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An Introduction to Arts Integration

with Lindsay Pinchbeck and Barbara (Packales) Vinal

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Arts Integration – An Introduction - Collected ideas by Lindsay Pinchbeck

Arts integration brings the driving forces of the arts; story, drama, movement, poetry, visual thinking and music into our lives allowing us to deepen our knowledge as educators and to bring the feeling and emotion inherent in the arts into the curriculum. Further the creative process of Imagining, Creating, Critiquing, Exhibiting/ Performing allows students to retain their knowledge for life rather than just holding information for a test. We can also confidently say we are engaging in '21st century skills' of communicating, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity.

“It is ironic, but the enlargement of life through the arts is a powerful way to see what is lifelike. By making things larger than life or by recontextualizing them, reality, whichever it is, seems to be made more vivid.....The arts provide a platform for seeing things in ways other than they are normally seen. In so doing they help us wonder, ‘Why not?’. – Elliot Eisner, *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*

When you engage in the arts you cannot escape the emotive qualities and questions which arise. The question which continues to come to the forefront when deeply engaged in the arts is ‘**Why Not?**’ This questioning allows us to take risks, and engage in innovative ideas and practices which propel us to higher level thinking and allows us to move forward as a society as well as in our own personal growth.

“If no one changes the world it will stay as it is, if no one changes the play it will come to the same end as before.” Augusto Boal.

Integrating the arts in an arts curriculum is just as important as integrating the arts into a math or science curriculum, as we are better able to meet the needs of variable learners in our classroom. The perception that art is a special *talent* attainable by just a few limits the potential for rich experiences in our classrooms and daily lives. Just as every child can learn to read and understand mathematical concepts so every learner should be expected to ascertain the skills to draw, sing or move with confidence and proficiency. These are measurable and attainable skills as the MAAI has proven and encouraged, and we can better meet the standards and needs of our students when we have more ways to engage many learning styles present in our classroom. With all the research now available on the success of Arts

integration the question should be why are we not making this a standard in our approach to classroom teaching?

Process and Product are equally important in art making, as Elliot Eisner states –

“ The phrase ‘work of art’ can have two meanings. It can refer to work of *art*, or it can refer to the *work* of art. The former refers to the product created, the latter to the process of creating it. Aesthetic experience can be secured at each location.”

The value of process and product reminds us we gain from action as well as from observation and experience. For example standing in a museum and experiencing a pulsating Mark Rothko painting or listening to live music allows us to have both personal and shared experiences allowing for new thinking.

Arts Integration nurtures the teacher – Arts integration is enriching and engaging for the teacher. When you apply the creative process to your classroom you too are communicating, collaborating and applying critical thinking skills.

Empathy and Human Connection is also an important element to consider when engaging in the arts. When we connect with others through non-verbal experiences we are likely to experience an emotive response which encourages our empathic awareness. The arts offers us new perspectives; The child you are struggling to reach through your own teaching/learning style may let you in when given an opportunity to express herself through poetry or drama, allowing you another avenue to support.

Thus Arts Integration uses the power of the arts to learn more about the people we work with, ourselves included. It is truly about the human connection and having many ways in which to engage and deepen our understanding. Seeing with fresh eyes, listening to stories, moving through space together, are the elements of the arts we as arts educators know in our core. The ability to risk, play, make mistakes and create, allows us to engage deeply with students and inspires creative classrooms and schools.

Recommended resources:

Theory:

Jensen, E. (2001), *Arts with the brain in Mind*,

Robinson,K.(2011), *Out of our Minds*, UK, Capstone Publishers

<http://sirkenrobinson.com>

Elliot Eisner, E (2002) *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*. New Haven, CT.

McLaren, K. (2013) *The Art of Empathy*, Boulder, CO: Sounds True

Powell, M.C. & Speiser V.M. (2005), *The Arts, Education, and Social Change, Little signs of Hope*, New York; Peter Lang Publishing.

<http://www.arteducators.org/learning/learning-in-a-visual-age/submit-participants/elliott-eisner>

www.edutopia.org/stw-arts-integration-research

Action:

Way, Brian. (1967) *Development through Drama*, London: Longman Group.

Gilbert, M. (1997) *Creative dance for all ages*. VA: National Dance Association.

Collins, B. (2005) *The trouble with Poetry*. New York, Random House.

Boal, A. (2002) *Games for Actors and Non Actors*, London, Routledge.

Hamilton and Weiss (2005) *Children Tell Stories*, New York: Owen Publishers

London, P. (1989) *No More Second Hand Art*, Boston, MA: Shambala.

Visual Art Assessment project by Barbara (Packales) Vinal

This project was done with Grade 5 but is adaptable to any grade level.

Driving Question: “How can I use technology to assess my artwork?”

Tools needed:

- Any device that takes digital pictures.
- PicCollage (available on any Smartphone, iOS device or Android device)
- Digital voice recorder - (built in to a Smartphone or stand alone)
- Web space for uploading finished product
- Optional: QR code generator and reader

Similar ways to use this type of assessment by modifying the media (video with voice over)

- Portfolio of various works/performances
- Music Composition

Black History Performance Project

This project was done with Grade 5 but is adaptable to any grade level.

Driving Question: "How can I create content for a performance about Black History?"

Tools needed:

- Research medium (Discovery Education or guided Internet searches)
- Word processing program; Google docs or DE Board Builder
- Video camera
- Optional: Google forms for assessment

All links and tools will be found at:

<http://maai2014artsintegration.weebly.com/tech-links.html>

Email: barbvinal@gmail.com

Twitter: @BarbVinal

Text or call: 919-607-6541

About Lindsay Pinchbeck

Originally from Scotland Lindsay Pinchbeck came to Maine for her undergraduate degree. Lindsay has been teaching with and through the arts in a variety of settings for the past 15 years. Lindsay is now the director and founder of Sweet Tree Arts L3C, a community arts organization in Hope, ME. Pinchbeck gained her Masters in Education through Lesley University's Creative Arts and Learning program. Creatively Lindsay works as a print maker and photographer. Lindsay believes the creative arts should be accessible to all. She encourages us to be active participants and keen observers with the hope of enriching our communities through the arts.

About Barbara (Packales) Vinal

Barbara (Packales) Vinal – Hello! This year marks the end of my 23 years in the music classroom. I have taught music predominantly at the elementary level, a few years teaching high school and continue to teach piano privately. I spent 12 years in Maine teaching Elementary music in MSAD #11 – Gardiner; as a member of the DOE Learning Results Review Committee; and part of the Maine Music Educators Executive Board. In 2010 I moved to Raleigh, NC to continue to teach elementary music and also coach teachers in Technology Integration for the Wake County Public School System. I now am a Technology Integration Specialist full time. I also develop and teach online Fine Arts courses for LearnNC a division of the University of North Carolina.