It is no wonder then that teachers and children need a break found in the art room. Sadly, Efland feels the school art style became the norm for schools,

Another important reason why the style was readily adopted was simply the fact that it made few professional demands on the teacher. Teachers didn’t have to know much art to teach it ... The fact that artistic competence seemed not to be a prerequisite enhanced the popularity of the method, because the school could have a liberal, humane, and creative art program without adequately trained teachers (p. 38).

The problem as Efland sees it, is that “the School Art Style does not seem to be a pedagogical tool for teaching children about art in the world beyond the school” (p. 39). Beyond providing a diversion for teachers and students from academic rigor, and proof that students can follow instructions, School Art, provides little growth opportunity for the imagination, and holds little academic value. Students quickly lose interest in and outgrow crafts that fail to challenge them academically or provide creative exploration and growth. For all that it lacks, School Art has become the mainstream gold standard in public education.

Olivia Gude (2013) feels that “despite the many dramatic changes in the styles, materials, and methods of making meaning in contemporary art practices” (p. 6) and thoughtful analysis of content by scholars, little change has occurred in visual art instruction in schools. Gude explains:

When I scan suggested projects in popular project-sharing art education magazines and websites, I see that many of the projects are eerily similar to those I saw in magazines as a young teacher in the 1970’s...The fact that suggested projects in such magazines are now routinely paired with a national art standard seems to have done little to encourage careful analysis by authors or editors of whether the instructions or resulting projects are actually in sync with the stated standard (p. 6).

Gude estimated the “total time of relatively static curriculum content in 2012 as 75 or 80 years” (p. 15).

As such, the opportunity for students to make learning connections and meaning of their world through imaginative exploration in the arts remains elusive in most school systems. Moreover, the role of the teacher is reduced to that of a giver of rote instruction. It is reasonable, to expect more regarding educating children in developing creative aptitude and aesthetic sensitivity, just as we would expect a reading teacher to build an aptitude for literature. Gude suggests, “We must be willing to let go of some of the old familiar projects (and their myriad variations) in order to make room for other sorts of projects and other kinds of art experiences” (p. 6).

The question that naturally arises is how does an art teacher create an environment where the child’s creativity can thrive, and individual artistic exploration can exist to produce authentic art rather than the status quo school art so prevalent in schools? What conditions must exist and

what methodologies must a teacher use to engage students in genuine, playful, artistic inquiry and expression? How does the teacher create an “Artful Habitat” where students thrive on creative experiences?

Response

In response to the problem, this research project explored a learner-centered approach to art education and the role of art educators in creating an environment conducive to fostering whole child development through creative growth. It focused on the qualities of effective art instruction using elements from many historical ideologies and current conversations, to inform effective teaching practices that enhance student engagement, creative development, cognition and problem-solving abilities in a setting of self-expression, curiosity, and playful wonderment. The purpose was to inform and improve the researcher’s teaching practice, by providing insight into the qualities of effective art instruction for junior high age students.

The research used a case study methodology informed by action research in a regular art classroom setting. It explored a learner-centered approach to art education and the role of art educators in creating an environment conducive to fostering whole child development through creative growth.

An academic literature review was used to determine active engagement and teaching strategies. The research looked at what those teaching methods and curriculum should look like in an art classroom to facilitate more fluid, inventive and divergent art making in eighth-grade students. It mainly focused on the methods introduced by Loris Malaguzzi in the Reggio Emilia schools in Reggio Emilia Italy. His methods built upon much of John Dewey’s philosophies and include an emergent curriculum, based on playful exploration. The Reggio Emilia Schools have

become world renown for their toddler/preschool centers that focus on developing independent thought and creativity.

A curriculum was developed that aligned with national, state, and local core standards that explored the application of Reggio teaching methods and principles with older students and was tested in an eighth-grade classroom.

My role as the “art educator” was to inform students with artistic, academic information that inspired their choices; to give them the skill set to find success in the medium; to observe the students path of inquiry, and to introduce new tools for further exploration. The purpose of my interactions with the students was to teach less by rote and become more of a director in an advisory role for their artistic explorations and research. I observed the children's response to those methods noting any changes in engagement and authentic and divergent art making in the class.

The primary purpose of this study was to inform the researcher in discovering how to get students to engage in their artistic research, thereby facilitating adolescent artistic development, and to encourage more creative thinking in the art-making process. It was also to provide feedback to the researcher on how to create an “artful habitat” or an environment that is inspiring, fun, encourages problem-solving abilities, curiosity, playful wonderment, and exploration, in a setting safe for self-expression in which middle school students freely create.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

“Creativity is an instinct which all people possess, an instinct with which we were born. It is the instinct which we primarily use to solve and express life’s problem ... Creativity, the ability to explore and investigate, belongs to one of the Basic Drives, a drive without which man cannot exist.” – Viktor Lowenfeld

The exploration of creativity is a vital part of my thesis. This chapter reviews definitions of creativity and will look at the place creativity has had in the past conversations in art education literature. This chapter will also outline some of the themes in American education. This review is essential, as I am particularly interested in the learner-centered approach to curriculum and how it connects to ideas about personal creativity. I will also review the Reggio Emilia approach and other effective art teaching practices that can enhance student engagement, challenge and develop their creative, cognitive, problem-solving abilities, and facilitate self-expression with more divergent, fluid, and inventive artwork.

It is essential to review a brief history of the research that has been done historically in art classrooms, the different teaching theories used in schools, and the historical context in which they were performed. It is critical to understand how that research informed art education of its time, what was learned, and how we might apply it now in new contexts.

Historical Review

Most of us take the idea of children’s art for granted. It is a common feature of our society. However, at the turn of the century, it was an entirely new concept. Even the idea of “having a childhood” is historically, a relatively new concept. Most children grew up working along side their parents to provide for family needs. Often there were limited opportunities for education. Children typically entered the workforce very young. Kliebard cites the Kingsburg

report In 1906 that found of 25,000 youth, ages fourteen-sixteen, five-sixths of them had not received an 8th grade education (p. 86).

In the late 1800s, artists were far more expressive, and less realistic, than traditional Western art had exhibited in the past. Many even aspired to be childlike in their art. Stankiewicz (2001) states, “there was a movement away from the goal of learning to draw through imitation and toward modernist ideas of art as creative expression” (p. 26). Teachers in the field began to compare modernist art to the art of children. Franz Cizek was credited with elevating children’s art to be recognized, as its own art form (Efland, 1990). In 1899, the Massachusetts’s exhibition of children’s art was held. Franz Cizek, part of the Vienna secession with Gustav Klimt, found similarities between children’s art and what was called primitive art, referring to the art of people of Africa, for example. He saw children’s art as primitive, but also fresh and expressive. As a result, a new form of art education took hold, based on the idea that children could make art.

In 1904, Cizek established the Vienna School of Arts and Crafts, where he taught for 34 years. Cizek believed that the child is an artist with an innate desire for expression that is thwarted by formal teaching methods. He believed children have a real creative vision that can be destroyed by illustrations and knowledge of art museums. Cizek was very insistent that children not be shown or influenced by examples of adult art (p.199). In Cizek’s school, there was no insistence on technique; that was left to the free choice of the child or “free expression.” However, critiques say the work looked very structured and anything but free. Because the work was very formally constructed and sophisticated for being the work of such young children, critics feel Cizek strongly influenced the work. Cizek’s ideas of allowing children their artistic developments without adult imposition took a life of their own and remain very strong even today. But, according to Wilson (2007), it is impossible for children not to be influenced by

visual culture and the world around them. This is particularly true in today's world of mass media.

Still, in the 1920–1930s, many people, employed by private schools, followed Cizek's lead and developed creative self-expression as a child-centered method. Marion Richards learned the shut-eye drawing method from Catterson Smith (Efland, p. 200). Richardson (1946 p. 12) describes giving vivid descriptions of things to her students to help them develop strong mental images before drawing or painting. As was the case with Cizek, the children's work appears to be strongly influenced by Richardson's rich descriptions, and have many similarities in choices of color.

Florence Crane taught at the Walden School in New York City. She was the sister of the school's founder, Margaret Naumburg. Naumburg started the school after being influenced by John Dewey's theories. Crane believed artistic expression was essential to psychological development. She used materials that children responded to easily, which she describes as follows, "Crayons soft enough to mark easily ... yet not so soft they will smudge. Paper must be good enough in quality to take the strokes well and hold the ... Watercolors must be moist in order to respond. Brushes must be large to keep work free" (Cane, 1933 p.44).

Efland cites Cane as designing curriculum, "toward the liberation and growth of the child's soul." She trusted the child to do what they wanted and to continue as long as they were interested. She never suggested subjects; the children chose what was dear to them so that it would hold their interest (Efland, 1990). Even though the students chose their work, the children's paintings, like Cizek's students, show a significant similarity in style and a preference for fantasy themes. This can only lead us to believe that even though Crane tried not to influence her students with adult art, they were in fact, greatly influenced by her as an instructor. It seems

it would be almost impossible, as Wilson stated, for students not to be influenced by their instructors and their environment.

In the 19th century, during the industrial revolution, American schools were for the most part, very rigid and used formal methods of teaching. Progressivism (1890–1920) began as a social movement to deal with economic issues and social problems that arose from rapid industrialization. Progressivism is the term applied to a variety of responses to the economic issues and social problems that arose from rapid industrialization in America. Though it began as a social movement, it grew into a political movement. Progressivism believed that the problems society faced such as poverty, violence, greed, racism, class, and warfare could best be addressed by providing excellent education, a safe environment, and an efficient workplace (Eleanor Roosevelt Papers, 2016).

Social Reconstruction as an ideology had its origins in the Progressive movement at the turn of the century. However, by 1930 Social Reconstruction came full circle as a response to the economic stress felt during the depression. At this time child labor laws were strictly enforced to keep teenagers out of the job market. This meant that they stayed in school. Up until this time, only college-bound youth attended secondary school. Now secondary school became common for everyone. The emphasis on art for its own sake or for individual self expression moved to art having a purpose in the community in the lives of everyday people and to ameliorate society's problems.

As reform of society was the preoccupation of many educators during this time it was felt that art needed to do more than be a form of expression; art should inform and be a catalyst for positive change in society. This stance echoed Dewey's writings on "experience as the stuff that

brings about the reconstruction of knowledge and ultimately, social institutions as well” (Efland, 1990, p. 203).

John Dewey taught at the University of Chicago. He taught at the laboratory school where he embraced the ideas of educational reform, and that learning came not only from books but that it embraced the idea of social welfare. In 1934, Dewey wrote *Art as Experience*. Dewey saw students as researchers who learn by doing. Dewey insisted that art was a process, “an experience” and that the product of the experience is residue after the art has taken place. He also saw art as a vehicle for developing creative abilities (Fratino, 2012). His educational theories have influenced education throughout the world. Many of his theories align with those of Montessori schools today. They also align with those of Loris Malaguzzi and the teaching philosophy of Reggio Emilia schools.

During the 1940s, Natalie Cole’s textbook became very popular. Her students were mostly comprised of poor children of Mexican, Chinese, and Japanese ancestry. Her idea was to motivate the children with discussion and build-up, which I have found to be true in my classroom. She believed that once the children had lots of ideas from a discussion, the work would just come pouring out and that the teacher’s job was to encourage its continuance with appropriate praise and encouragement (p. 3-5). Her ideas included using large pieces of paper, with images that filled the page and bump the sides of the paper. She also believed teachers should not draw in class, or the children would draw what the teacher did putting an end to their vision of the work (p. 12).

Contrary to this belief, research by social learning theorists such as Albert Bandura (1977) shows children learn from imitation and modeling. Imitation methods are often used in other academic disciplines. As such, it can be good for students to see the teacher draw and

participate in art making. It also can help build their drawing skills and confidence (p. 3-10). Although Cole chose not to model drawing, her students, like Cizek's, displayed a high similarity in their styles, suggesting they were not free in their artistic art making but were greatly informed by Cole (Efland, 1990).

Victor D'Amico worked throughout the 1930s and 40s. Before publishing his book, his focus was on encouragement and motivation in the classroom. His writing was very influential because it discussed how to teach technique in the studio. There were two aspects to his method of teaching. First, he helped children use their own experiences as sources of inspiration. Second, he felt adolescents should be taught technique, fundamentals, and principles, but only as they needed to be. He was the first to implement collage as an art form in schools.

D' Amico was the founder of the education department at MoMA and the Children's Art Carnival at MoMA. He also opened the Art Barge. D'Amico states, "Art education for children should be based on art making — as opposed to the teaching of rote techniques. Motivation is the key to creation ... an art teacher's magic lies in the way he/she motivates" (The Art Barge, 2015).

Victor Lowenfeld researched from the 1940s–60s and was the author of the highly celebrated text, *Creative and Mental Growth*. Lowenfeld also believed creativity was inherent in all children and should be attended to as part of whole child development. (Lowenfeld, 1947). Leading art educators have recently revisiting many of his theories with a surge of enthusiasm (Burton, 2009).

Curriculum Structure Themes in American Education

Four ideological groups have struggled for control of the 20th-century American curriculum. These educational theories include: academic ideology, social efficiency ideology,

social reconstruction ideology, and learner-centered ideology. Each of these theories has played a role in art education and continues to define how the curriculum is built and what that looks like in the classroom. According to Schiro (2013), understanding our conceptual framework as educators and the range of ideological options available can help us to, “more effectively clarify and accomplish our curriculum and instructional goals” (p. 3). It is important, therefore, that we have a clear understanding of each ideology, its context in history and how it will apply to the research at hand.

Scholarly academic ideology. Academic ideology refers to a “shared knowledge of cultural ... literacy that is viewed as having been collected by and residing within the academic disciplines found within colleges and universities” Schiro, (p. 15). It is defined as the collection of facts, writings, and works of scholars in a well-defined area of study. A group called the humanists first pushed this ideology. They were led by Harvard President, Charles W. Elliot and Later William Torrey Harris. The Humanists regarded schools as mechanisms for transmitting the traditional values, sensibilities, and cultural highlights that accumulated within Western civilization. They initially justified this liberal-arts curriculum as the best way to train the mental faculties. Liberal arts advocates believed that everyone, regardless of their future occupation, was entitled to the same curriculum, taught the same way, (Kliebard 2004, p. 15). Academic-based programs spread quickly across all disciplines of study in public schools, including the social studies curriculum, Schiro (p. 16). It is the intent of Scholar Academic ideology, to induct the child into an academic discipline.

According to Schiro, “Scholar Academics create curricula by working within the domains of their academic disciplines as though they are functionaries of those disciplines” (p. 19). When applied to the field of art, educators of the past focused on a classical, Eurocentric view of art

history and knowledge of design fundamentals and principles. It was also expanded to include an understanding of classical art mediums. Classic, Eurocentric art is no longer the only standard for art. Today, there is a much broader scope of academic understanding, as art forms have expanded to include ethnic, modern, post-modern, new genre, performance, technology, and electronic media, to name a few. Students come to our classrooms with a strong working knowledge of technology and are highly influenced by the visual culture and its highly promoted effects on a daily basis.

Social efficiency. Just after the turn of the 20th century, Franklin Bobbitt was one of the first to introduce Social Efficiency as an ideology for schools. His premise was that an educator's first responsibility was to apply the routines of scientific procedure to curriculum making. He believed that doing so would prepare students to take their place in society and to contribute as responsible adults (Schiro, 2013, p. 57). In this system, the school worked for society, and societies needs set the bounds of education. It was up to those building curricula to understand what society needed and wanted. Schiro quotes Ralph Taylor as citing four things educators must ask themselves when creating programs:

1. What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
2. What educational experiences can be provided that is likely to attain those purposes?
3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?
4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained? (p. 58)

In other words, what should our goals be and how can we assess them. Much of this ideology came as a response to learner centered ideology promoted by Lowenfeld.

One of the criticisms of the Social Efficiency is that there is little concern for the child, except for the child's potential to contribute as an adult. This approach contributed to the

accountability movement in education. Though the movement started as being accountable to the public, it soon became accountable to lawmakers who placed great emphasis on test scores. The demand to make education accountable with The Race to the Top (RttT) and the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) changed the nature of art education (Schiro, p. 82). It demanded that art teach concrete concepts like art history and foundation skills that could be assessed and tested. This took much of the creativity out of the classroom. To try and justify art programs in schools, the Getty Center developed Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE) to encourage art curriculum that could be taught in conjunction with all disciplines in the classroom. DBAE theorists placed emphasis on students learning from great works of art and learning through the disciplines of art criticism, aesthetics, and art history (Greer, 1993). This emphasis aligned their curriculum with a scholarly academic approach, while providing a means to give art credibility within schools that stresses accountability.

Social Reconstruction

As discussed earlier, social reconstruction as an ideology had its origins in the Progressive movement during the industrial revolution and gained momentum that changed the face of education during the depression. Its purpose is to bring about change in society. Social Reconstructionists view the purpose of education as a way to “prepare individuals to take part intelligently in the management of conditions under which they live, to bring them to an understanding of the forces which are moving, [and] to equip them with the intellectual and practical tools by which they can themselves enter into direction of these forces (Kilpatrick, 1933, p.7).

Social Reconstruction enjoyed a surge during the 60s and 70s with such events as the civil rights movement, women’s liberation, and the Vietnam War. Today the focus goes further,

to include such things as gender issues, global warming, pollution, and racial inequity (Schiro, p. 194). Its influence on the arts over the last 30 years has been profound, as new art forms have emerged such as new genre, media, and performance art to embrace social change as their catalyst. Little has been done, however in elementary and secondary classrooms to move away from centering curriculum on the elements and principles of art and formalism that can be easily assessed. Olivia Gude (2007, 2013) one of the nations leading education researchers focuses much of her writing and curriculum development for the Spiral Workshop on Social Reconstruction. Her curriculum engages students in current issues and uses a higher-level creative thought process to explore and comment on these issues (Gude, 2013, p. 7)

Learner centered ideology. From the time an infant picks up his or her first rattle, or a toddler can first scoot around the room, they learn by exploring, experimentation and what they experience around them. This was never more evident than when I watched my one-year-old granddaughter several months ago. She would crawl from one kitchen cupboard to another, exploring. First, she went to the cupboard where the Tupperware was kept. She pulled out each piece one at a time, looked at it carefully, put it in her mouth, and then tossed it aside to pull out the next piece. She was not interested in stacking the pieces or playing with them once they were out. She was only interested in exploring what was in the cupboard; what did it look like, how did it feel, how did it taste. When she was finished emptying the Tupperware cupboard, she went to the drawer where the lids were kept and repeated the whole process. When I picked everything up and put it away, she dutifully pulled it all out again. For her, the joy was in the exploration. Children naturally learn by exploration and experimentation. Howard Gardner (2016) states,

Our knowledge derives from actions, from actions upon actions, and ultimately, from internal mental operations which are actions that have been internalized. The

wonder of Learning and the construction of knowledge, “Once one poses the question “Where do new ideas come from?” this crucial epistemological insight gains traction.” (p.12)

As children grow, they continue constructing knowledge through their experiences. A pile of spoons can be used for 100 things other than just eating cereal. A child will experiment by building, piling, designing, stacking, and then starting over again. However, when a child reaches school age, traditional schools often expect them to learn from books, by mechanical or habitual repetition, and memorizing facts. The need to construct knowledge through playful exploration and experience has not changed, but the method of delivering knowledge has. Most schools are geared to deliver a conveyor belt method of education, where the teacher imparts knowledge, and the student’s role is to absorb the allotted information in an allotted amount of time. Authentic learning experiences can become the rare exception in traditional school settings.

A learner centered ideology is one that focuses on a child’s needs, interests, and abilities (Rugg & Shumaker, 1928, p. 56). It embraces a constructivist view of learning. Experts such as Rugg and Shumaker agree, that for knowledge to be internalized truly, learning experiences must be more authentic and fall in line with the child’s needs and what they are ready to learn. Three things characterize a learner-centered school. First, they are “child-centered” institutions. The interests, needs, and desires of the child, influence the curriculum and even some school governance. Second, the curriculum is not organized around traditional school subjects, although all subjects are taught. Third, they orient around the child, rather than parents or societal expectations for children (Schiro; Rugg & Shumaker, 1928). Lillian Webber (1971) describes learner-centered philosophy by explaining,

Central to the conversation (of learner-centered schools) was always the child: What does he need? What is he interested in? What is he ready for? What are his purposes? How does he follow them? What are his questions? What is he playing? These Questions about children seemed to be uppermost in developing plans for the classroom (p. 169).

According to Webber, plans should not be made from a syllabus that the child has to fulfill, but should meet the child's most immediate needs. For optimal growth, lessons should be designed in "response to the pace and internal pattern of his own growth and in support of his own purposes. It was developed through watching a child. Studying him at his moments of deepest involvement in play" (p.170). For the teacher, this means a change in rolls, from giving out information to collecting it. It means getting to know and understand the child through careful observation and documentation.

Learner-centered teachers create an environment where children can thrive based on their individual needs. John Dewey saw this as a democratic right

The words 'environment,' and 'medium' denote something more than surroundings, which encompass an individual. They denote the specific continuity of the surrounding with his own active tendencies ... In brief, the environment consists of those condition that promote or hinder, stimulate or inhibit, the characteristic activities of a living being." (Dewey, 1916, p.15).

Knowing that the conditions created in the classroom can either inhibit or enhance the growth and well being of students places a tremendous responsibility on the teacher. It is vital to carefully consider the environment of the classroom as a whole and on the how each child fits into it individually.

Learner centered schools recognize that children learn at their own rate and when they are ready. Marietta Johnson (1974) expounds on this and makes clear the difference between “training” and “growing.” Training denotes domination or forcing to accomplish certain definite results. Growing means providing “the right conditions and the end is human and immediate— included in the process—and the moving power is within ... the child” (p. 8-9). This requires a deeper sense of respect for and connection to each student.

Perhaps the seminal author advocating for learner-centered art education was Victor Lowenfeld. Lowenfeld authored *Creative and Mental Growth*. In it, he analyzes the stages of artistic development in children. He believed as others, that art was an innate need for children, and that in fact, art was our first language. He advocates that the learner be always at the center and should be at the core of art education. Lowenfeld (1957) states:

Because every process involves the whole child, and not only a single segment, art education may well become the catalyst for a child-centered education in which the individual and his creative potentialities are placed above subject matter, in which the child’s inner equilibrium may be considered as important as scientific achievements (p.11).

The emphasis is on the children and how they learn, not upon the art. “Art is our vehicle, but it is not any more important than what students learn about science, math, social studies or language arts” (Olson, 2003, p. 35).

Another benefit of a learner-centered ideology is a heightened sense of engagement among the students. A great deal of literature exists on student engagement. Phil Schlechy (1994) believes the evidence of engagement can be seen in three characteristics of students who are engaged. First, students are attracted to their work. Secondly, students who are engaged will

persist in their work despite challenges and obstacles. Third, students take visible delight in accomplishing their work.

Strong, Silver and Robinson (1995, p. 9) cite four essential goals that drive people who are engaged and that build energy and intrinsic motivation; First, success and the need for mastery; second, curiosity and the need for understanding; third, originality and the need for self-expression (also referred to as autonomy); and fourth, relationships and the need for involvement with others. They feel children are convinced they can succeed when “we clearly articulate the criteria for success and provide clear, immediate, and constructive feedback” (p. 9). They also feel that we help them see success as a valuable aspect and that it is attainable when we model it for them as instructors. This is one of the strengths that come from artists teaching art.

Learner-centered schools are not new and exist at all levels of education, Montessori, Waldorf Schools, and Reggio Emilia Schools are examples. The Reggio Emilia Schools are considered among the world’s best schools and are studied by educators from around the globe because of their success.

At Reggio Emilia and other learner-centered schools, an emergent curriculum is developed by careful observation of the students, their interests, and desires. According to Schiro (2013), “The teacher is not simply an imparter of information, but a facilitator of children’s growth, learning, meaning-making, development, and self-actualization” (p. 122). The teacher continually observes children in their activities and documents what they observe. Based on these observations the teachers plan future curriculum and the tools needed to help maximize the child’s growth. The children are encouraged to have many hands-on experiences with multiple physical materials and social interactions. However, children do not get to while away time by doing whatever they please. “Rather, they make choices from

alternatives designed into the learning environment by the teacher” (Schiro, p.122). As in the case of my young granddaughter, exploring a cupboard, Learner-Centered educators consider the ability and the need to learn to be a natural process. It is what happens to children as they make meaning out of their interactions with people and their world.

Defining Creativity

Educator and illustrator, James Christensen (1994) stated, “Many of us view imagining as being lost in the clouds ... but the positive, active side of imagination has immense energy and potential. No one is born without an imagination. Each of us possesses a boundless inner universe ... unique to ourselves” (p. 16). Christensen taught that actively exercising and stimulating our imaginations can lead to greater creative capacity. His prolific illustrative works bear witness to the truthfulness of his words.

In recent years, there has been a resurgence of interest and research regarding the role of creativity in visual art education (Foley, 2014; Zimmerman, 2015). As the word “creativity” has a broad range of meanings and inferences, particularly in regards to producing art, it is important to define what creative development means in the context of this research. Many books have been written on the topic referencing a broad scope of definitions. Experts in the field, such as Enid Zimmerman (2010) agree that there is no one definition of creativity, but that creativity “is a complex process with relationships among people, processes, products, and social and cultural contexts relevant to a domain of knowledge” (p. 2). She asserts that all children should be seen as having creative ability.

Ellen Dissanayake (1992) agrees that everyone has an innate creative ability. She approaches creativity and art from an evolutionary point of view. She recognizes art as the need to make some things special and considers it a “biologically endowed need” in all humans. It is a

natural part of all of us. All humans have the predisposition to want to satisfy the need to create and find pleasure and satisfaction in it. Dissanayake explains,

Art can be considered as a behavior (a 'need,' fulfillment of which feels good) like play ... it helps (humans) to survive better than they would without it ... This behavioral tendency is inherited, and thus both indelible and universal ... What is gained by recognizing art to be a behavior is an understanding that it is important intrinsically (p. 34-35).

It is widely agreed among researchers that all students should be seen as having creative ability and that student's creative aptitude can be stimulated, enhanced, and increased, just as their aptitude of literacy can increase if they are adequately trained in it (Zimmerman, 2010; Gude, 2013; Foley, 2014; Christensen, 1994). John Dewey (1938) saw students as researchers who learn and increase their aptitudes by doing. Oscar Wilde added to this by stating, "Education is an admirable thing, but it is well to remember from time to time that nothing that is worth knowing can be taught" (1891, as quoted in Ellmann, 1982, p. 349). Rather, students construct their knowledge in the doing of a thing. Howard Conant was much blunter when he said, "Art cannot, of course, be 'taught,' nor can an artist be 'educated,' but good teachers can bring students to the "threshold' from which they can "leap" or "journey" into the art itself" (1964, p. 241).

Gude (2013) suggests that creativity involves allowing freedom of expression and "providing opportunities for students to truly explore personally meaningful subjects" (p. 6). She states, "If enhancing creativity is to convincingly be an important goal of art education, projects must be designed to open out into unexpected possibilities" (p. 10). In other words, as students explore, they can build on past knowledge and are, "able to see old things in a new light" (p.12).

According to Gude (2007), the creative process and creative artwork should embrace playfulness, and spontaneity. Author and educator George Szekely (1985) agrees. Children need to see themselves as artists (p.39). Play, according to Szekely should be the basis of all learning and creative development. Ideas come when we give ourselves over to imaginative play. Creativity is not something you can mandate; it is an invitation. Planning for an art lesson is not planning for a lecture, but planning for a magical experience. In his lecture at the CMA Creative Summit, Szekely expressed the art room should be a magical place where we take children to the highest fantasies. Ask yourself, “What exciting thing is going to happen that doesn’t happen anywhere else in the school” (Szekely, 2010). Szekely recommends we “play out their dreams that are not happening anywhere else in society.” He suggests we act as if art has not been invented yet and it is up to the student to find art. Students need to feel like the world is open. Middle school students especially want to have a voice; they want to say something. Exploring through art gives them a voice on how they are going to contribute to the world; it is empowering kids. According to Szekely, we should feed students with the notion that they are artists; art is not an open and closed subject, they are the ones doing it right now; and I as the art teacher am their biggest fan.

Though a focus on creative development was evident with teachers like Cane and Cole, it was Viktor Lowenfeld who was most influential in promoting this ideology in the arts. He believed that children were born with innate creativity that flowed naturally from them and that teachers and adults should allow for their creative self-expression without influencing or directing their work in any way. He strongly believed that the child lost his own artistic voice as he began to adapt to the teachers taste (p.103). Much of his work has been highly criticized over the past few decades. However, because his concern for creative self-expression is evident when

discussing the development of creativity in children, researchers like Flávia Bastos, Enid Zimmerman, and Janet Olsen, believe some of his work should be revisited. Judith Burton (2009) explains that,

Lowenfeld's seminal offering to art education (was) the enduring idea that creative practice offers ways of knowing and world-building that enliven knowledge through acts of personal generativity. For him, creative intelligence existed within everyone and acted to enlighten what he termed the search for "subjective truth" providing encounters with the world that were relational, distinctive, and unique. (p.13)

Before we can develop creative ability in our students, it is essential to understand what might inhibit creativity before we begin teaching. James Elkins (2001) feels art cannot be taught, but that teachers can inspire students to do better, or more importantly they can appreciate students' work for what it is. Elkins asks us to consider what teaching would be like if we did not try to change a student's work, but just appreciate it? "This kind of teaching would have self awareness as its goal rather than change of any sort" (p.71).

To help enhance a student's creative capacity it is vital to provide students the opportunity for experiences that can act as a springboard for their ideas. "The creativity that is admired in children's art does not emerge from a vacuum, rather, art skills and competence develop from the nurturing provided by an environment that furnishes opportunity to learn about art in different ways" (Dobbs, 1992, p.22).

For this research project, creativity was defined as making new meaning while producing original and spontaneous work with unexpected outcomes. Creativity was cultivated by developing and implementing a curriculum that included historical, cultural, and aesthetic

contexts of art making. The curriculum used a learner-centered ideology that allowed students to explore their interests to make new meaning in order to produce original, spontaneous work with unexpected outcomes.

The Reggio Emilia Approach

Effective teaching practices are at the very heart of creating an “artful habitat” as explored in this research. This section explores Reggio Emilia teaching methods and how every academic subject is taught through the arts. It also explores the philosophies on which the school was founded. The research will then look at ways these teaching methods may be applied by art teachers to enhance learning and engagement of adolescents in arts classrooms in Western schools.

For centuries Italian life has centered around the Piazza or City Square. This is a place for community gatherings and a place dedicated for the discourse of ideas. The Piazza remains a very important part of Italian cities even today. The Reggio Emilia Infant Toddler Centers and Pre Schools of Northern Italy are built around the same concept. They are built on the idea of community where teachers and students share in research and ideas. They work as co-researchers to discover new truths. The schools themselves are physically constructed around a Piazza or central square called the “Atelier” The atelier is an art studio headed by the “Atelierista” or art teacher. Everything in the school centers around the atelier. The Atelier is attached to a courtyard filled with plants and light. The school’s philosophy is that students learn naturally through creative, playful exploration. With the Atelier and Atelierista at the head and center, the students of Reggio Emilia learn all subjects through the arts. The children create artistic responses to everything they learn. The Atelierista coordinates with regular classroom teachers and a pedagogue. Together they create an emergent curriculum that is truly learner-centered and

individually based on each child's interests and the direction of study each child chooses to undertake.

Parents initially started the schools right after World War II and called it "The Peoples Schools" These were mothers trying to recover from a fascist Italy. Their hope was to educate their children to think for themselves in such a way, that they would never be swayed by something like fascism again. The schools were built on the idea of democracy and education for every child regardless of their circumstances, the central premise being every child has a right to education and creative freedom. It was based on the rights of citizenship and coming together as a community to heal the wounds after the war. The central idea has always been based on community and relationships. In 1963, Loris Malaguzzi began working with city administration on opening the first municipal preschools. In 1967, this first network of schools began to take in self-managed preschools, and in 1971, infant-toddler centers were also added. Malaguzzi directed this network of schools for several years with other close colleagues and defined their cultural project (Reggio Children, 2017).

Malaguzzi had been exposed to the educational philosophies of John Dewey and the Laboratory School in Chicago where he taught for 34 years. The Reggio schools parallel Dewey's laboratory school in many ways. In his book, *Democracy and Education*, Dewey (1916) explains that education is the right of all children. He believed it was the responsibility of the community to provide education. It provided the opportunity to grow and be emancipated. He felt education was the meeting place of freedom, democracy and peace.

Howard Gardner (2011) suggests that the Reggio Emilia project far surpassed the work of Dewey. Like Dewey, the school is based on the premise that education is a democratic right of every child. As such, it was Malaguzzi who designed to the schools to

be built around democratic square or piazza, making the school “a place for dialogue” (Malaguzzi, 2011, p.15). Dewey’s school was built with everything physically centered around a museum. Malaguzzi took the idea further, by physically and philosophically centering everything around an art studio making creative exploration the central focus of the school.

Additionally, respect for children, their abilities, and accomplishments are at the heart of the Reggio Philosophy. Children at Reggio are highly respected as active learners and researchers. An environment that is conducive to sustained growth must have at its heart, a teacher whose attitudes and actions towards children and learning foster growth. In *The Hundred Languages of Children*, educator/researcher David Hawkins discusses how respect is a “more magical gift” than just love. (p.77) According to Hawkins:

Respect for the young is not a passive, hands-off attitude. It invites our own offerings of resources. It moves us toward the furtherance of their lives and thus, even, at times, toward remonstrance or intervention. Respect resembles love in its implicit aim of furtherance, but love without respect can blind and bind ... whereas respect is implicit in all moral relations with others. To have respect for children is more than recognizing their potentialities in the abstract, it is also to seek out and value their accomplishment—however small these may appear to be. (p. 79-80)

Classroom management is a paramount topic in schools. Developing these skills and tactics, as part of a teacher’s regimen and routine is vital. However, at the center of it all, according to Hawkins, genuine respect for students opens the door to student engagement. It also allows teachers to impart their knowledge of the topic with

enthusiasm and passion, which in turn invites students to investigate more in-depth in an environment that is safe, but not without enabling boundaries (p.77).

Hawkins also discusses civility. As teachers, we have come to identify civility as merely being polite to others in the classroom. This is indeed a good goal to help students feel safe in their classroom environment. However, Hawkins discusses civility as being derived from the Latin word for city, and civics, as well as having connections to words such as civic, citizen and civilization. He sees it as a coming together or congregating to “exchange and form common ideas” (p.77). This indeed describes an environment, where ideas thrive and can be explored. Szekely (2010) also feels this involves speaking to our students as if they were colleagues. As students and teachers become co-researchers in the learning and creating process, this changes the student-teacher relationship to one of respect. Hawkins goes on to say that we must provide the kind of environments for children that, “elicit their interests and talents that deepen their engagement in practice and thought” (p. 80).

Respecting and seeing students as intelligent researchers capable of constructing their own knowledge is the real key to Reggio Emilia’s success. While students must complete the central curriculum, the learner centered philosophy allows students the freedom to pursue the curriculum how they choose. Children are allowed and encouraged to playfully explore their curiosities and areas of interest in the curriculum. Because they pursue their own areas of interest, students are highly engaged and grow exponentially.

Daniel Pink (2009) agrees that autonomy to pursue ones interests, increases creative potential. He feels control will bring about compliance, but autonomy engages the student.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1990) the author of *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* describes this as a quality of concentrated attention that follows curiosity. Most feel it is what sets them apart from their peers. Without concentrated attention, they could not have maintained the hard work it took to accomplish their goals. Csikszentmihalyi sees curiosity and drive as the yin and yang needed to achieve something new. It is when we act freely for the sake of action, without ulterior motives, that Csikszentmihalyi feels we learn to become more. What makes Reggio unique is that as teachers encourage curiosity they expect and consistently receive concentrated attention and achievement from very young children.

The Reggio Emilia Schools have gained much attention throughout the world for their unique style and methods of teaching multiple disciplines through the arts. Last year in conjunction with this research I had the opportunity to attend a conference and visit the Reggio Emilia schools. I was there to learn about and observe the schools with some 500 other educators, representing 64 countries from around the world. The directors and researchers who operate the 32 infant toddler and preschool sites host the conference biannually. The opportunity allows educators to actually visit the sites, observe how an emergent curriculum is developed through careful documentation of the children's learning processes. It also allowed us to observe the children participating in the learning process and their interactions and responses to that curriculum. The conference then took us through similar hands on learning processes. An emergent curriculum was developed for each of us over a two-day period that allowed us to experience what the children experience as they learn through playful exploration. As much as one reads about the Reggio Emilia Schools, nothing written came close to the actual experience of being there watching children engage in learning. Neither did anything written come close to describing the atelierista, student interactions, student explorations, or student

accomplishments I was able to observe. It was astonishing to see how advanced the children's work was.

My work explores the idea that the child is an artist with an innate desire for expression. Because it is impossible for them not to be influenced by the teacher's preferences and the artistic expressions that surround them in our culture, art curricula should give them a more sophisticated knowledge of art and art history so that art can inform their work and be a springboard for the development of their ideas. Key to student engagement is using more sophisticated visual knowledge that is also fun, inspiring, and appeals to student's interests.

Chapter Three: Methodology

“Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time.

Vision with action can change the world.” -James Christensen

Case Study and Action Research Methodology

This research project focused on the qualities of effective art instruction using elements from many historical ideologies, with the intent to study creative development and expression in students. The research used a case-study methodology informed by action research in a regular art classroom setting. A case study approach was used to understand the artistic experiences of a select population of students.

Art educators often use case study, because it is an open-ended methodology. (Davenport & O’Connor, 2014). A case study is helpful to understand specifics about groups, individuals, events, or a series of events It can be used as a tool to evaluate programs, test a theory, or involve action research, (Zimmerman 1992). A case study is not meant to be generalized. Bassey (1981) asserted:

An important criterion for judging the merit of a case study is the extent to which the details are sufficient and appropriate for a teacher working in a similar situation to relate his [/her] decision making to that described in the case study. The relatability of a case study is more important than its generalizability. (p. 85)

One benefit of this type of research is it allows for unexpected discoveries. Understanding can emerge from the study itself (Davenport & O’Connor 2014).

Action research in art education involves the teacher/researcher studying their own art education practice. In this case, the practice was my classroom curriculum and

teaching. Action researchers use what they learn to solve problems or improve their practice. This involves carefully observing the classroom, gathering data, reflecting, planning and creating new actions in the classroom based on their research. This particular study used action research. Lessons were carefully planned observed, reflected on, adjusted and the adjustments acted on to improve my practice both during the research and in the future, based on what I learned. The process is designed to improve the learning experience for the students as changes are made, and needs are addressed.

A thorough literature review was used to determine how to measure active engagement, teaching strategies, and indicators applicable to the research. The application of this research was designed to inform and improve my teaching practice and to provide insight into the qualities of effective art instruction for junior high age students. I observed my teaching methods of engaging students in creating an environment that was inspiring, fun, and safe for students to freely create in. I also observed student responses to this approach.

The intent of my teaching was to enhance student engagement through playful artistic exploration to produce authentic, original art within my regular classroom with my own students. This was an eighth-grade class with students ranging in ages 13-14 consisting of 23 students. All students were asked to participate in the research. From those who provided their assent (along with parental approval), I chose ten participants to include in the study based on my judgment about the various qualities of their response to the curriculum. This was a purposeful sample designed to illuminate essential qualities of teaching and learning. Both male and female students were included along with special

needs and English learners so that the study would reflect the demographics of an ordinary classroom.

I chose ten as the number of students being studied, as this was a manageable size for this type of qualitative research. This sample size is consistent with the aims of the research, the resources of the researcher and existing practices in the field. In his article, *Sample Size and Saturation in PhD Studies Using Qualitative Interviews*, Mark Mason cites Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006, p.59) who suggest, "although the idea of saturation is helpful at the conceptual level, it provides little practical guidance for estimating sample sizes for robust research prior to data collection," he cites Creswell (1998, p.64) where five to 25 subjects are used as participants, and Morse (1994, p.225) as saying that at least six subjects are needed for a robust qualitative sample. Mason also cites Romney, Batchelder, and Weller (1986) who developed an analysis tool called the "Cultural Consensus Model" (CCM) for their ethnographic work. This analysis tool has also been used by some to estimate a minimum sample size—for example by Attran, Medin, and Ross (2005, p.753) "suggested that in some of their studies as few as ten informants were needed to reliably establish a consensus." Morris states,

Most recently, Guess et al. (2006) carried out a systematic analysis of their own data from a study of sixty women, involving reproductive health care in Africa. They examined the codes developed from their sixty interviews, in an attempt to assess at which point their data were returning no new codes, and were therefore saturated. Their findings suggested that data saturation had occurred at a very early stage. Of the thirty-six codes developed for their study, thirty-four were developed from their first six interviews, and thirty-five were developed after

twelve. Their conclusion was that for studies with a high level of homogeneity among the population a sample of six interviews may [be] sufficient to enable development of meaningful themes and useful interpretations. (p.78)

Based on these precedents, a sample size of 10 was selected. Educational research is typically done in a classroom with a student population of 20–32 students. It was reasonable to assume that not all parents would feel comfortable having their child participate in the study. It was also reasonable to assume that at least one third to one half of the class would choose to participate. The sample size gave me the ability to select students for the research whose experiences would best shed light on the creative processes of children from those who choose to participate, The experiences these students provided insight into the creative process and artistic development of adolescents. Their experiences also helped me to understand my role as a teacher in facilitating creative thinking.

Additional appropriate sources citing minimal sample sizes for art education research in a classroom give sound justification for the sample size chosen and include the following:

1. A sample size of six students was used from an art classroom in a case study by Dr. Mark Graham (2003) entitled *Responding to the Demise of Adolescent Artmaking: Charting the Course of Adolescent Development in an exceptional Art Classroom*. According to Graham, “the choice of six artistically active students was based on the premise that the experiences of a few, unique individuals who continue to be artistically active would provide a source of data that would illuminate artistic learning and development” (p. 165).
2. A sample size of five students was used from an art classroom in an *A/r/tography* study done by Jeff Cornwall. Cornwall shares,

I will share the stories of five.... students who I felt had meaningful and individualized learning experiences. The following students were chosen for discussion because their experiences, and my experiences with them, helped me to better understand my role in facilitating individualized student learning (p 38).

3. Downi Griner, in her case study concerning student autonomy, collected data from students who chose to participate from a group of 14. The actual participating number of students from whom data was collected is not given in the research. However, the researcher uses a sample size of five students to give an in-depth look in her writing.

Student privacy was protected by not using real names or other identifiers in the written report. All data was secured in a locked file cabinet in a secure location. All hard copy and electronic data will be kept for five years and then destroyed. Only myself, and the two directing advisors, Mark Graham Ph.D., and Daniel Barney Ph.D., have access to the data. The electronic data is password protected, encrypted, and stored on a drive. I am the only person with the password. Electronic data will also be kept for five years at which time it will be destroyed. An Institutional Review Board of Human Subjects (IRB) from Brigham Young University approved an ethical review for this research on July 18, 2018.

Students were informed by a classroom announcement that I would be studying my teaching and a new approach to curriculum and teaching. They were informed about the rationale for the research as well as the research process. Parents were notified both by email and flier. A flier accompanied by permission slips was sent home to them (see appendix) at the beginning of the semester, during the last week of August. Classroom disclosures were sent out at the same time.

The unit began the first week of September and ran for eight weeks. Students completed the curriculum over eight weeks of classes. This was 20 class periods of 80 minutes each for a total of 25 hours. Each class session is 1 hour and 20 minutes.

All students were required to complete the curriculum that included classroom discussions, personal reflections, and artwork regardless of whether or not they chose to be part of the study. Personal reflections were part of the language objective included in the curriculum. All students completed the project and other activities including the reflections as part of their grade, whether or not they choose to participate in the study. They received a grade on the assignment that was not based in any way on whether or not they participated in the study. Their participation had no impact on their grade. Only four students declined to participate. Students who participated in the study were seated in centers together for video purposes. Students not involved in the study were seated at centers out of the range of both cameras and videos.

Curriculum Development

The curriculum will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four; however, it is important to note several things that were considered as part of the methodology. In developing the curriculum, I mainly focused on the methods introduced by Loris Malaguzzi in the Reggio Emilia schools. As discussed in Chapter Two, his methods include an emergent curriculum, based on playful exploration. Specifically, I looked for the following:

1. How did the adaptation of these methods to my teaching change my own experience of teaching?
2. How did curriculum and teaching based on student choice and exploration influence student learning, creativity, and attitudes toward art making?

Hypothesis

I hypothesized that by giving students more freedom to make choices about their learning, my teaching would change to becoming more of a facilitator. I also hypothesized that as students engaged in the more playful exploration, they would become more authentically engaged in art making with sustained interest and enjoyment enhancing their creative efforts.

Purpose

While the study may be beneficial to others and contribute to the literature, the primary purpose was to provide feedback to improve my teaching practice in facilitating adolescent artistic development and encourage more creative thinking in the art-making process. One of the primary aims of this research was to increase my ability as a teacher to enhance creative growth in my students. Reflecting on detailed information about my teaching methods and pedagogies as seen by an outside source greatly informed my teaching practice. It also helped me explore the qualities of effective art instruction for adolescent-aged students.

The students benefited from the curriculum, but the study itself provided no direct benefits to participants. It may be beneficial to others and will contribute to the literature in this area, as it will be published research in the form of a thesis.

Data Collection

Observation was the primary method of gathering data. Observing the classroom in as many ways possible helped to verify the data. Data was gleaned from the following sources.

1. Dr. Graham, the researcher advisor, and Melissa Tschabrun, my teaching coach/vice principal, observed during both instructional time and studio time. Melissa Tschabrun observed once at the beginning during an instructional day. They were there to observe my use of carefully mediated instruction and student responses to that instruction. They record sustained engagement levels of

students during project completion. Observation information was used for triangulation with video data and my field notes. They used the Elliot observation tool and listed additional comments. The form is a standard observation tool used in education to evaluate effective teaching and classroom management methods. Appendix II contains the forms used for the observations. The forms provide a means of evaluating the researcher during instruction. The observers give a third-party expert opinion on the researcher's ability to scaffold information, engage students, and to record student responds to instruction.

2. Photographs: Photos were taken in class throughout the project. They recorded the progression of the creative process from the rough drafts to the completed project. They were also used to evaluate student artwork and analyze the creative outcome of the project. Both photos and videos will be used to track the creative process. Select photos were used in the thesis as examples.

3. Videos: Studio time was recorded daily to observe and collect data. Observation of students in the videos recorded student effort, playful exploration, sustained engagement, recorded student responses to me as the teacher and the curriculum. They also verified my consistency in applying the desired methodologies in my teaching practice. Videos also recorded conversations and comments from the students that indicated their level of enjoyment in art making and their perceptions of the project. The video could capture non-verbal parts of the interaction. More detail was captured than is possible through observation and field notes that were taken in retrospect.

The drawback and limitation were that only information on the camera screen could be thoroughly analyzed. Additionally, background distractions were not filtered out and caused some confusion in data collection. Additionally, there were a few days when the camera was

unreliable or quit filming. Precautions had to be made, so equipment worked adequately or a backup was ready.

4. Field notes were taken daily recording my reflections on my own experiences with instruction, interactions with students, and the students' progress on their projects. They recorded my experiences interacting with the students and creative outcomes that result from those interactions. I also recorded insights gained about my role in facilitating creative behavior in the students. Field notes were kept electronically be used in the data.

5. Student Reflections: Written reflections gave students the opportunity to express their personal experiences and enjoyment levels with the project. They evaluated what was satisfying, what was not and why. They also recorded their perceived success with the project and what they would improve.

How Data Was Analyzed

Loris Malaguzzi, the founder of the Reggio Emilia Schools, describes the creative processes used by children and adolescents as the, “hundred languages of children” (Malaguzzi, 1993). As the “hundred languages” suggests, creative processes are varied and many, depending on the child’s background and artistic experience. As such, some of the indicators were emergent. The observation data contributed to the research by allowing me to look for indicators that denote creative thought processes, playful exploration, and sustained engagement as it emerged in the classroom. Relevant analysis approaches or frameworks that guided data analysis identified evidence of the following indicators of student’s creative growth:

1. Playful exploration
2. Openness to the artistic experience
3. Sustained enjoyment

4. Wonder and excitement
5. Inquiry/Brainstorming
6. Autonomy
7. Spontaneity
8. Student effort and investment
9. Sustained engagement and attentiveness
10. Critical and advanced thinking
11. Problem-solving
12. Effort to develop medium skills
13. Imaginative expression
14. Meaning making
15. Surprising, authentic solutions and artistic outcomes

Data was collected on how well I applied classroom management, scaffolding, and engagement strategies, and on how much independent, creative thinking occurs in relation to those strategies. Data was also collected on how I directed students to keep exploring creatively by giving them new tools and directions to experiment with as their interests emerge. The same information was collected from videos; however, the observation data helped verify and ratify my observations from the videos and field notes.

My role as the teacher was to inform students with artistic, academic information to inspire their choices; to give them the skill set to find success in the medium; to observe students and their path of inquiry; and to introduce new tools for further exploration. My interactions with the students was designed to become less teaching by rote and more as a director or advisory role for their artistic explorations. I observed the students respond to those methods noting any

increases in engagement, and in their authentic and divergent art making in the class.

Observations included watching students for signs of engagement, student responses to curriculum, teacher/student interactions and responses to those interactions.

The data also looked for evidence of how being taught by a practicing artist may have influenced instruction, mentoring, and curriculum. For instance, the atelierista in Reggio Emilia schools is a trained, practicing artist that directs the other teachers in their curricular choices. As I analyzed my classroom teaching, I looked for ways that my artistic practice informed the development of curriculum and teaching. Did it impact the use of self-expression and divergence in their work, the level of playfulness in art making, or increase students ability to make relevant connections in their work that is indicative of problem-solving? Did students learn through appropriate imitation as informed by an art teacher and exposure to sophisticated academic influences? The goal was to help the students make appropriate connections to think like artists, including working in different ways to problem solve. Was this way of thinking and working reflected in their work and in the types of peer/teacher collaboration that took place in the classroom? Data collected was coded to see if student work reflected a growth mindset with divergent, authentic outcomes. The results will be discussed in detail in chapter five.

Chapter Four: Curriculum

Imagination is more important than knowledge. – Albert Einstein

For this project, the students built imaginative ceramic habitats. The learning objective for the students was to understand and apply ceramic slab construction technique and glazing. Students also learned pinch pot, coil and slump techniques as the individual need emerged. They were to make connections to the work of four modern and postmodern architects, as well as imagining habitats that might make them thrive personally. As stated earlier, the research was looking for indicators that denote creative thought processes, playful exploration, and sustained engagement as they might emerge in the classroom, which hopefully would produce fresh, authentic, imaginative outcomes. The development of this curriculum was emergent, based in part on student interests.

Rationale

My thesis research has centered on creating a learning environment where students constructed their creative knowledge and ability through authentic experiences. According to Vygotsky (1968), real learning and growth occurs in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Vygotsky describes this as the distance between a student's ability to perform a task under adult supervision or collaborative work with peers, and his ability to problem solve independently. To create authentic work is at the highest level of Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom, 1956 p. 207). That meant the curriculum had to move students to a higher level of thinking independently. While much of my research had to do with examining my teaching style, my interactions with the children, and the physical environment, I specifically focused on engagement, using an emergent curriculum, and a learner-centered ideology to enhance the student's opportunity to construct

their knowledge in the ZPD through their experimentation. My goal was to create a curriculum that was more learner-centered, and that provided the students more autonomy. Strong, Silver & Robinson (1995) indicate that students want and need work that allows them to express their autonomy and originality. This lets them discover who they are and who they want to be. They suggest that schools often design projects around technique only, rather than self-expression and that most schools frequently view creativity as a form of play and thus fail to maintain the high standards or seriousness that make creative work meaningful.

With that in mind, I surveyed a group of fourth and fifth-grade students in 2015 to see what interested them and what kinds of projects they wanted. Overwhelmingly, the number one request was for a ceramic project. Ceramics became a logical choice, as it also met engagement criteria. Phil Schlechy (1994) describes evidence of student engagement, as exhibiting three characteristics: (1) students are attracted to their work, (2) They persist in their work despite challenges and obstacles, and (3) they take visible delight in accomplishing their work.

The project was also based on a learning model from Reggio Emilia Schools, in which the student is respected as a rational and imaginative thinker. Project-based learning is the approach they use to frame student-centered investigation, (Cutcher, 2013. p. 323). The Reggio Emilia schools are infant-toddler centers and preschools. However, in recent years they have piloted their theories of creative exploration in learning on middle school and high school students with fascinating results. After visiting the schools in 2017 and seeing the results of their studies, I was anxious to apply Reggio methods to the middle school curriculum.

A pilot curriculum was first developed for fifth-grade students. Ceramics created some unique challenges for this group, first because the kiln is in an entirely different building. Transporting green ware without breaking it would be difficult. Second, with only 30 minutes of

class time, it seemed that as soon as we would get the clay out we would have to put it back. Additionally, I saw the children once per week. Keeping the clay moist and workable was difficult. Knowing ceramics was the students' resounding preference, and that these challenges could infuse more frustration than success in the students, I began doing prototype lessons and experimenting with ways to increase the probability of student success while still allowing them room for autonomy and experimentation. As such, this project positioned me (the teacher) as a researcher, practicing my inquiry into a medium. Loris Malaguzzi (1994) describes this as "professional marveling."

I piloted curriculum with a fifth-grade class of 28 students. I then refined it to be used with eighth-grade students. Piloting the curriculum allowed me to discover where I needed to scaffold for student success and where I needed to allow students the freedom of exploration. It became clear early on that if they felt frustration in getting the clay to do what they wanted it too, they lost interest. Building techniques needed to be carefully scaffolded. However, when it came to building what interested them, I gave them a free reign and tried to give them the tools that would further their exploration of ideas. I kept a log of student work as part of my field notes and documented as carefully as possible each student's progress and what they needed individually to enhance their exploration. I videotaped each class to help me observe things I may miss during regular instruction to help students and to evaluate their engagement. I also arranged for observers to come and evaluate my interactions with the students and teaching methodology.

I teach the ceramics program at Treasure Mountain Junior High School. I felt it was essential to create an environment that would allow for real exploration and discovery for this age group. For that reason, I choose to use the Art Foundations 1 class for the research. Only a handful of the students in this class had any ceramics experience, and even that was limited. That

meant all of the students would need to experiment and play with the medium to some degree to find what worked for them. They also came into the unit without any predisposed expectations and would be more open to unexpected possibilities.

Typically, when developing curriculum, I plan a few projects where I collaborate with teachers to reinforce core curriculum and concepts being taught in the regular classroom. I also plan lessons around the core art standards. This was the first project where I went to the learning goals for science, math, literature, and social studies as suggested by Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE). In consideration of ceramics and artful habitats, the following fifth-grade science standards fit well.

1. Science - Standard 1

Students will understand that chemical and physical changes occur in matter.

2. Science - Objective 2

Describe how some characteristics could give a species a survival advantage in a particular environment. Identify that some environments give one species a survival advantage over another (e.g., warm water favors fish such as carp, cold water favors fish such as trout, environments that burn regularly favor grasses, environments that do not often burn favor trees).

Science standard number one was a natural choice, as we discussed the chemical makeup of glazes and how they changed physically and chemically in color during firing. As the focus of my research, was an environment where children could thrive creatively, the second science objective also stood out. Last, of all, it seemed to make sense that comparing and contrasting natural habitats to artful habitats would be appropriate.

When it came to the eighth-grade curriculum, nothing aligned from the core subjects. Therefore, the curriculum was built solely around the following visual art standards:

Standard 7-8.V.CR.2:

Document early stages of the creative process visually and/or verbally in traditional or new media.

Standard 7-8.V.CR.3:

Develop criteria to guide making a work of art or design to meet an identified goal.

Standard 7-8.V.CR.5:

Demonstrate persistence in developing skills with various materials, methods, and approaches in creating works of art or design.

Standard 7-8.V.CR.6:

Demonstrate a willingness to experiment, innovate, and risks to pursue ideas, forms, and meanings that emerge in the process of art-making or designing.

Standard 7-8.V.CR.9:

Apply Visual organizational strategies to design and produce a work of art, design, or media that communicated information or ideas.

Standard 7-8.V.CO.3:

Analyze how the response to art is influenced by understanding the time and place in which it was created, the available resources, and cultural uses.

As I considered these approaches and their application to creating an “artful habitat,” it began to occur to me that the students needed to be the ones to research out what an artful habitat was. The project that emerged had the students study habitats in nature, compare and contrast it to their habitats, then create a habitat from ceramics that not only included what they needed to sustain life, but what they needed to thrive within many possibilities.

My students come to class informed by a tremendous amount of visual culture, which I knew would strongly influence their work. I hoped I would be able to counter the trivial aspects of this influence somewhat and advise students on a more sophisticated level. Brent Wilson calls the place where students make art and visual culture on their own without adult assistance, the first pedagogical site. The second site is the conventional classroom where adults supervise art making (2005 p. 18). I hoped to bring students to what he describes as the third pedagogical site which

celebrates the possibility of new content that emerges through the presentation, negotiation, and collaborative reformulation of kids and adults' interests. This third pedagogical site holds the possibility of their collaborating to combine high art with popular visual cultural interest. It is an open space where seeming oppositional and confrontational high and low visual cultures modify and facilitate one another so that hybrid things emerge and evolve. (2008, p. 120)

The third pedagogical site allows for new and unexpected outcomes as described by Loris Malaguzzi (2011). To do this, it was essential to inform the students' work aesthetically and academically, giving them a springboard for new ideas while allowing them to pursue interests important to them. To do this, we looked at several modern and postmodern architects who were not only creative innovators of their time but also whose imaginative habitat designs would engage and enthrall the students. In addition to being innovators, I choose architects who varied greatly in their styles and solutions in hopes that the children would be drawn to their preferences which I believed would differ significantly. The example habitats these artists created were truly "artful" and original in concept. The architects were Antoni Gaudi, Friedensreich Hundertwasser, Ra Paulette, and Frank Gehry. All of these artists took their inspiration from

nature; they all incorporate the aesthetics of nature in some way. It provided the opportunity to discuss the aesthetics of these artists as well as the design elements and principles they applied to their work.

The Setting

Considering the physical environment, the students were in was just as important as the execution of appropriate methodology, and curriculum. The goal was to create an environment in the classroom where the students could thrive artistically; they needed to be in an artful habitat as they created artful habitats. When the students walked into the environment they would be creating in it needed to feel safe, comfortable, and what I like to call delicious. It needed to be a place that encouraged creativity. The surroundings need to be engaging visually. Visually, if the room has a “Wow” effect, you have the student’s attention and enthusiasm as you present the project. The project presentation must also have the “Wow” effect. They must be hooked quickly, understand the expectations and criteria, engage in a meaningful discussion where they feel their ideas are important and valued, and start the project while they still feel the fire. Though the project must be presented well and internalized, too much time spent here can dampen their enthusiasm.

The first classroom environmental consideration was how the desks should be set up. I had tried many configurations previously but settled on groupings that put the students in centers for the presentation. They were situated in such a way, that all of the students could easily face the board and see the presentations and demonstrations, yet still collaborate as a group and enjoy social interactions. I made sure each of the students was seated with at least one friend but split up clicks that would prevent everyone from feeling apart. Lastly, it allowed me maneuverability to make all students easily accessible with the rise of a hand.

As this is only my second year teaching at Treasure Mountain, the art room I inherited was quite cluttered and dirty. I spent the summer cleaning and organizing so that the physical space took on as many characteristics of the Reggio Emilia Schools as possible. I made sure the room was light and immaculate. The walls received a fresh coat of paint. I placed live plants around the room and pictures of the beautiful architecture they would be studying by Gaudi, Paulette, Hundertwasser, and Ghery along with the words, “An Artful Habitat.” I placed optical illusions on the ceiling tiles to enhance interest in the room. The students were mesmerized the moment they came in.

I carefully chose music to play during work times that would be fun and relaxing. It significantly enhanced the feeling cheerfulness in the room. I let the students choose from several genres that either had no lyrics or that I knew were school appropriate lyrics. Though occasionally I would forget to put it on, the students started reminding me. The walls of the classroom changed only slightly. The elements and principles of art posters found in most art classrooms were replaced with colorful three-dimensional descriptions of each concept.

Contextual Factors

For this research, I chose one eighth grade class with 24 students enrolled. The class was made up of 11 boys and 13 girls ranging in age from 13-15 years old. There were three special needs child in the class who are developmentally delayed. One had a 504 plan; the other two had IEP’s. None of the students had peer tutors or aids. Two of the students were ELL (English Language Learner) students.

This project extended for an eight-week period from September 3, 2018–October 26, 2018. Classes are one hour and 20 minutes long. This gave the students roughly 25 hours total for instruction, conceptualization, and art-making including drying, firing, and glazing. I

collected data on the student's level of engagement, my teaching methods, student interactions, and exhibition of authentic creative work produced by the students. I chose to video all of the classes. The camera quit working or was accidentally turned off four different times. All but two of the students for this class had permission slips, and media release forms signed by the parents, allowing me to videotape the classes for data collection on how I executed the teaching methodology and the students' responses to my methods. The students themselves also signed release forms to be part of the study. None of the students opted out of the study.

The written lesson plans and teaching aids can be found in the appendix. No materials were used in the lesson plan that didn't fall under regular copyright use. All video materials were taken from public domains and fell under the district and BYU's copyright video use guidelines.

The Process

To begin their creative research, students worked in groups of four to six students and discussed what habitat was and what it was not. The questions they answered included: What does a habitat need to sustain life? What would it require for life to thrive? They chose three habitats to describe in detail. They then came up with three fantasy habitats from current visual culture, using literature, movies, and video games. The students then discussed their habitats and what made them different. Each group shared their findings with the class.

The class quickly concluded that habitats included places plants, animals, and humans could sustain life because of the 5 essential elements, air, water, energy, shelter, and food. They compared and contrasted the difference between deserts, swamps, arctic areas, oceans, and jungles. As the discussion turned to fantasy habitats, the students engaged with more enthusiasm. The list of habitats included lands from Oz, the Hobbit, Hogwarts, Atlantis, Narnia, the land of Zelda, Star Wars, and many others.

As we discussed their habitats, the conversation changed from just physical elements to emotional needs. At this point, I asked the students if there was a difference between just having what you needed to survive and having what you needed to thrive. This sparked their interest. They concluded that experiencing joy and happiness was an essential part of thriving. Many of the students related they couldn't survive without their families, love, friendship, opportunities to learn, grow and pursue interests and talents. I was astounded at the depth of their understanding. Surprisingly one of the most significant concerns for all of the students was that they needed a place to rest, they needed their bed. This became a major concern for everyone, and all of the students agreed that this was essential.

I then introduced four architects for the students to consider as a springboard for their ideas. They took notes in their sketchbooks and had to list at least three things they liked about the work of each. All of the artists were extremely imaginative in their work. I explained the first artist made habitats for people that were fun. He took his inspiration from nature and the habitats of animals. We then looked at the architecture of Hundertwasser. The students compared how most homes are square, but his all had curving lines, looked like fox dens, or sedimentary rock formations, and had gardens on the top.

The next artist I introduced was Antoni Gaudi. We discussed the dripping lava formations and the forest-like columns of the Familia de Segrada Cathedral in Barcelona and several other works. I then showed the children a quick video of the Casa Batlló designed by Gaudi. The house resembles a giant dragon. In the video, the house is animated and comes to life. The students then discussed and listed all of the design elements they saw in the home that reminded them of a dragon and what they thought made it unique and creative.

The overwhelming favorite artist was Ra Paulette. We watched a quick documentary segment about how he creates his extraordinary caves in New Mexico. Paulette carves incredible sandstone caves with relief sculptures that cover the interior walls. Again, we quickly discussed Paulette and the ideas that sprang to their minds as they saw his work. The students thought his caves resembled forts built by children, but as they put it, “way cooler.”

The students were also very enthralled by the architecture of Frank Gehry. It was remarkable to them that he could make steel curl and bend the way he did. Many of them had seen the Disney Opera house in LA. A few were even familiar with how the building had to be sandblasted because the glare on the building blinded driver on the nearby freeway. The students were pleased they could share their knowledge about this architect.

At this point, the students had been saturated with artistic examples that exhibited great creativity and out of the box thinking. I had the students take out their sketchbooks begin making rough drafts of what they thought the perfect habitat would be to them. They were eager to record their ideas. I tried to get to as many students as possible and let them tell me about their ideas and how they envisioned making them from clay. They were instructed to keep working on their ideas at home and talk with their parents about their habitats.

The second class began with a demonstration of clay slab construction using paper models and tarpaper support. I explained the Goldilocks rule, showed them how to slip and score and gave them as many tools as I could to make their ideas a reality. I also went over the criteria for their artwork, such as the thickness of the clay, covering their piece well, labeling their work, and clean up. I then went around to each student again as they finalized their rough drafts and gave them individual tools. I handed out clay that day and began construction.

The five following classes were all spent constructing the habitats. As students began to have some difficulty, I would re-demonstrate, and improve the scaffolding to help them find success. By the second building day, I was able to start observing each student's work more closely and look and for ways to encourage more imaginative thinking; developing conversations to build on their ideas, or take them further. I repeatedly asked them what they could do to add interest to their piece, to fix problems and help them find their solutions to refine their work.

I also demonstrated the glazing process and gave instruction on glazing. After the final firing, the students' work was exhibited in the school library during Parent-Teacher Conferences. The parents were invited to come and view the student's work. Reviews from the show are included in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five: Results

“Most enjoyable activities are not natural; they demand an effort that initially one is reluctant to make. But once the interaction starts to provide feedback to the person's skills, it usually begins to be intrinsically rewarding.” —Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

In summarizing the results, I will discuss both my experience with the children and their experiences with me as a teacher and the curriculum. I have chosen four students to follow and focus on because of their experiences during both the creative process conceptualizing their ideas and in executing them through the art-making process; they were given pseudo names for their protection. I recorded data when I observed any of the 15 indicators mentioned in chapter three. My research questions are:

1. How did the adaptation of these methods to my teaching change my own experience of teaching?
2. How did curriculum and teaching based on student choice and exploration influence student learning, creativity, and attitudes toward art making?

The interesting thing I noted in each case was that engagement and sustained effort in refining the piece and mastering the medium always accompanied fun. When students exhibited having fun, their ideas flowed and they engaged. Hard work always followed fun. They were willing to make an investment that was hard once they felt the magic of the atmosphere in class and the magic of their ideas.

Possibly the most important observation I made was concerning myself. If I came into class with things on my mind, the magic left. I had to go in the classroom with the attitude that I was there to play and have fun with the students, leaving everything else outside my classroom.

It was interesting to me that my own attitude changed the outcome for the students more than anything else I did. Often when a student isn't stimulated or invested in an assignment, they take the easy way out and use the first idea that comes to their head. When this is the case, school art emerges with many of the assignments looking much the same. Using the curriculum I designed for this study, I observed much less of that. Even when the students chose a standard solution, the solutions were much more individualized. The students did express their ideas through the "hundred languages" as described by Loris Malaguzzi. Their expression came through on this assignment more than any other I've given. The results were quite varied.

The first student that caught my attention was Eddie. Eddie is an English language learner, ELL, and a special needs student. Eddie should have an aid in class, but the school is short on aids this year. Eddie's aid splits her time between two students. The other student requires most of the aids time in a core class. As a result, she will usually only peek in and see that Eddie is working. I have tried to pair Eddie with students that help him and with whom he feels comfortable. Sometimes he is engaged in class, and other times he tunes out or lays his head down. The day we began our unit, Eddie was alive. He enjoyed the "Think, Pair, Share" activity. Some of the other students in his group didn't contribute much about habitats, but Eddie was excited about ceramics. He liked ocean habitats and could tell the students all about them, especially the Arctic. When it came to fantasy habitats, he wanted to live over the rainbow. The other students caught his enthusiasm and spurred his ideas forward. Eddie was childlike and animated the entire time. His thoughts were fresh and innocent. His passion was contagious and spread to his group. When we watched the PowerPoints about the creative works of Hundertwasser and Gaudi, he was glued to them. We watched a brief video about Casa Batlló in Barcelona, Spain. The house was designed by Antoni Gaudi and resembles a dragon. The house

is animated slightly in the film and appears to come to life. The colorful ceramics on the roof and chimneys reminded Eddie of candy. Eddie's idea for a habitat came from the movie. He planned to build a tree that grew candy and put a tree house in it. As I discussed his idea with him, I told him about a hike our family likes to take with my grandchildren at Snow Basin. The hike leads to Green Lake and at the edge of Green Lake is an exceptional tree. It's called the sucker tree because for my grandchildren it grows suckers in the summer and candy canes in the winter. When I told Eddie about the tree, his eyes lit up, amazingly as did another boy's eyes who was also sitting at the table. It took them both a moment to realize the tree was make believe. The other boy became excited to help Eddie. He helped Eddie for the rest of the class with his trunk.

Doing this experiment in a ceramics unit presented its own unique challenges. Ceramics requires an unusual amount of technical skill in order get things to work. Even though I was focusing on personally meaningful work, divergent outcomes, and creativity, these outcomes had to be balanced with the need for direct instruction on ceramic building techniques.

Some of the building skills were beyond Eddie's capabilities. This is where he really would have benefitted from an aid in class. As the task became harder for him, he began to lose interest. Eddie needed closer supervision to remember steps and sequences. I helped Eddie at the beginning of every class to give him tools for success and to keep him enthused, but as the tasks became more difficult, he felt less and less success and his interest began to die out. He started laying his head down without engaging. I tried pairing other students with Eddie again with limited success. Once Eddie had most the tree built, and he could begin to make the candy and start decorating, his enthusiasm came back to a degree.

The real joy for Eddie was in the creative planning and glazing when he saw his idea realized. During the planning period, I recorded such things as wonder and excitement,

inquiry/brainstorming, imaginative expression, and spontaneity. His sustained engagement floundered when the task became too difficult. I believe if an aid could have remained with him to coach his progress, his success with the medium would have been different and he would have continued to stay energized. I also realize I should have helped him focus less on the outcome and enjoy the spontaneity of playing in the clay. This is generally the course I follow with special needs students. Eddie had much more ability and wanted to produce something similar to the students around him. My direction to him should have recognized this and kept him playing in the medium, regardless of how it changed his outcome over time. I could and should have facilitated him more in line with his level of skill.

Jenny was also in Eddie's group and sat at his center both during instructional and building times. She was often happy to help Eddie and fed on his enthusiasm. Her piece took a much more whimsical turn. Initially, she had just wanted to make a mushroom like a gnome house. Like Eddie, her idea came from the fantasy world of Oz that their group discussed on the first day. When talking about her piece, I wondered if there were something she could do to push it further and make it truly unique and new. I didn't want to squelch her enthusiasm by taking away any autonomy, so I just encouraged her to keep adding to it to make it uniquely her own. She took my advice seriously; her personality and uniqueness came out through the additions she made to the Noam house. Her creation sported outside picnic areas, giant snails, a teacup play area, and a variety of designs on the inside and outside. The house was fully furnished. When Jenny was finished, she had created quite a unique piece that looked like something out of a Dr. Seuss movie. More rewarding, however, was watching Jenny work. She seldom left her spot, was utterly engrossed in what she was doing, and gave it her most excellent care. During observations of her, I recorded 14 of the 15 indicators listed that denote creative process. My role

was just advisory, allowing Jenny the autonomy she needed to create an authentic work. Jenny's craftsmanship was excellent. She had put her whole heart and soul into it. The result was an extraordinary piece that surpassed even what she thought she was capable.

Dillon built a large tree container. The lid was the upper branches and leaves of the tree. In the top was a hot tub for soaking under the stars in the top of a tree. This is a solution I doubt he would have thought of before our discussion on creative habitats. Dillon was very interesting to observe. He wanted to create something fun but had little patience for the process. He was far more closed off to the artistic experience in the beginning. He was confident he could take drastic shortcuts and get the results he wanted. Clay is often unforgiving and requires patience and crafts.

After several disastrous attempts, I finally told him, I was there to see that he was successful and if he would follow the directions I gave him for using tarpaper, his piece would go together much faster, and it would not fall apart. He agreed and within minutes he was amazed at what he was able to produce to bring his idea to life. That changed the experience for Dillon. I also knew he didn't have the patience to work with coils to build part of his project, so with Dillon in mind, we had an impromptu demonstration on building with slumps for the whole group. Without me intervening, he immediately saw that this was a quick solution for him and began the process. His piece came together quickly. I hoped he would take the time to finish it nicely, but that wasn't what he was interested in doing. He was interested in adding texture. As I watched him, I introduced several carving tools that would quicken the process and enhance the results. I was amazed to hear him say, "I love this, look what it does." He dove into the project with a renewed enthusiasm to finish it with a much more polished flare. His other concern was

that the piece would indeed be waterproof so he could put water into it. I made sure he knew how to cover it well with glaze.

In my observations, I saw Dillon display playful exploration, autonomy, spontaneity, imaginative exploration, and expression. I also saw sustained engagement, but with less effort to develop medium skills. In the end, however, he had an astonishing, authentic solution and artistic outcome. I learned a lot about Dillon through this project that will help me meet his needs in future assignments. It was essential to give Dillon a lot of autonomy and space; he had his way of wanting to do things and only took advice if it was offered as an optional experiment. It was also important to watch him closely, joke with him and know when to intervene with ideas that fit what he was interested in carrying out. If I had imposed my criteria for an outcome, Dillon would have shut down. This was an excellent exercise for me. There are many Dillon's at this age coming to class with somewhat of an attitude. They want and are ready for independence, but still, need adult instruction and intervention. Learning how to build a rapport he was comfortable with really helped him engage in learning and enhanced his enjoyment of the class.

Adeline came into class a lot like Dillon. She carried somewhat of an entitlement attitude and an air of "I know what I'm doing, and you can't teach me anything. I'll do it my way." I wasn't sure how to approach Adeline at first. She enjoyed the opening discussions and engaged with the project. She was very concerned about coming up with "correct" answers to what constituted a habitat and was a leader with her group. She didn't have much interest in or patience for anyone else's answers. She didn't have much patience for the demonstrations. She just wanted to start and prove she knew what she was doing. Adeline is a brilliant student, but during demonstrations, she didn't pay attention and didn't register information about building

with a slab. She didn't have the patience to create rough drafts or brainstorm ideas before she started. She also missed instructions to keep clay thinner than your thumb.

She began by sculpting a solid tree trunk. The thing Adeline did that was amazing was to add texture immediately. Her bark looked like bark, and she was intensely focused once we started the clay. Knowing my input wasn't especially welcome, I reminded her the piece would have to be hollowed out, showed her quick options for doing it, but kept my distance to observe and let her work. The next class for Adeline's benefit, I held another quick demonstration. This time I built a tree trunk out of a slab and tarpaper. I showed the students options for adding branches, roots, and other appendages, that would simplify things for them. Then I demonstrated texture. I made sure I pointed out how well Adeline had done on applying texture. I pointed out that she wasn't afraid to start carving and what a great job she had done on making the surface look like bark. Then I just stood back and watched to see what Adeline would do. She immediately started over on her piece making the trunk with a slab. She increased the size and started adding as well as subtracting to create the bark. This time my instructions had registered without me saying much at all.

I would give her new tools and suggestions on occasion but primarily pointed out what was working well and why. I spoke to Adeline largely through my demonstrations. When she struggled with the leaves and branches, the presentation on slumping was again just what she needed. I saw her return to her piece and tear off the top of the tree. Again she started over using a slab. When she couldn't get the texture she wanted without adding hundreds of leaves, I introduced some tools to use for making impressions. This pleased her, and again she quickly engaged. I didn't see a lot of inquiry and brainstorming, but I saw a lot of autonomy, continued enjoyment, playful exploration, effort and investment, and sustained engagement and

attentiveness. Adeline's piece ended up being one of the most excellent and most polished produced by the class.

This was an enjoyable project from beginning to end. All of the students engaged and enjoyed the process. The most challenging part for me was getting the students to polish their pieces at the end. The fun for this age group was in creating, not in sealing creaks and cleaning off burs. When they understood the dangers of leaving unsealed edges, most endured to the end to make a nicely finished piece. They had invested way too much to have something go wrong in the firing. I believe knowing this, and recognizing this as an age-related challenge, I can address this early on in future classes and find ways to inspire the finish work while making it more fun.

Chapter Six: Conclusions

“The ultimate freedom for creative groups is the freedom to experiment with new ideas.”

- Daniel Pink

This research project focused on the qualities of effective art instruction using elements from a number of historical ideologies and current conversations, with the intent to study creative development and expression in students and to inform and improve the researcher’s teaching practice, by providing insight into the qualities of effective art instruction for junior high age students.

Effective Art Instruction

It was my intent to observe my own teaching methods, including how I went about engaging students. I particularly focusing on the methods introduced by Loris Malaguzzi in the Reggio Emilia schools. His methods include an emergent curriculum, based on playful exploration. His methods cast the teacher as an observer, documenting student interest and acting as a facilitator to help students construct their own knowledge, rather than being a giver of rote instruction.

As mentioned earlier, the goal was to create an environment in the classroom where the students could thrive artistically; they needed to be in an artful habitat as they created artful habitats. When the students walked into the environment they would be creating in it needed to feel safe and comfortable. It needed to be a place that encouraged creativity by engaging students visually and socially.

The room itself was clean and filled with light. There was fun and stimulating music playing most days. One visitor observed: “in the room there were masks, some prints, and

inspirational sayings on the ceiling.” I observed the students occasionally referring to these sayings and how they influenced them as they presented their piece to me. They wanted me know they were making the connections. One poster quotes Michelangelo telling how he carved the marble until he set the angel free. While talking with a student about his piece, he said, “I did what Michelangelo did with the angel. I carved and built until I got the habitat I wanted.”

The routine of the classroom was consistent everyday. The students met together at the front of the room each day with their sketchbooks. I welcomed them as they entered and we chatted about their day or what they did on the weekend. I tried to acknowledge every child everyday. I started class with the same “attention getter” in the same place daily so students knew it was time to give me their attention. I would briefly take roll; go over expectations for the day with them as posted on the board; give any needed demonstrations; then turn them over to work. I sent them to work daily with a “go team.” When the students hear this, they know they had permission to get their work and begin. Then I would move from student to student, asking about their work, answering questions, suggesting new tools or building methods they could try, and recording my observations.

Boundaries set for the project included that it had to be a clay habitat at least five inches by five inches, and it needed to have a lid. The habitat they created should reflect what was of interest and importance to them and include what they needed to thrive. Within those boundaries they had complete autonomy. I allowed them to pull from popular culture if they built on the idea to make it uniquely their own.

To assess the effectiveness of art instruction for this study, it was helpful to ask the following questions:

1. How did the adaptation of these methods to my teaching change my own experience of teaching?
2. How does curriculum and teaching based on student choice and exploration influence student learning, creativity, and attitudes toward art making?
3. What evidence did you gather about the students' playful exploration?

These questions were based on the idea that by giving students more freedom to make choices about their learning, my own teaching would change to becoming more of a facilitator.

Reflections and Analysis

Reflection 1. How did the adaptation of these methods to my teaching change my own experience of teaching? I found this experience to very fun. It allowed me get to know my students better and connect with them on a deeper level. The curriculum changed the types of conversations and discussions I had with the students both as a group and individually. Instead of always telling them what to do, I asked them questions about their work, which allowed them to be more open about their work. They began verbalizing why they made the decisions they made. I knew from our conversations why they chose particular visual culture images or personal experience to influence their work. Knowing and understanding what was important to them helped me direct them in more meaningful ways that deepened their engagement and made our interactions more personal and meaningful. In the past I might know a student was frustrated, but if I didn't understand why, I might or might not have had the right solution or tool to offer him.

Changing the nature of our conversations also changed my relationship with the students. We enjoyed our class time together and laughed more together. This helped us develop a classroom culture of trust. As I showed more respect for them by listening to their ideas and

concerns, they listened and took my artistic advice and suggestions more readily. I found myself truly enjoying watching the students make discoveries for themselves. I have always felt proud of all of my students successes, but in this case, I observed them responding to that pride, and genuinely finding pleasure in their own ideas and successes.

Of course this did not always come naturally to me. When the demands of the classroom were great, I found myself resorting to being the sage on the stage. When this happened, it affected the entire classroom adversely. The students reverted quickly from playfully exploring to just filling the assignment. When I allowed them autonomy to choose their direction, they engaged and were willing to try new and more challenging solutions.

Reflection 2. How does curriculum and teaching based on student choice and exploration influence student learning, creativity, and attitudes toward art making? By allowing students more autonomy in their choices with the curriculum and allowing them to explore the things that interested them, their ideas became far more individualized and divergent. Few of the students chose the same subject matter. Overall, fewer students used the first idea they came up with. The solutions they chose for their artifact became less predictable and trite. The student's personalities and interests began to be reflected in their habitats. They gave more serious reflection to what was important to them and based their work on those things that mattered and really interested them. As a result, the variety and originality of the work increased significantly across the class.

One observer noted "Projects range from an alphabet block house, to a tree house, soccer trophy house, tree house, fairy house, some students are just finishing their work, others seem to be struggling getting the slabs joined ..." As noted by this observer, some students still struggled to

understand the building process and had a harder time engaging in the work. This was evidence that as a facilitator, I needed to address their individual needs better.

This curriculum brought in multiple artists that were of great interest to the students. Discussing these artists first created a springboard for their ideas. Steven Dobbs (1992) stated it best in the DBAE handbook, when he acknowledged that students couldn't come up with ideas from an empty vacuum. Yet students of this age can have difficulty relating or connecting to much of the academic art we introduce them to. This may have much to do with how we introduce art works to students. The artists we studied for this project engaged all of the students from the very beginning. No one in the class sat on the sidelines or tuned out. The work of the four artists we discussed was fun and unique; it immediately caught and kept the students attention. The artists themselves modeled creative exploration. They each described their own work as play. Their investment in "play" produced impressive artifacts that spurred the student's imaginations.

Overall, as the students brought more of what was important to them to their work and many became far more invested in their work. I observed students working longer and harder to achieve outstanding results, rather than being satisfied with mediocre ones. Most were no longer just filling an assignment but were accomplishing something that was important to them. More students became more excited about their pieces. As the student's overall enjoyment level and fun of the class increased, sustained engagement levels increased.

Rather than learning one ceramic skill and applying it the easiest way possible just to fill the assignment, the students were willing to learn and master multiple skills to see the fulfillment of their ideas. The overall quality, sophistication, and polish of their work is evidence of their increased investment and engagement.

As with all projects, there were those who listened and tried the tools I gave them to discover success. There were also a few who were determined to do it their own way, and who still had trouble engaging. When it came to finishing their pieces, many of the students still lost interest toward the end of the project. The fun was in creating, not refining. Getting the students to stick with it clear to the end was the most challenging part for me. As I brought out new finishing tools that were fun to use and provided easy success, most reengaged. They were very anxious to just see their work fired and start glazing.

As discussed in chapter 2, “Art” is what happens as the student explores and creates. The finished artifact is simply evidence that “Art” took place. By this definition, I observed “Art” taking place far more often in class. Rather than learning one ceramic skill and applying it the easiest way possible just to fill the assignment, the students were willing to experiment and explore with multiple skills. Students constructed their own knowledge as they experimented with and mastered these skills to see the fulfillment of their ideas. The overall increase in quality, sophistication, and polish of the entire class’s artifacts is evidence of their increased investment and engagement.

Reflection 3. By giving students more freedom to make choices about their learning, my own teaching changed to becoming more of a facilitator. My roll as a teacher became one of presenting new tools, skills, and techniques to the students. I no longer told them what to do, but asked them what they needed in order to further their inquiry into clay construction. I questioned them about what was happening, what they wanted to happen, and made suggestions on how to achieve it. I was surprised that I no longer had to tell the students what to do to make their piece work. When they saw a demonstration that was what they felt they needed, I observed students choose that tool independently and apply it on their own. This allowed me to become much more

of a facilitator for their choices. By becoming more of a facilitator to help the students construct their own knowledge, they took the reins and invested deeper in the project than I had ever observed before. One observer recorded

Overall, Marilyn is acting very much as a facilitator, working with individual students, walking around the room, visiting with everyone..." "Ms. Bambrough can you check this for me?" "Tell me what you have going on here?" Marilyn asks as she slowly moves from student to student, asking about their individual projects, "How are you coming here?" and occasionally giving advice.

Teaching is not so much about feelings, but clear expectations for an engaging line of inquiry. It is about investigation, touching on personal interest with a passion for your subject. Learning is a progression of "trying to find out..."

Greater personal inquiry was evident in most students. Some students still remained on the fringes or could have engaged more in constructing their own knowledge. I attribute this to two things as I observed them. The first was that students have developed the habit of being told what to do in school, rather than engaging in discovery themselves. It was easy for all of the students to slip back into these habits at times. A few students were very reluctant to engage in their own discoveries. They wanted me to just tell them what to do.

The second thing I observed was in regard to my own teaching habits. I had been thrilled at Reggio Emilia to observe alterieristas and teachers as facilitators for learning, rather than rote givers of knowledge. I liked the idea of building relationships with students that allowed for conversations about their work and helped them do their own problem solving. I found, however, in the course of trying to get to everyone who needed me in class, I sometimes reverted to being the sage on the stage. I would find myself just telling students what to do next.

Allowing students autonomy in learning doesn't mean they can run amuck or choose to do nothing. There are still standards and curriculum that must be mastered. The choice comes in the path they choose to master it and in following their own line of inquiry. I feel I could have constructed clearer expectations and parameters for this. Mastering the skill of being a true facilitator takes time and practice. Allowing students to playfully explore doesn't always feel productive to the teacher. Finding a way to facilitate learning for a hard to engage child was difficult. There is a tendency for me to just want to just get it done in some of these more difficult cases. Allowing student autonomy and facilitating them in investigative learning, is a skill I will need to continue to foster and strive toward.

Reflection 4. What evidence did you gather about student's playful exploration?

Evidence was gathered from my personal observation in class, the videos taken of each class, and third party observations made by my committee chair and vice principal. In both my personal observations and in the videos of class, I observed the students having fun working in the clay. They enjoyed the process and were eager to start each day. The students also had fun with each other. Overall the class was a happy, fun place to be. The students consistently exhibited good attitudes about learning and their projects. On occasion, when a student was experiencing frustrations, I was able to introduce new tools or solutions that helped resolve the problem. One of my observers recorded, "I observed lots of happy playful talk, the boys were physically active (as expected) moving around pounding things, working on the slab roller, walking around looking at what their peer were doing, making jokes, walking around to different tables, touching each other, clapping, standing up ... all tables had ongoing but not loud conversations going on."

I observed students didn't feel as tied in to making the piece exactly like their rough draft. They were willing to take risks and play with the medium to find better solutions. Some changed direction completely as they became familiar with the medium. I observed student embracing unexpected outcomes and becoming excited about their discoveries.

The process described above demonstrates where creative knowledge and skill were constructed and what was important for me and for my students. For the students, the finished product was what they thought was important. To them it mattered how their piece turned out. The finished artifacts are evidence of the creative process. For students twelve to thirteen years old, the sophistication of their artifacts is evidence that they enjoyed the process enough to engage until the finished product was polished.

Unexpected Outcomes

Historical and current conversations among art education researchers include the belief that creativity is an innate human need. As such, all students have both the need to create and the aptitude to develop creative ability.

For this reason, the curriculum was tested on a Foundations I class that is a graduation requirement for all students whether or not they consider themselves to be artists, are interested in art, display artistic skill, or have artistic experience. The class population represented what these theorists consider "all students." As the students developed and executed their ideas for creating habitats, all of the students were able to successfully express their ideas to create an artifact at varying levels. They were able to do this using clay construction skills regardless of their past artistic experience. The research documented creative growth and ability of all the students to varying degrees as "creativity" was defined for this research.

As I reflect on the overall experience with the students, I found the entire class was far more engaged with this project, than past eighth grade ceramics projects. The Reggio Emilia approach was never meant to be duplicated exactly in our schools. We were encouraged at Reggio to adapt their applicable methods to our situations. To make teaching truly student centered, collecting data on each student and assessing their needs was important. With over twenty students, this became a real logistical problem. Reggio teachers work with small groups of students at a time. They record data for the group that is then discussed with the alterierista and curriculum specialist to develop a continual emergent curriculum that is truly formulated for each student's needs. Even observing videos was often logistically impossible me. I found I needed to assess what each student needed next, working much more on the fly during class. This process did, however, help me deepen my involvement with the students and what they were trying to accomplish. I found I focused in more on students, even though I wasn't recording as much data.

I also realized that it is easy to focus intently on several students in class, while totally ignoring others who are quieter and require less of the teacher. This can always be a problem, but I became very aware of it during the study. Teachers tend to go to the squeaky wheel and some wheels squeak a lot. I recognized a real need to focus on my skills in helping students develop more independence in class and less dependence on me as the teacher. I found myself reinforcing these dependency attitudes and realize it is something I need to improve in my practice; so all student needs are meet.

Overall, it was clear that the students did experience more engagement in their projects and find more fun and joy in them. The finished pieces showed a much greater authentic artistic outcome and skill advancement. Students did act more as researchers invested in their own

learning. However, this could have happened to a much great degree than it did. Setting up class parameters to consistently facilitate students becoming their own researchers will take practice on my part.

I was able to improve the feeling of comradery and fun in the class. The students did support and help each other to a greater degree. I was able to engage with students on a deeper level and was able to teach less by rote and more as a facilitator. These are skills that will take me time and practice to master on a consistent basis with all curriculums. I believe this study supported my original hypothesis. Effort on my part to maintain an “Artful Habitat” will continue to enhance student engagement through playful artistic exploration. Students will continue to produce authentic, original art and experience greater creative development.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Figures

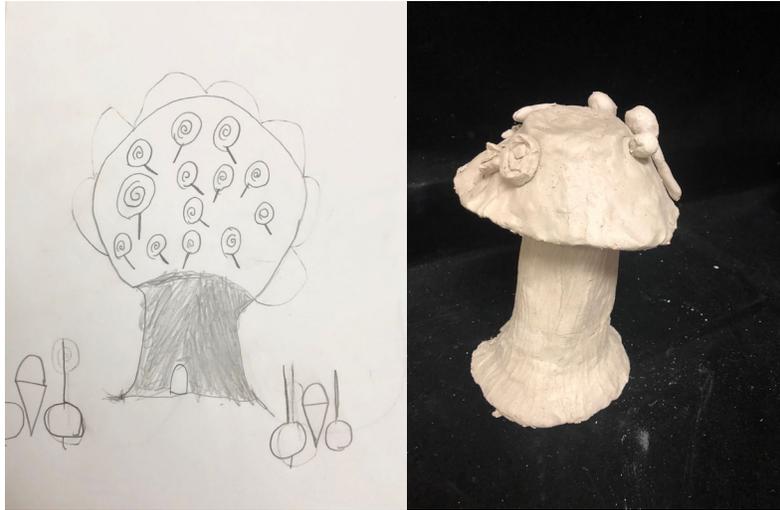


Figure 1 - Eddie's Rough Draft and Clay Habitat

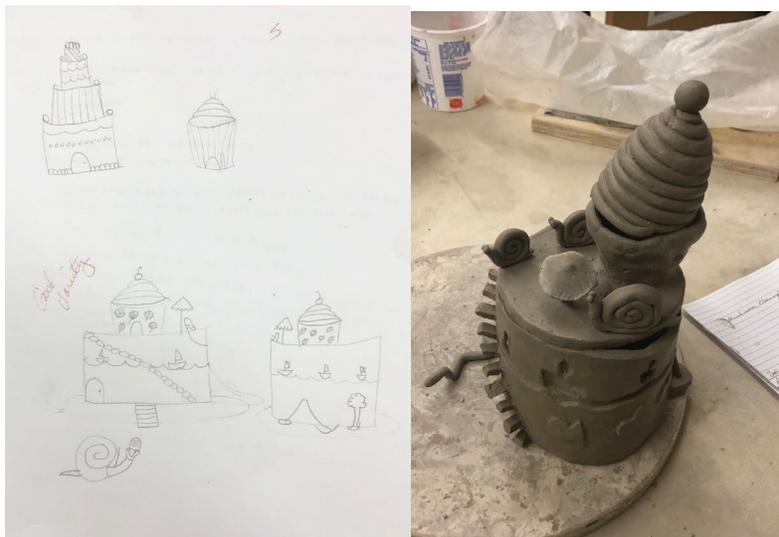


Figure 2 - Jenny's Rough Draft and Habitat



Figure 3 - Dillon's Rough Draft and Tree House Hot Tub Habitat



Figure 4 - Adeline's Rough Draft and Working



Figure 5 - Adeline's Tree House Habitat



Figure 6 - Additional Student Work

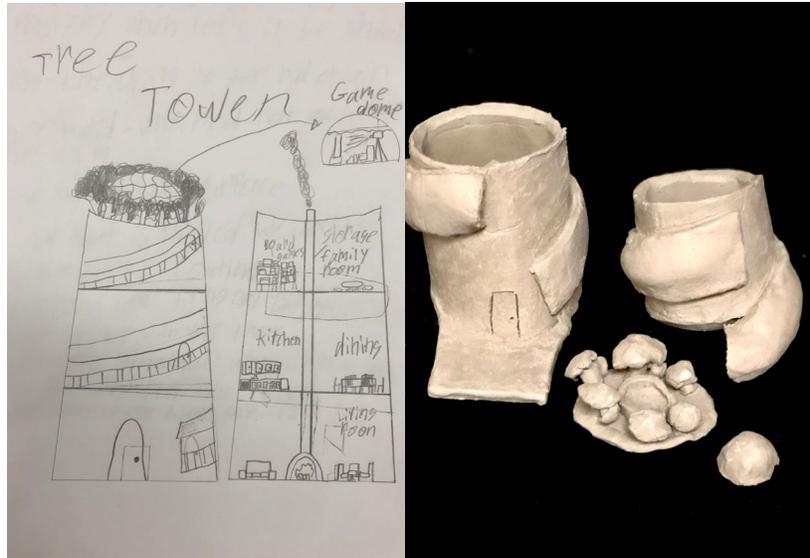


Figure 7 - Additional Student Work



Figure 8 - Additional Student Work and Evidence of Divergence Solutions



Figure 9 - Additional Student Work



Figure 10 - Studio Environment and Student Working

Appendix B: IRB Approval and Forms

From: Human Subjects Committee
Sent: Wednesday, July 18, 2018 3:02 PM
To: marilyn bambrough@yahoo.com' <marilyn bambrough@yahoo.com>
Subject: X18230 PI: Marilyn Bambrough IRB Determination: APPROVAL

Memorandum

To: Marilyn Bambrough

Department: ART

College: FA&C

From: Sandee Aina, MPA, IRB Administrator

Bob Ridge, PhD, IRB Chair

Date: July 18, 2018

IRB#: X18230

Title: "*An Artful Habitat*"

Brigham Young University's IRB has approved the research study referenced in the subject heading as expedited level, categories 6-7. The approval period is from **July 18, 2018 to July 17, 2019**. Please reference your assigned IRB identification number in any correspondence with the IRB. Continued approval is conditional upon your compliance with the following requirements:

1. A copy of the informed consent statement is attached. No other consent statement should be used. Each research subject must be provided with a copy or a way to access the consent statement.
2. Any modifications to the approved protocol must be submitted, reviewed, and approved by the IRB before modifications are incorporated in the study.
3. All recruiting tools must be submitted and approved by the IRB prior to use.
4. In addition, serious adverse events must be reported to the IRB immediately, with a written report by the PI within 24 hours of the PI's becoming aware of the event. Serious adverse events are (1) death of a research participant; or (2) serious injury to a research participant.

5. All other non-serious unanticipated problems should be reported to the IRB within 2 weeks of the first awareness of the problem by the PI. Prompt reporting is important, as unanticipated problems often require some modification of study procedures, protocols, and/or informed consent processes. Such modifications require the review and approval of the IRB.
6. A few months before the expiration date, you will receive a continuing review form. There will be two reminders. Please complete the form in a timely manner to ensure that there is no lapse in the study approval.

IRB Secretary

A 285 ASB

Brigham Young University

(801)422-3606

All forms were made available to students in both English and Spanish

Classroom announcement script

Along with being an art teacher, I am a master's student at BYU. I want to tell you about a research study I am doing. A research study is a special way to find the answers to questions. We are trying to learn more about teaching methods, and curriculum that is fun and engaging. You are being asked to join this study because a ceramic unit is part of your art class, and I am using a ceramics curriculum for the study. If you decide you want to be in this study, this is what will happen. You will participate in the curriculum as a normal part of class. I will be observing my interactions with you and your interactions with the curriculum through observation and by videotaping the class.

We don't know if being in this study will help you. But we hope to learn something that will help other people someday.

You can choose not to be in this study. You will still be expected to participate in the same curriculum for your grade in class.

We won't tell anyone you took part in this study. It will be completely anonymous. When we are done with the study, we will write a report about what we learned. We won't use your name in the report.

The risks are the same as participating in any art class. Your parents/legal guardian, have been given information on what to do if for any reason you are injured during the study.

You don't have to be in this study. It's up to you. If you say yes now, but change your mind later, that's okay too. All you have to do is tell me.

You will not receive compensation for being in this research study. Before you say yes to be in this study; be sure to ask Mrs. Bambrough to tell you more about anything that you don't understand.

Appendix C: Parent Email

Art Class Curriculum Study

Dear Parents,

I am your child's art teacher at Treasure Mountain Junior High. I am also a graduate student at Brigham Young University. As such, I am conducting a research study about teaching methods, and curriculum that is fun and engaging. I am inviting your child to take part in the research because (he/she) is enrolled in the art class that will be participating the ceramics unit being studied.

Additional information about the study and curriculum has been sent home with your student as part of the class disclosure forms. Please fill out the forms and return them with your student.

The study will be part of our regular curriculum and is aligned with national and state standards.

If you or your student opt not to be apart of the study, they will still complete the same curriculum requirements for the class. However, their artwork and data will not be included in the study. Whether or not your student participates in the study, will have no effect on their grade in any way.

Many thanks,

Marilyn Bambrough

Art Teacher TMJH

Appendix D: Parent Permission Form

Parental Permission For a Minor

Introduction

My name is Marilyn Bambrough. I am an art teacher at Treasure Mountain Junior High and a graduate student from Brigham Young University. I am conducting a research study under the direction of Dr. Mark Graham in the department of Art Education at BYU about teaching methods, and curriculum that is fun and engaging. I am inviting your child to take part in the research because (he/she) is enrolled in the art class that will be participating in the ceramics unity being studied.

Procedures

If you agree to let your child participate in this research study, the following will occur:

Your child will be introduced to a variety of historical and contemporary artists as inspirations for their own ideas.

Your child will participate in class discussions about the artists and how it relates to core science standards.

Your child will be taught skills in ceramic slab construction and glazing.

Your child will create an artistic ceramic piece in response to the things they have learned and write a reflection about their piece. The teacher will be observed and evaluated on the types and quality of teaching methods used and student teacher interactions

Teacher observations will be recorded each class period.

Student artwork will be analyzed.

This will take place in their regular classroom as part of my scheduled curriculum at Treasure Mountain Jr. High in Park City, UT. It is expected to span approximately 8 weeks.

I will be documenting student artwork and classroom activities using video and photography.

Risks

There is a risk of loss of privacy, which the researcher will reduce by not using any real names or other identifies in the written report. The researcher will also keep all data in a locked file cabinet in a secure location. At the end of the study all data (hard copy and electronic) will be kept for 5 years by the researcher and then destroyed.

Confidentiality

Only the researcher and the two directing advisors, Mark Graham PHD and Daniel Barney PHD have access to the data. At the conclusion of the study, all identifying information will be removed from the data. The researcher will keep hard copy data in a locked cabinet in an office; all electronic data will be password protected and encrypted. All data will be kept for 5 years by the researcher and destroyed.

Benefits

There are no direct benefits for your child's participation in this project.

Compensation

There will be no compensation for participation in this project.

Questions about the Research

Please direct any further questions about the study to Marilyn Bambrough at 435-645-5640, or at mbambrough@pcschoools.us. You may also contact Dr. Mark Graham at 435-422-5866, or at mark_graham@byu.edu

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

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

Participation

Participation in this research study is voluntary. You are free to decline to have your child participate in this research study. You may withdraw you child's participation at any point without affecting your child's grade/standing in school, treatment, or benefits, etc.

Child's Name: _____ Parent's Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix E: Video and Photo Release Form

Video and Photo Release Form

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

Photo or Video can be studied by the research team for use in the research project.

Photo or Video can be used for scientific publications.

Photo or Video can be shown at scientific conferences or meetings.

Photo or Video can be shown in classrooms to (elementary/middle/high school/college) students.

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

Child Appearing in Photograph or Video (Adult Signature Required)

I represent that I am the (father, mother, guardian) of _____,
the above-named child. I hereby consent to the foregoing on his/her/belief.

I have read the foregoing and fully understand the contents thereof.

Name (Printed): _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix F: Child Assent Form

Child Assent (7-14 years old)

What is this research about?

My name is Marilyn Bambrough; I am a Masters Student at BYU. I want to tell you about a research study I am doing. A research study is a special way to find the answers to questions. We are trying to learn more about teaching methods, and curriculum that is fun and engaging. You are being asked to join this study because a ceramic unit is part of your art class, and I am using a ceramics curriculum for the study. If you decide you want to be in this study, this is what will happen. You will participate in the curriculum as a normal part of class. I will be observing my interactions with you and your interactions with the curriculum through observation and, by videotaping the class.

Can anything bad happen to me?

This will be a normal class project. Your grade will not be based in any way on whether or not you chose to opt out of the study.

Can anything good happen to me?

We don't know if being in this study will help you, but this project may help to improve art teaching and learning

Do I have other choices?

You can choose not to be in this study. You will still be expected to participate in the same curriculum for your grade in class.

Will anyone know I am in the study?

We won't tell anyone you took part in this study. When we are done with the study, we will write a report about what we learned. We won't use your name in the report.

What happens if I get hurt?

The risks are the same as participating in any art class. Your parents/legal guardian, have been given information on what to do if for any reason you are injured during the study.

What if I do not want to do this?

You don't have to be in this study. It's up to you. If you say yes now, but change your mind later, that's okay too. All you have to do is tell me. ***If you do not participate in the study, you will still complete all aspects of the curriculum, including reflections as part of your regular classroom activities. Your work will simply not be included in the study and you will not be videotaped during class time.***

You will not receive compensation for being in this research study. Before you say yes to be in this study; be sure to ask Mrs. Bambrough to tell you more about anything that you don't understand.

If you wish to opt out of this study, please sign and print your name.

Name (Printed): _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____