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THE COLLABORATION OF ART MUSEUMS AND ART EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL SETTING

by

Breanna S. Daugherty

A thesis submitted to the Graduate College in
partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
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THE COLLABORATION OF ART MUSEUMS AND ART EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL SETTING

Breanna S. Daugherty, M.A.

Western Michigan University, 2021

Many schools offer visual arts as an elective, so an art field trip could be seen as a fun reward instead of a required component of the curriculum. However, certain evidence has contradicted this idea. For instance, students who are able to visit an art museum, view original artworks, and discover the process of real artists have displayed long-term benefits. The latter range from enhanced behaviors, questioning, critical thinking, and empathy in students after visiting an art museum. This paper is a study of how an art museum's educational resources can benefit and be implemented into a school setting. First, this work examines studies that followed students in kindergarten through twelfth grade in the United States who visited an art museum, participated in student-led discussions, and viewed original artwork that was not shown through reproductions. In addition to reviews of research, this study includes a set of lessons based on the Indiana State Standards for Visual Arts in the middle school grades. The lesson presented in this paper can be applied to schools in both rural and suburban areas and to broad a range of budgets and class sizes.

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The Collaboration of Art Museums and Art Education in a School Setting

One's earliest memories of going on a field trip or a visit with family have the potential to shape someone's view on what a museum is and their interest in visiting such places. The Institute of Museums and Library Services (IMLS) states that there are around 35,000 museums in the United States, with roughly 2,620 of them concentrating on art, so many Americans have access to a museum of some kind. Museums promote key aspects of art education, including curiosity and inquisitiveness. Incorporating art education into school curricula is as vital to strong test scores as it is students' social emotional learning (SEL). For instance, Fiske (1999) stated, "When well taught, the arts provide young people with authentic learning experiences that engage their minds, hearts, and bodies. The learning experiences are real and meaningful for them" (p. IX). Viewing original artwork in the classroom, a museum, a community center, or an artist's studio can leave a stronger impression on students than only interacting with a select group of reproduced, distorted images on a screen. However, the heavy use of reproductions in society and a lack of visiting museums can result in a knowledge of art history limited to only the most famous artists, such as Leonardo da Vinci, Picasso, and Van Gogh. This perception of art history is then carried on stays with students after they leave the school setting, which is proven by how many museum visitors shown interest in only the well-known artists' works, passing by lesser-known pieces (Zeller, 1983, p. 43).

Additionally, a museum environment can enhance one's experience of artwork and learning process by placing visitors in a meaningful setting designed for a wholistic learning experience. Because museum education programs and activities have developed worldwide,

especially in the United States, the number of art educators working with museums, galleries, and institutions has increased.

However, modern school systems at times hinder the capabilities of art museums by emphasizing standardized tests and skills, other than the arts, viewed as valuable in the workforce. Furthermore, instructional methods and limited budgets make field trips challenging to execute. In her research as the Museum Educator and Docent Program Supervisor at the Wellin Museum of Art, Amber Geary (2019) found that 95% of polled educators saw value in using a museum in their curriculum and research, but only 41% of respondents claimed to have done so. She continued by explaining that this effect had occurred due to one of three main factors: time, cost and defensibility, or persuading administers to allow field trips to happen. In turn, this issue takes attention away from the arts, leaving gaps in curricula and allowing students to graduate without advanced knowledge of art museum benefits in their lives after graduation (Al-Radaideh, 2012; Geary, 2019; Hein, 1998, 2012; Institute of Museum and Library Services [IMLS], n.d.; Krantz & Downey, 2021; Zeller, 1983).

Although budgets can be tight, and finding locations can be challenging for many school districts, there are benefits often forgotten surrounding student visits to art museums. Crow and Bowles (2018) explained how such visits can increase students' empathy by comparing modern pieces to ancient artwork. There are many ways students can experience higher-level learning in with textbooks and reproductions, but connections made to cultures, time periods, religions, past societies, and different geographic locations from actual artwork can be fundamental in the learning process. Traits such as empathy, compassion, social connection, and visual literacy do not appear on state mandated tests, but the administration and communities who vote on budget

allotments for schools could consider the benefits of having students spend time with art and artifacts.

Art educators have the task of introducing an extensive amount of art to their students. Many times, these teachers accomplish this task as the sole art educators in their building or even in their districts. Thus, the assistance of art museums both virtually and in person can give educators the extra support, guidance and collaboration needed to strengthen art curricula. Supplementing the production component of an art class with the research, reflection, and discovery of art history through art museums allows students to be versatile and informed in their art practices.

Literature Review

This literature review begins with a brief overview of the historical cooperation between schools and museums and the educational practices happening within the museums themselves. Recognizing that education has always been interwoven in art museums helps highlight certain key factors in the changes that have shaped modern art museum education. Following these historical landmarks, this section acknowledges the benefits that have been revealed in studies focused on the collaboration between art museums and schools. Comparable to the collections found in each museum, the diversity, numbers, and socioeconomic composition of schools fluctuate across districts. Additionally, there is evidence explain how teachers and students prosper when interacting with museums.

History of Museum Education

Numerous questions can arise when focusing on the history of art museums and their connection to education. There may be multiple starting points from which to explain the journey to where museum art education stands in 2021. Some believe a turning point in this process was

the advent of docents in the early twentieth century. Other experts, like Nora Sternfeld, look centuries before this and cite the French Revolution or possibly the opening of the Louvre in 1793 as the beginning of modern museums and therefore the start of museum education (Prottas, 2019). Conversely, George E. Hein (1998) expressed that the democratic educational model is more of a modern concept. Throughout history, museums have transformed from personal collections of items in storage to more public exhibitions. During Roman times, the term "museum" described places mainly used for the discussion of philosophy, and these sites were the first iterations of modern universities and libraries (Lewis, 1999). However, one of the earliest and most famous of these places was the Mouseion of Alexandria, which contained objects such as statues of thinkers, surgical instruments, and a botanical and zoological park (Alexander & Alderson, 1987). Thus, even at that time, visuals were used for educational purposes. (Hein, 1998, 2012; Prottas, 2019).

Over time, the modern museum has become a location of exploration, culture, history, inspiration, and education. Toward the second half of the nineteenth century, the progression of industrialization encouraged the growth of populations in cities. One result of this effect was that the government's role expanded in the areas of social services and education. Viewed as an effective educational provider by society, museums were considered one of best ways to help people appreciate the value of modern life. For example, museum exhibitions informed the public of developments in technology, public health campaigns, and public entertainment (Hein, 1998, 2012).

In 1926, while he was the Director of Education Work at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Huger Elliott wrote,

> Cooperation with the city's educational institutions is encouraged by every means in our power. So that those who are studying the history, the theory, or the practice of art may feel free to use the treasures gathered here as may best fit their needs (Elliott, 1926, p. 204-205).

Around the same time, Sally Duncan outlined her philosophy that the museum's educational charge and emphasis on its collections and curation of exhibitions necessitated a balancing act and diplomatic negotiations by the director. The latter were required to please donors and collectors while simultaneously serving the public. If these actions were performed as Duncan suggested, a museum could develop a middle ground between an exhibition-based mindset and an exposition-based philosophy, creating "a vibrant, active museum" (Hein, 2012, pp. 129-130).

When the Tax Reform Act was passed in 1969, art museums were provided with financial benefits for " … clarifying their educational role and, as a result, museum personnel further refined and expanded existing educational services" (Stone, 2015, pp. 45-46). The same year, the educational role of museums was examined by the American Association of Museums, now known as the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). This discussion confirmed the idea that museums should operate as educational institutions. The AAM conclusions were followed by those of UNESCO in 1973, which stated the following: " … museum education would begin to form a regular part of any art curriculum and educators have the responsibility for students' energies and emotional responses to be properly channeled" (p. 506).

The progression of education in the art museum setting has shifted over time, with more intense movements and research occurring in the last century. Before this, it was introduced to general audiences by labels and descriptions accompanying the work, lectures, and programs for

public and school groups. In more recent events, new changes have occurred in museum education programs to connect visitors to art objects in a more personal way.

Specifically, these revisions have targeted disadvantaged adults and school-aged children. Additionally, changes in social, political, and educational aspects have resulted in refined and broadened educational services and increased interactions between art museums and schools (Hein, 2012; Stone, 2015).

Before this integration of schools and museums, Al-Radaideh suggested that public school teachers be used to create and teach in the museum setting. During the planning stage, both a museum's collection and its resources should be considered, along with school standards and curricula. The most successful teaching strategies arise from a joint effort connecting schools and museums (Al-Radaideh, 2012). Milligan and Brayfield (2004) confirmed this idea, writing that art museums are most beneficial when they offer lesson plans and activities aligned with the learning objectives stated in schools' standards, as opposed to those of the museum. Although both schools and museums are public institutions, each has taken a different path throughout history to reach their current states. In the United States, schools have diverged from museums over the last decades, emphasizing assessment and standard curriculums. For instance, museums of the past put less emphasis on assessing impact because it was accepted that visitors would "learn, be enlightened, and be entertained by their visits" (Hein, 1998, p. 5).

Recently, there has been a heightened movement to realign and create collaboration between schools and museums. In 1984, the AAM published a report on a three-year study focused on American museums titled "Museums for a New Century." This report, conducted by commissioned museum leaders, stated that while there has been an increased movement in educational programing, there is still a lack of understanding of museums' full capabilities in

educational programs. Additionally, this study highlighted the need for schools and museums to build curriculums together, encouraging both entities to continue strengthening the relationship (Berry, 1998; Hein, 1998; Hicks, 1986).

Although these are strong steps forward in art museum education, there is still room to grow. On this subject, Mjoseth (2009) stated,

> "Not surprisingly, most of President Obama's comments surrounding 21st century skills address the role of formal education in preparing students to be prepared for today's workforce. But the Administration has also recognized the importance of out-of-school learning environments … " (p. 4).

This statement indicates an emphasis on education in art museums, but the discussion on this issue within the field has been limited. Corresponding to this viewpoint, there have been many shifts in education, including the report published in 2009 by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The latter explained that libraries and museum are learning pillars supporting 21st-century skills, including visual literacy, critical thinking and problem solving, creativity, and innovation. Since the IMLS report, a shift in museums has begun making these skills part of museum dialect (Krantz & Downey, 2021). Soon after the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which replaced the No Child Left Behind Act, development and collaboration with schools and museums increased. The arts community welcomed ESSA as the new act called for "well-rounded education," which directly included the arts in its definition (2015, p. 298).

However, there are still gaps, questions, and problems in the process of getting museums and schools to work together. Thus, the past can be a road map for where research, funding, and energy should be directed in the coming years. At the forefront of this movement, many

restrictions still exist due to funding, distance, and scheduling conflicts. Additionally, there is still a lack of collaboration among museums and schools, necessitating further research (Krantz & Downley, 2021).

Benefits and Impact

The goal for art classes in general K–12 education is not to develop students as vocational artists but to produce citizens who are visually literate and understand artistic heritage in a broad sense. Thus, integrating museums into these curricula should be obligatory. Additionally, learning occurs in multiple settings and not only the classroom. For instance, many schools and educators have come to understand a demand for learning involving multiple opportunities through field trips and experiences where the environment functions as a resource for the educational process. However, there is still a lack of investment in schools to facilitate such off-campus activities or invest in visiting artist. One key reason for this deficiency is finances. When the idea of a museum visit is presented as a reward or seems too enjoyable to have educational value, schools allocate funds into resources they believe will improve test scores. In one such case, a Cincinnati arts organizations saw a 30% dip in school trips over a five-year span, which happened because schools were spending more time on test preparation (Al-Radaideh, 2012; Zeller, 1987).

After graduating from high school, a limited number of students go on to be working artists, separating them from those who will participate in the art world only by visiting museums and galleries. According to Krantz and Downey (2021), “Even a one-time museum experience significantly complements the visual arts education students receive in school because the single-visit program benefits students in three capacities (creative thinking, critical thinking, and empathy)” (p. 39). Similarly, a study published by Rice University and HERC (Houston

Education Research Consortium) stated the following: “Childhood arts experiences predict arts participation and engagement later in life … ” (Bowen & Kisida, 2019, p. 4). From this study, the authors found that the decline in arts education and opportunities in the United States was beginning to show effects, especially a decline in opportunities for African American and Hispanic or Latinx students. Thus, future visitations could be increased and better enjoyed if prior to graduation, students were given the “knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values” (Zeller, 1987, p. 50) needed to become involved in the arts during their adult lives. According to Unrath and Luehrman (2009), when students are exposed to art through museum access at a young age, it helps to develop “further exploration of one’s culture by developing skills to interpret visual language” (p. 41). In this vein, Bowen and Kisida (2019) warned that decreased access, opportunities, and exposure to the arts have lasting effects past childhood.

Over the last decade, many studies, including one by the Crystal Springs Bridges Museum of American Art in Northwest Arkansas, have shown the positive effects of a multi-visit program. In the latter, students visit an art museum multiple times, allowing for a deeper application of their critical thinking. The Crystal Bridge study revealed that field trips to art museums helped students become more “civilized young men and women who possess more knowledge about art” (Greene et al., 2014, p. 2). In a study conducted by Bowen and Kisida (2019) in Houston, the researchers worked with “ … 4th–8th grade students with baseline standardized math and reading test scores” (p. 12). One area of this study focused on students’ critical thinking in their writing. In their findings, they outlined how such an art education experience can “foster critical thinking skills” (p. 6), but researchers tend to leave this point out of their reviews. However, Bowen and Kisida cited the Crystal Bridges study by Greene et al. (2014) as a notable example showcasing evidence of critical thinking and many other benefits. In

their findings, Bowen and Kisida reported increases in both math and writing skills for students who used art education to increase their critical thinking. These researchers wrote about how the Houston Areas AAI (Arts Access Initiative) benefitted students in connection with critical thinking, saying the following:

> … [W]e find that the AAI significantly increases student scores on both sections, but effects were greater in magnitude with written composition. Specifically, scores on the writing mechanics section increased by 0.08 of a standard deviation ($p = 0.03$), and scores on the expository essay increased by 0.18 of a standard deviation ($p < 0.01$). (Bowen & Kisida, 2019, p. 16)

Along with enhanced critical thinking, visits to art museums in such studies also led to increased empathy, higher levels of tolerance, and a higher quality of absorbing arts and culture. When conducted at school ages, art museum education contributes to a lifelong appreciation for and interaction with the arts (Greene et al., 2014; Krantz & Donwey, 2021; Zeller, 1983). Additionally, Bowen and Kisida (2019) shared findings of productive changes in students SEL and empathy toward others. Along with these notable data on behavior, "[i]ncreasing students' arts educational experiences reduces the proportion of students receiving a disciplinary infraction by 3.6 percentage points" (Bowen & Kisida, 2019, p. 14).

The Crystal Bridges Museum study is significant for a variety of reasons. At its opening in 2011, Crystal Bridges was the newest major art museum in four decades to welcome visitors in the United States. A large segment of this organization's $800 million endowment was allocated for field trips, including busing and ensuring that all aspects of a school group's visit were completely free. This endeavor resulted in a high demand for field trips and educational tools among educators and schools, and enabled a wide range of age groups, districts and classes

to participate in this study. In the first school year the museum was open, roughly 38,300 students in kindergarten through 12th grade toured the building. This large number of students allowed those conducting the study to easily compare groups of age and other demographic components similar to the control and treatment groups. Compared with similar studies done in areas with only a few schools participating, the 120-plus different schools involved in this study gave the range and depth needed to gather data that was both interesting and relevant to museum education.

Before students took the survey in this study, they were part of an hour-long tour during which they were able to view and discuss up to five new paintings. These discussions regarding artwork were student-directed, with the museum educators offering information such as media and artists' names when asked. These discussions were largely popular and motivated by progressive education theories and the belief of many museums' education programs that students struggle to retain large amounts of information from tours. However, data from this study changed when students were asked to recall details of their visit to the art museum. These data revealed the following:

> [Eighty-eight] percent of the students who saw the Eastman Johnson painting *At the Camp--Spinning Yarns and Whittling* knew when surveyed weeks later that the painting depicts abolitionists making maple syrup to undermine the sugar industry, which relied on slave labor. Similarly, 82 percent of those who saw Norman Rockwell's *Rosie the Riveter* could recall that the painting emphasizes the importance of women entering the workforce during World War II. And 70 percent of the students who saw Romare Bearden's *Sacrifice* could remember that it is part of the Harlem Renaissance art movement. (Greene et al., 2014, p. 3)

The entire study experience lasted about half of a school day, and many students had time to freely walk the museum on their own after the tour. Surveys used in the Crystal Bridges study asked students to remark on areas such as "critical thinking, historical empathy, tolerance, and sustained interest in visiting art museum" (Greene et al., p. 2). Included in this questionnaire was a short essay in which students used critical thinking skills to write responses to a specific painting. The students did not see this survey prior to the field trip.

To ensure the viability of the analysis of students' learning, the essay was key. The latter is a main area of focus of this study, involving critical thinking, recalling, and writing. Thus, schools try to help students become proficient at crafting essays. Students in grades 3–12 were shown the movie *The Box* (Bartlett, 2002), which they had not previously viewed. Next, the test group participated in a student-led discussion during a museum visit, while the control group learned the same information in a classroom setting. The essay questions consisted of two typical questions museum educators would use to commence a discussion on a work of art: "What do you think is going on in this painting? And what do you see that makes you think that?" (Greene et al., 2014, p. 4). The resulting 3,811 essays were then blindly assessed by independent researchers, based on "observing, interpreting, evaluating, associating, problem finding, comparing, and flexible thinking" (p. 4) skills used in the responses. When the scores from separate researchers were compared, the outcomes were quite close. Thus, the researchers were able to classify students' critical thinking abilities pertaining to the works of art "with a high degree of inter-coder reliability" (Greene et al., 2014, p. 4).

This study revealed that the students attending the art museum remembered the art, and the works also allowed them to demonstrate critical thinking and empathy. Both the students in the museum and control groups of the Crystal Bridges study responded to Bartlett's work and

asked questions about tolerance of others. Students in the museum group were able to show stronger empathy toward artwork depicting people from different time periods or races than their own. Their responses demonstrated the importance of student-led discovery and this break in a more traditional, lecture-based learning style. In her article recapping the Crystal Bridges study, Miller (2013) wrote, “Kids who were visiting the museum for the first time showed dramatic increases in critical thinking, empathy, and tolerance” (p. 1). Paralleling this study, Marcus (2008) discussed similar discoveries from students in kindergarten through 12th grade, saying, “Museum visits can expand students' content knowledge, offer a more sensory learning experience, and develop their historical understanding including increased historical empathy, exposure to multiple perspectives, and an examination of how evidence is used to create historical narratives” (p. 56).

The evidence found in the Crystal Bridges Museum study is important to educators and administrators because of the effects of a museum visit on learning. Far more information was recalled by students who visited the art museum (the test group) than by students who stayed at school (the control group), who were not exposed to the specific five works of art or the others at the museum. Students in the treatment group recalled this information due to critical thinking skills, knowledge retention and enjoyment, as no grades or tests were assigned during the discussion and activities during the field trip. Because the students who visited the museum recalled historical, visual, and sociological information at such significant rates, direct experiences of the arts could be productive ways to communicate this type of content to students.

In an interview for an article by Jennifer Miller (2013), Greene gave a detailed discussion of the Crystal Bridges study. He described the importance of students both seeing the artwork and leaving the school setting to visit the museum. He compared this experience to being in a

religious building versus watching a preacher on television. That is, the setting in which one has an experience matters. “It’s why museums and churches invest in architecture. The act of going gets people into a mindset to receive the experience” (Miller, 2013, p. 1). Allowing students to remove leave the classroom during class can refresh their mindsets, which in this case helped them focus on the artwork they saw. In this way, they were no longer thinking about the bell ringing, their next class, or a future test; instead, they were free to stimulate their brains and senses in a new way.

Museum Setting

The settings where schooling occurs are collectively recognized as a resource. Among such entities, museums are one the most frequently used types for holistic, comprehensive learning experiences. The more schools understand the educational benefits of art museums and students viewing real artwork, the more these schools will recognize that art curricula can facilitate learning and opportunities for discovery. One of these opportunities for discovery being, visual literacy. In the modern school framework, there is an emphasis on verbal language. This focus, paired with instructional approaches that tend to limit fine art exposure, limit visual art experiences in formal schooling. On the other hand, art museums offer a visual literacy component that students (particularly young students or those with language barriers) can more easily understand. Benefits of the art museum setting include enhancing self-expression, building a connection to art, developing communication skills about art, listening and learning from class discussions, and providing motivation to create art in the future (Al-Radaideh, 2007, 2012; Greene et al., 2014; Unrath & Luehrman, 2009; Zeller, 1983, 1987).

Additionally, an educator in a museum does not need to inform students of as many facts as a classroom teacher does. The museum setting allows for students to visually experience

different artwork and mediums without help from the teacher. For instance, instead of a teacher having to explain a painting or acquiring materials or visuals for a lesson, the teacher could focus on other instructional techniques. On the other hand, the time, cost, and planning that bring a gallery experience to students without visiting a museum can be strenuous. Thus, when students experience art in real life, a teacher can focus on helping their class discuss and examine works of art (Al-Radaideh, 2012).

Another positive result of having a class leave school to visit a second learning location such as a museum is the diversity of items offered for students to examine. In the Crystal Bridges Art Museum study, almost all of the students who attended the school field trip to the museum had time to freely walk around and explore the museum after the tour. In contrast, students in the control group learning about similar works of art were only presented with a limited number of works of art in digital or print form. Allowing students the chance to explore and discover works of art in a museum introduces them to a wider variety of work than what might appear in a book or a limited selection of pieces presented in a classroom. Thus, a museum or artist's studio can offer students the chance to see a range of work beyond the limitations of what can be shown in a classroom setting.

Another result of having students in the museum setting was an increase in their sense of historical empathy. The latter developed from simultaneous exposure to "a diversity of ideas, peoples, places, and time periods" (Greene et al., 2014, p. 4). It would be a large, expensive challenge for teachers to recreate an art museum setting for students in the classroom setting. Additionally, the historical empathy generated in this study was revealed through students' answers to certain questions. Students responded to the following items with their levels of understanding and acceptance to the questions:

1. I have a good understanding of how early Americans thought and felt.
2. I can imagine what life was like for people 100 years ago.
3. When looking at a painting that shows people, I try to imagine what those people are thinking. (Greene et al., 2014, p. 4)

Responses to these three items were measured on a scale for historical empathy. Researchers found that the results of the blind assessment described above showed 6% more empathy and cultural understanding in students who had visited the museum (Greene et al., 2014).

In similar research, William Crow, Director of the University Art Galleries and Professor of Practice at Lehigh University, and David Bowles, Gallery Educator at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, examined how students viewing historical items in a museum can make modern connections to their person experiences. (Crow & Bowles, 2018). These researchers explained that something as simple as a coin could inspire a significant connection for students. For instance, if students were visiting a museum that displayed coins that were centuries old bearing the image of an emperor, those students could make comparisons to how modern American money displays "the likeness[es] of influential white male politicians" (p. 345). That is, students could make the connection that people living in very different cultures and time periods both came into "regular intimate contact with images of leadership power on a daily basis, and both use art to reinforce and legitimize dominant cultural narratives" (Crow & Bowles, 2018, p. 345). These contemporary connections with ancient art mentioned by Crow and Bowles are instances of empathy that can form from time spent in a museum setting for students. Other connections cited in this same article, *Empathy and Analogy in Museum Education* (Crow & Bowles, 2018) demonstrated how educators could help students make real-life connections

between historic art and students' lives. For example, ornate battle armor was compared with sports uniforms, helping students contextualize what they were observing with their own lives.

As educators use museums and galleries to build associations with and links to the past, students are able to practice compassion and understanding. In one study, Crow and Bowles (2018) described empathy as understanding the feeling and emotions of others. They made the following statement: "It is a key element of emotional intelligence, the link between oneself and others, because it allows us to understand what others are experiencing as if we were feeling it ourselves" (Crow & Bowles, 2018, p. 343). Through their research, they expressed how analogical reasoning applied in an art museum setting can increase one's empathy.

William Crow, the inaugural educator in charge of teaching and learning at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, oversaw all school programs. Through his own work and other research, he studied how students retain knowledge in the museum setting while making connections with works of art. David Bowles, who served as master gallery teacher, focused on object-based learning and concentrated on the same areas as Crow. Together, Crow and Bowles, expressed how experiencing the museum setting with an educator aided in the learning process, because one could use prior knowledge to connect to artifacts and artwork to deepen understanding and improve knowledge recall (Crow & Bowles, 2018). Crow & Bowles explained, "Modern day research in cognition and learning affirms that learners are more likely to remember information and concepts when they are connected to prior knowledge and experience" (p. 343).

New information that is too sophisticated or perplexing for a learner could create a barrier, preventing the storage of new knowledge. The divide between what is known and what knowledge is being obtained is called the zone of proximal development, or ZPD, a concept

created by Lev Vygotsky (Silalahi, 2019). This zone must be challenging enough to motivate the learner, but if it is too difficult, the new information cannot be learned or stored in an effective way. Crow and Bowles (2018) cite scaffolding, "the guidance of a more skilled individual or a tool that provides a bridge" (p. 343), as the apparatus needed for acquiring new skills or knowledge. The connections students are able to create between the visuals and object-based learning that an art museum offers can be ideal for constructing this scaffolding.

When a student is asked to observe, reflect on, and respond to artwork, they may find this to be a daunting task. Specifically, students with language or writing barriers may find the objective of a critique or reflection too strenuous and may shut down before even starting. Thus, such students may need motivation or an accessible starting point to begin this task, and viewing original artwork can be helpful in constructing the aforementioned scaffolding. If a student is able to view a work of art they find intriguing or with which they personally connect, this experience can help that student advance to the next level in the learning process. That is, making personal connections with works of art gives students a starting point for writing or verbally communicating about these pieces of art.

Vallance (2007) shared that the most important component of the aesthetic experience is asking students to examine and responds to a work of art. This process can lead to the development of self-awareness of the process of responding to works of art. When students are observing and absorbing visual artwork along with a facilitated discussion, these activities can help them develop communication skills and visual literacy. A single piece of art in a museum setting can help students construct personal meaning from the work, build strong applications for the craft and skills involved, and engage in discussions with classmates pertaining to these factors (Griffin, 2004). This growth can transfer into other areas beyond the arts. That is, "[t]here

are certain kinds of learning activities that are easy to implement in a museum environment which have the added advantage of having real things to observe, record, appraise and analyze" (Al-Radaideh, 2012, p. 506). A discussion about artwork can build one's vocabulary, strengthen observation skills and reinforce communication skills that students need not only in school but throughout life as well.

Teaching enjoyment, history, and aesthetics through authentic art instead of reproductions ensures the understanding and appreciation of the value in fine arts. A field trip to an art museum also ensures that one experiences "the ambience of the art museum," as explained by Zeller (1987, p. 50). Being present in a museum can activate the "senses, perceptions and emotions" of the person visiting (Krantz & Downey, 2021, p. 40). Offering students direct exposure to artwork, including opportunities to handle objects, significantly expands a student's aesthetic experience and broadens their applications of multiple media. This exposure and experience, enable the discovery of factual, fundamental knowledge that children can use in their own lives (Al-Radaideh, 2012; Zeller, 1983, 1987).

"Structured museum experiences with planned pre and post museum activities are essential to instruction in art appreciation" (Zeller, 1983, p. 44). At a museum, a student is given the chance to explore thoughts, use their imagination, kindle curiosity, and get a deeper sense of history and various cultures. This experience can lead to lifelong involvement in the arts, including museum visits. For instance, Vallance (2007) mentioned that, when paired with excellent teachers and museum educators, positive experiences in museums can produce the ultimate goal of art education. That is, these experiences can make students lifelong participants in the arts using resources available in their communities. A national study conducted by the National Art Education Associate (NAEA) and the Association of Art Museum Directors

(AAMD) along with a similar study by Crystal Bridges Museums of American Art (Greene et al., 2014) researched the effects of the learning environment of a museum compared with those of other locations. Results from the studies showed that students who participated in museum visits could recall information more thoroughly than students with similar planned lessons in a classroom, and details were remembered more remembered at higher rates (Greene et al., 2014; Krantz & Downey, 2021; Vallance, 2007).

Furthermore, the new learning environment offered to students visiting a museum can create a lasting experience, involving the architecture, aesthetics, objects, and people present in the space. While visiting a museum, students come into contact with experts in specific fields, such as artist and docents, not normally present in the school setting. Thus, potential dialogues with artists and craftspeople gives students access to "unique objects and culturally informative experiences that afford construction and sharing of meanings" (Paris, 2002, p. 37).

Original Works

The necessity of art museums in art education arises from museums' usefulness in teaching and reinforcing both studio work and art history. With current technological advancements, art educators often use projected and digital images to display artwork in their classes. That is, a quick search online, a keynote app, and certain websites can easily produce an art history lesson containing works of art from artists from a variety of media, centuries, and countries. However, although this method is effective way to bring a large quantity of work to students, it also has its drawbacks. For instance, certain details original works possess in real life are lost in translation to the digital realm (Stone, 2013; Zeller, 1983).

Stone (1993) summarized the art museum experience for students in education as a chance for them to see original works of art and observe features that may be hard to identify in

reproductions, including specific effects of media and scale. She wrote, “This experience can make a powerful and lasting impression on students and has the potential to expand students’ perspective of art and possibly their critical appreciative skills” (p. 53). Additionally, a positive, well-structured experience at a younger age can allow the “museum code” to be possessed, described by Hood (1983) as a strong understanding of art and museums that leads to lifelong familiarization to that setting.

Modern technology has so allowed easy reproductions of artwork, which have become the norm for how instruction is given in art history classes for K–12, as well as college courses. Although the convenience and flexibility of quickly comparing works of art beside one another can benefit both the teacher and student, there can also be many downsides to experiencing art only through a screen and reproductions. Beyond this, many reproductions have distorted works in scale and color and can lack details or texture (Zeller, 1983; Stone, 2015). All of these changes occurring in reproductions create a barrier for students, making lessons less effective and solely focused on subject matter. In this way, information about medium, scale, and texture is often lost. That is, in a large lecture hall with a screen more than triple the size of the original work, awareness and understanding of small but powerful works of artists are lost. Such as a Kathe Kollwitz print that in real life would be small and intimate at around 16 inches by 18 inches, projected on a screen that is multiple feet in height. “It is difficult to adequately discuss Impressionist brush work, to explore the subtle value differences in Barbizon paintings, or to appreciate the space and volume of a Houdon sculpture from even the best reproduction” (Zeller, 1983, p. 43).

Margaret Mead (1960) warned about the effect of too many reproductions on society. She wrote that the over-reproduction of pieces such as Van Gogh’s *Sunflowers* (1889), altered to

appear more intense than the original, is not questioned by the large audience buying and viewing the reproduced work. When we rely on a small group of people or companies to select are we display, it limits options and curbs personal creativity. “What was once sought diligently and seen seldom is now staled by continuers unsought experience” (Mead, 1960, p. 20). She spoke of a society desensitized to reproductions, saying,

> For almost overnight (for Americans) it has become possible to acquire reproductions, not only of the pottery and fabrics of other peoples, in which the cunning of the machine can repeat over and over what the hand once had to learn, but also of individual works, which once drew their beauty from their singleness (p. 19).

Additionally, one of the fears of knowing art only through mass-produced pieces is that art history and knowledge tend to revolve around “big names.” Technology and viewing art through a screen increase the sense that art can be quickly observed. On the other hand, an art museum forces a viewer to observe art at a slower rate. Technology teaches students and adults alike that speed is important for receiving information. From browsers loading quickly to the ease of scrolling through social media, it is easy to become accustomed to viewing and intaking information at a rapid pace. In an article for the *New York Times*, Rosenbloom (2014) shared that “…the average visitor spends 15 to 30 seconds in front of a work of art…” (p. 1). If museum visitors are viewing art that fast in person, there is a high risk that when art is presented on a screen, students will need to be taught to slow down their observation time. Increasing the time someone focus on artwork allows that viewer to more deeply connect with that piece, developing a stronger sense of the process and materials used to create the work.

Additionally, viewing real art for extended periods of time facilitates a deeper understanding of the contents of the work. In this vein, hearing a short clip of a song or a

recording has a completely different effect than being at a live performance, where a person can have a more complete, comprehensive experience of that song. The same principle applies to viewing artwork; that is, museums encourage visitors to take their time while examining art. For instance, the Tate Modern in London participated in the annual Slow Art Day, when visitors are prompted to look longer at a few works of art. Jonathan Watts (2019) observed the following from this event: "The overlap between slowness and wellbeing is one of the transformative virtues of art … " (p. 1). With this benefit in mind, Zeller (1983) recommended,

> Rather than relying so heavily on commercial reproductions of works of art that are in distant museums that most students are unlikely to visit during their schooling, greater advantage should be taken of local art museums and even historical societies, many of which have original works of art in their collections (p. 43).

Similarly, Gardner described the importance of teaching children using real works of art to elicit observations, noting that "looking at paintings can result in substantial increase in stylistic and textural sensibility" (Gardner, 1973, p. 291).

Collaboration

Therefore, a combined effort between schools and museums produces the best results for students. Aligning the historians and experts of museums with school educators can help bridge gaps and supplement inadequate areas for both institutions. For instance, a museum docent is thoroughly informed about the collections and exhibitions their museum offers, whereas educators are well-versed in the abilities, interests, and backgrounds of their students. For this reason, collaboration between the two in a curriculum would help both parties learn about areas in which their counterparts were more experienced. This process of combining knowledge is

successful when all parties involved cultivate and obtain knowledge from one another (Berry, 1998; Munro, 1949; Schwab, 1973; Stone, 1992; Zeller, 1983).

Joseph Schwab (1973) detailed this collaboration as the formation of a group of members who can offer information in these areas: subject matter, learners, milieus (settings), teachers, and curriculum creation. Additionally, Schwab referred to those with extensive knowledge of an area of study as scholars, noting that while they are experts in their fields, they need the collaboration of those with knowledge in other areas to develop strong curricula. Educators possess background knowledge and other information about students. When working toward the same goal, both teachers and museum staff can complement each other, with teachers bringing knowledge of students and museums bringing insight on works of art (Berry, 1998; Schwab, 1973).

In 1984, AAM published a report on a three-year study regarding museum education in America. This work revealed the need for a shift in partnerships between schools and museums to improve the educational experience offered by museums to students and families. Hicks (1986) addressed this issue by saying, “The proliferation of collaborative efforts make it clear that museums are no longer the providers and teachers the recipients; instead, they share the responsibility for finding ways to use museums as curriculum resources” (p. 2). In their 2004 study, Milligan and Brayfield confirmed this idea, emphasizing that art museums are most beneficial when they offer lesson plans and activities aligned with learning objectives aligned with schools’ standards as opposed to those of the museum. Al-Radaideh (2012) explained, “In the collaboration between art museums and schools, the goals of school-related programs offered by the museum need to be considered carefully so that each institution benefits and grows” (p. 510).

Benefits for Museums and Community

When schools bring students into a public setting to visit a museum, such as a field trip for class or an after-school program, this practice increases visitors to that museum. That is, students who have the chance to learn at museums are often excited to return to those museums, which in turn drives interest in and increases visitors to local museums. When a student is taught how to develop "looking strategies" (Zeller, 1983, p. 44) to increase their experience, the latter can be applied to any museum. With these skills, students are more willing to visit a museum outside of a school setting (Zeller, 1983).

In the same vein, in the Crystal Bridges study (Greene et al., 2014), researchers found that participating in a school field trip increased the chances of students' returning with family members. Thus, the guided, educational practice of students visiting an art museum "cultivates a taste for visiting art museums, and perhaps for sharing the experience with others" (Greene et al., 2014, p. 6). Of all the participating students visiting a museum in this study, 70% said they would encourage friends to visit the same museum, showing that museum visits for school groups encourage recurring interest in art museums and galleries (Greene et al., 2014).

Paul Krapfel (1998) wrote about his time working as part of a museum education team in which field testing was conducted regarding the idea of museums starting their own schools. That is, the relationship between museums and schools because schools could provide aid to museums. The strong relationships the museums build with the schools, teachers, and community can "…help them build credibility and political support for a museum" (Krapfel, 1998, p. 11). Additionally, a third party, the community, would benefit from this collaboration. A museum with a strong educational program works with students not only in the school setting but with families in the community. Such outreach and partnerships with a school could develop into

an energetic community connection. “Museums often position themselves as community anchors – places to explore issues of personal relevance, sources of cultural identity, champions of lifelong learning, and venues for bringing communities together” (Crow & Bowles, 2018, p. 342). Museums and school collaboration is not one sided. It is a relationship where one partner reinforces and subsidizes the other.

Professional Development for Educators

In many schools, it is common to find one art educator working with many grades. If a district has very few art teachers working in separate buildings, collaboration and professional development resources can be limited. Wilson (1997) noted this issue and asserted, “Art teachers’ resultant intellectual and physical isolation from other professionals has meant that they have often been unable to sustain the impetus required for the full implementation of educational innovations” (p. 193). However, teachers can find success in collaborating with museums and thereby gaining resources for their art education curricula. As Stone (2015) explained, “Art museums have important resources for complementing art education instruction and assisting art educators in developing appreciative skills in students” (p. 45). Prior to teachers’ work in the classroom, it would be beneficial to give teachers to acquire training and assistance in developing lessons about art museums or teaching from original artwork. For instance, the University of Missouri Art Education Program and Museum of Art and Archelogy created the Museum Partnership program. The latter aims to help preservice art teachers to gain the skills to include original artwork and museums in their lesson plans. This process is described as follows:

> Rather than relying on secondary sources, such as printed and web-based art reproductions, this program allows preservice art teachers to experience the energizing

> effect of teaching from primary sources, such as real artworks in an authentic setting, and the museum itself. (Unrath & Luehrman, 2009, p. 41)

Stone affirmed this idea, writing, "Adequate preparation and experience could lead to more active involvement in the art museum setting on the part of secondary art specialists and perhaps encourage them to become educational allies with art museum educators" (Stone, 1993, p. 54). Kindergarten–12th grade educators, both in art and other subject areas, often feel under qualified to present museum content to their students. This feeling arises from a lack of education in the use of museums as educational resources. Although there are some teachers who feel they could adequately interpret collections without help, many are happy to accept the aid of lecturers, speakers, docents, or other aids a museum offers to educators. That is, museums can aid teachers by supplementing lessons related to and given in an art museum in a variety of ways. (Munro, 1949; Stone, 1993; Zeller, 1983).

Furthermore, a museum visit can introduce a student to real-life artwork, but students still need background knowledge about historical context and crucial appreciative skills. Stone (2013) argued that a collaboration between schools and museums allows for important information and skills to be taught to students in preparation for experiencing art. Having such background knowledge in considering, questioning, and connecting to a work of art prior to a visit would potentially facilitate more active involvement during the visit. Additionally, a collaboration between schools and museums could increase student engagement and connection to art. If students have very little past experience with museums, they might not know museum expectations or how to observe and interact with art in a structured museum setting.

A 2006 study by Eggemeyer found that teenagers generally held negative thoughts on museum visits. Many cited "feelings of boredom" and that they were "not given enough time to

explore or understand" artwork in museums during visits (p. 506). This same study found this attitude was in most cases due to a " … deficiency in the teacher's experience to manage a group of students to learn in an informal environment, the museum environment, and their failure to nurture the interest of students during a museum visit" (Eggemeyer, 2006, p. 506). Alan Marcus (2008) urged for a deeper collaboration between educators and museums to benefit students. This change would lead to an increase of field trips incorporated into school curricula "in a way that meets learning goals for students (Marcus, 2008, p. 56).

Thus, using a museum's education program, staff, and resources could aid pre-service teachers and current educators alike in developing strong curricula brimming with resources. These resources can range from classes, to printed materials to artwork that can be checked out on loan. On this subject, Carolyn Erler (2013) detailed helpful materials she has used for years from the Toledo Museum of Art's Resource Center for Educators. These materials and guides were tailored for not only an art education curriculum but also the integration of "math, social studies, geography and local history into the study of art" (Erler, 2013, p. 172).

Many museums have an extensive resource library that can be of use to schools wanting to collaborate, build a curriculum in both visual arts and other content areas, and offer professional development. Additionally, the use of a museum's research department and materials can benefit both educators and students. If a school is limited in budget or in a rural area, an educator may still be able to find valuable resources to bring back to the classroom in the research library of a museum. In an experiment exploring the collaboration between the school and the museum's library research facilities, Rislow and Nelson (2020) taught a course utilizing the research library of a nearby museum showcasing contemporary local artists. They worked with undergraduates from Missouri Western State University (MWSU) and the library

archives at the Spencer Art Reference Library (the Spencer), part of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. The study focused on a "sustained relationship between university and museum educators" (Rislow & Nelson, 2020, p. 166).

Rislow and Nelson's (2020) study took place during a semester-long course where students used the resources of the Spencer to better understand local contemporary artists. Positive results of this experiment ranged from students' becoming knowledgeable regarding local artists to their developing a greater understanding of general art history (Rislow & Nelson, 2020). As BFA undergraduates working in the studio, which emphasizes creativity and innovation, many students consider art history to be outdated, irrelevant, and disconnected from the objective of becoming a working artist, but Rislow and Nelson's study proved these ideas wrong.

Rural Settings and Low Funds

Currently, there are a number of factors keeping school groups away from museums, such as low administrative support and lack of teacher understanding about how to use museums. However, results from studies such as the Crystal Bridges Museum study (Greene et al., 2014) have demonstrated the benefits for students from rural areas or high-poverty conditions (those in schools where 50% or more students receive free or reduced-rate lunches) are exceptional, even compared with students in more urban or socioeconomically stronger settings. Although some rural schools need to rely more heavily on reproductions for specific media or examples of art, small artist studios, local galleries, or even historical museums can offer a range of in-person art and resources for such schools. Zeller (1983) confirmed this idea, sharing that "not only is time spent in the museum a way to teach topics from the art elements to 'aesthetic sensibility,' it is the root for students to appreciating the resources found in their community" (p. 43). Even so, if

museums are limited or far away from schools, teachers could still involve local artists and the community to expand and diversify art curricula. “When students from rural settings own artistic heritages, and those of their local communities, are incorporated into art curricula, students, parents, teachers, and community members can learn to value traditions of their own heritages and those of others” (Clark & Zimmerman, 2000, p. 39).

Many museum staffs understand this problem with reaching schools in rural areas or with schools lacking funds to visit museums. Like many other museums, the Snite Museum of Art in South Bend, Indiana, offers resources for teachers and students both in person and online. However, when field trip numbers declined over the decade, they worked with donors to cover not only admission costs but also busing expenses for schools within driving distance. In the same way, docents, museum educators, and staff in many museums across the country have worked to develop and implement outreach programs for such schools. “Art vans, buses, suitcase, and traveling exhibits are making it possible for students in communities outside metropolitan areas to have opportunity to look at and learn from art objects” (Mims, 1982, p. 28). Museums and supporters of the arts understand the gaps and challenges schools need to overcome. Innovative ideas are being used to overcome these barriers.

Like the schools that rely heavily on local galleries, craftsmen, museums, and guilds, these artists and organizations need the community as well. In larger, more urban areas, museums and artists have the privilege of tourism to bolster financial support. In a more rural setting, a community is needed to support and foster these resources. Clark and Zimmerman (2000) shared that many times rural families have cultural values, traditions, and family heritages that are not always acknowledged in the school setting. Therefore, community members, families, and local artists can supplement and diversify an art curriculum even when art museums are far distance

away. For instance, Clark and Zimmerman explained that “there is a need for community involvement in successful programs for teaching art in rural areas, where teachers, parents and community members should be involved actively in developing arts programs that build upon local resources and histories” (p. 34).

As previously stated, the Crystal Bridges Art Museum in northwest Arkansas conducted a study focusing on museum education with students in grades K–12. Again, the study reported that students participating in a field trip to the museum were 6% more likely to show historical empathy than those staying in the classroom. However, when examining students living in rural communities (those living in communities with 10,000 people or fewer), this historical empathy discrepancy was even higher, with a 15% greater likelihood of empathy in those visiting the museum than those who remained in the classroom. This increase proved true for students in other areas as well. In addition to historical empathy, questions exploring tolerance, critical thinking, and interest in art museums all revealed the largest increase for students in rural settings. Additionally, smaller but still notable increases were observed for those in high-poverty areas. This research was confidentially recorded in the Crystal Bridges report, as researchers focused on student reactions to one specific series of questions to unearth this data. In a survey given during this study, students reported their levels of agreement to a series of statements concerning historical empathy and tolerance. These statements included the following:

1. Artists whose work is critical of America should not be allowed to have their work shown in art museums.
2. I appreciate hearing views different from my own.
3. I think people can have different opinions about the same thing.
4. I can imagine what life was like for people 100 years ago.

5. When looking at a painting that shows people, I try to imagine what those people are thinking. (Greene et al., 2014, p. 5)

As seen in Figure 1, the overall trend of the data confirms that students from rural settings showed the highest results in all four categories measured: critical thinking, empathy, tolerance, and interest in art museums. A similar trend emerged among students from more disadvantaged circumstances or who were minorities. The results demonstrated that out of the 3,811 student essays, 68% of the rural students in the treatment group agreed with positive statements on historical empathy, compared with 62% of the control group. Additionally, rural students showed a 13% improvement in tolerance after visiting the museum, slightly above the 9% increase from high-poverty students, while those in the control group only reached a 7% increase in tolerance after this visit. A few factors may be responsible for rural students' higher gains in this category. For instance, Crystal Bridges Museum displays artwork from a variety of periods in American History, allowing students to view more of the collection while touring the museum. Students in situations of greater poverty, minorities, and those living in rural communities were less likely to visit the art museums and galleries outside of the school field trip setting. Thus, this visit produced a larger increase in results for this group of students than for those with more material resources and greater access to museums. In this vein, Fiske (1999) stated "that the learning in and through the arts can help 'level the playing field' for youngsters from disadvantaged circumstances" (p. VIII).

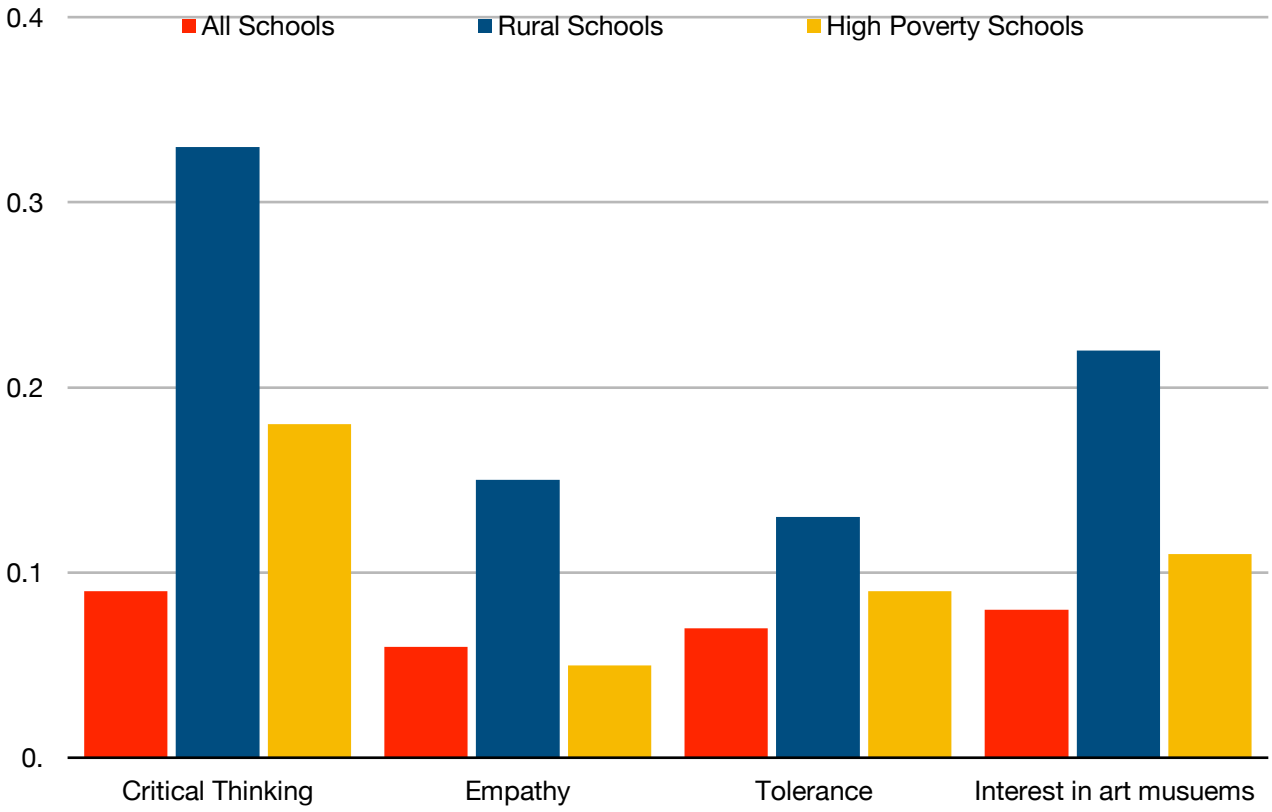
A study conducted by Clark and Zimmerman (2000), Project ARTS (Arts for Rural Teachers and Students), involved working with students in rural and low-income areas in Indiana, New Mexico, and South Carolina over the course of three years. The researchers worked on the premise that many times students in these rural areas have "traits, folkways, and learning

styles" that contrast with those of dominate cultures (p. 34). Through Project ARTS, artwork, techniques, and objects from "those found in local crafts, folk arts, popular arts, women's arts, and vernacular art" were used to create a curriculum with a diverse approach to understanding others in different locations or different cultural connections. (Clark & Zimmerman, 2000, p. 34). During this study, students kept journals and created artwork in their schools and also were in contact with students in other states participating in the same program. They were able to hold conversations about their local communities, traditions, and artwork. Regarding this part of the study, the researchers found that "[e]xpecting to find each other strange and different, Project ARTS students from rural Indiana and the pueblo were pleased to discover they shared many interests, such as participating in the arts experiences, playing basketball and romping in the snow" (Clark & Zimmerman, 2000, p. 38). The students participating in this program gained common ground and a deeper understanding of others they previously did not have.

Project ARTS is a notable example of how local art centers, museums, and artists can bring a broader understanding to students. This collaboration ensures that no parties are isolated from the others. Additionally, this system strengthens curriculums, boosts empathy, supplies teachers with resources, seamlessly intertwines multicultural traditions with lessons, increases art appreciation, and spotlights individuals in the community. A partnership between schools and an art museum or local artists should include students of all grade levels and abilities. The recognition of the school's collaboration with local art museums and artists is fundamental in students' lives, making it a significant task with enduring benefits.

Figure 1

Positive Effects of Student Interaction with Artwork in a Museum as Described in Greene et al. (2014)



Implementing Original Artwork in a Curriculum Without Museum Access

Art educators face more challenges than ever to get students in front of real art and artists. For instance, Amber Geary (2019) noted three recurring factors that kept art educators from participating in the museum education programs she developed at the Wellin Museum of Art at Hamilton College. These components were "time, cost and defendability (persuading administrators)" (p. 1). Additionally, distance, budget cuts, large class sizes, a lack of volunteers and substitutes, and limited bus drivers all threatened field trips before COVID-19 restrictions

were introduced almost two years ago. Additionally, a growing emphasis on standardized testing limits time students can spend away from the classroom, and art electives are often neglected compared with core subjects. On the subject, Geary (2019) wrote, “If the American school system judges student success (and therefore, the success of the teacher, or school district) by a test score, then all activities tied to curriculum must reinforce students’ ability to perform well on tests” (p. 1). This mindset has had a negative impact on the K–12 art education experience in the United States.

Increasingly, more studies are highlighting the need for the arts to be included in school curricula. Greene et al. (2014) showed that the arts provided the benefits of critical thinking and empathy. In the same vein, Fiske (1999) listed many benefits in *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*, including the following:

- The arts reach students who are not otherwise reached.
- The arts connect students to themselves and each other.
- The arts connect learning experiences to the world of real work.
- The arts provide learning opportunities for adults in the lives of young people.
- The arts provide new challenges for those students who are already considered successful.
- The arts transform the environment for learning. (pp. 11-12)

Although these benefits have been clearly demonstrated through research and most art educators feel strongly about them, these efforts are often not enough to overcome the barriers of cost, defendability, or distance to a museum with a strong education program. However, there are other ways for art educators to offer students the ability to view tangible art and allow them to have conversations with working artists. For example, students can work creatively with local

artists and community members, and educators can facilitate visits to local artists' studios, host such artists in their classes, or bring art to the classroom in interactive and beneficial ways.

Displaying Original Artwork in Place of a Museum Field Trip

When I was studying for my bachelor's degree in art education, I was aware of the artistic community and a number of museums in the area. My college art classes traveled to some of these places each semester. Thus, when I began teaching in the same town and knew the museums that would be within driving distance, I was heartbroken to realize a field trip for my students was not possible. The school I was currently teaching at was 90% free and offered free and reduced lunch costs, and approximately 70% of the student population were minorities, many first-generation Americans and non-English speakers. Currently, I now teach at a middle school in the neighboring district with very similar statistics. Allowing my students to see artwork, talk with artists, and develop a deeper appreciation of art has always been crucial to me, and I have often seen why students need real art in their lives. Thus, I created the following lesson plan to introduce original artwork, include the voices of current working artists; to authentically represent different cultures; and to demonstrate a variety of techniques within my curriculum. Graeme Chalmers (1992), professor emeritus of art education at the University of British Columbia, expressed the importance and demand for a more multicultural, community-involved art room when he wrote the following:

I believe that we need art educators who demonstrate respect for cultures and backgrounds different from their own and acknowledge that all groups can produce and define cultural artifacts that are 'excellent' and that in all cultures 'art' exists for rather similar reasons. We need art teachers who provide a classroom atmosphere in which students' cultures are recognized, shared, and respected. We need art educators who will develop culturally appropriate

curricula materials to supplement those whose treatment of different cultural groups is limited or biased. We need art educators who will give students an opportunity to explore what they do not know or understand about the arts of other cultures. We need learning and teaching to operate in both directions and to involve parents and other community members as experts and resource people in classroom activities. (p. 142)

When visiting a museum, one may work with museum educators or docents who have created lessons and activities around artwork on display. In most museums nationwide, an education team exists at each museum to help with planning field trips. Additionally, many museums offer lessons to prepare students for their visits, interactive and discussion activities during the actual visits, and follow-up lesson plans for after the visits. Museum education staff and docents can work with teachers to incorporate this material into the teachers' curricula and tailor it to students' needs and state standards. Furthermore, many of these museums' provided materials could be adapted to fit a smaller local museum's artwork or the work of a visiting artist. However, many teachers are working solo to incorporate original art and local artists into their syllabi, but these teachers do not have to be isolated in the curriculum-planning process. For instance, many museums will work with educators to help provide resources and publish free content for schools and families. For example, the Toledo Museum of Art shares resources, lesson plans, and activities for different grade levels and content areas on the education portion of their website. An example is shown below in Figures 3 and 4.

The following is a lesson plan containing a list of activities for middle school art students, following the Indiana state standards for visual arts to help with observing, discussing, and contemplating art. This lesson could be used when an artist visits a classroom, when students visit a local artist's studio or a community center, or during other art education experiences that

may not offer supplements or resources to a curriculum. The content of this lesson was developed using materials created by museum educators to help students discuss, identify, analyze, and connect to the artwork they are viewing.

Table 1

Visiting Artist Lesson Plan

Specifics	Indiana State standard	Anchor Standard 6, from Indiana State Standard	Essential Questions, from Indiana State Standard
Course: Visual arts, 3D or 2D classes Grade level: 7th and 8th graders Length: 4 classes, lasting around 4 minutes each	7th VA:Pr 6.1.7a: Compare and contrast viewing and experiencing collections and exhibitions. 8th VA:Pr 6.1.8a: Analyze why and how an exhibition or collection may influence ideas, beliefs, and experiences.	• Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work • Enduring understanding: Objects, artifacts, and artwork collected, preserved, or presented either by artists, museums, or other venues that communicate meaning and a record of social, cultural, and political experiences resulting in the cultivating of appreciation and understanding	• What is an art museum? How does the presenting and sharing of objects, artifacts, and artwork influence and shape ideas, beliefs, and experiences? How do objects, artifacts, and artwork collected, preserved, or presented, cultivate appreciation and understanding?

Planning for the Unit

Identify and contact a local artist to bring artwork on a visit to your class. Consider an artist with ties to a local tradition or a personal culture that might be less common in mainstream curricula. Using a visiting artist to build a multicultural curriculum helps one avoid what Aldridge et al. (2000) called “tour and detour” methods of art education. These strategies misinform or bypass “the true picture of the everyday life of the people from that culture” (p. 3). The Indiana state standards ask educators of seventh grade students to help them “compare and contrast viewing and experiencing collections and exhibitions” (Indiana Department of Education, 2017, p.5). While planning for this unit, consider asking an artist who has multiple pieces in a collection that could be displayed, similar to how a collection or exhibit would be displayed at an art museum.

Learning Objectives and Overview

In this activity, students will be able to experience artwork in real life created by a working artist. They will be able to observe, process, and connect to artwork. As Stone (1993) shared, “This experience can make a powerful and lasting impression on students and has the potential to expand students' perspective of art and possibly their critical appreciative skills” (p. 53). This personal, up-close interaction with students will exceed what reproductions can do and help students better understand qualities of the art, such as scale, textures, colors, and materials. Seeing an original piece of work and being able to speak with the artist allows students a better understanding and appreciation for future experiences with art and museums. The objective of this lesson is to allow students to study and question art that is directly in front of them instead of on a screen.

Furthermore, learning the process of discussing, questioning, and critiquing art at a young age may facilitate more enjoyable museum experiences later in life (Zeller, 1983). Seeing a work of art and then taking the time to study it, examining its textures and materials and analyzing its colors and scale, allows students to critically think and form questions around what they see. After students have time to discover the work, they can form questions about the process, materials, and meaning the artist has used in the pieces. Additionally, these students can form a connection to this work, draw conclusions regarding the piece, and log observations from their time with the artwork.

Next, the students' questions can be shared with the artist, who could later answer these queries, facilitating a deeper understanding of the body of work being observed. These questions will also be fundamental to students in helping them use a higher level of thinking in future artmaking practices. Allowing the artist to speak instead of the educators gives a more authentic delivery of information, especially if the artist is displaying art from a specific culture to which the teacher is not connected. For instance, doing a drawing activity, color mixing, or a written activity the second day of this unit allows students to dive deeper into the meditation process that occurs when observing and learning about new work.

Hearing an artist talk about their own work helps listeners gain a deeper understanding of and connection to the work. In this way, students can actively engage in conversation with a working artist, allowing these students to see the arts as a viable career option. Meeting a current, living artist gives the students the ability to grasp that art is a present, ongoing part of life.

Pre-Lesson

When arranging for an artist to speak with students, consider the unique qualities your community possesses. This is a chance for students to interact and engage with an adult other

than their parents and current teachers. Inviting an artist who practices a historical artmaking practice can help create a more multicultural curriculum. Evidence from the study Project ARTS (Arts for Rural Teachers and Students) stated the following:

> Studying local arts and crafts, musical and oral traditions, the skills of local artists and artisans, and other aspects of their local communities often help rural students attain greater awareness and valuing of personal resources and develop self-confidence and self- esteem. (Clark & Zimmerman, 2000, p. 35)

Along with acquiring and setting up artwork for students to view, you could collect other resources on the medium and artist being presented. Additionally, written materials such as an artist statement, websites, or videos to help introduce an artist to the students would be helpful for the beginning of this unit.

After making a connection with a local artist, arrange a time to have artwork brought to the school. If possible, display the artwork in a room or area that is away from high traffic or in a different setting then where students create art. When using this lesson with my 7th and 8th grade students, I used a storage area attached to my art room that could hold a small table to display seven ceramic pieces by a local artist. Prior to the first day of this lesson, I arranged the artwork so that students could safely walk around it.

Table 2

Schedule of Activities for Guest Speaker Lesson Plan

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Activities	Intro to artwork and artists Students observe artwork by the artist. An intro is given such as a brief biography, an artist statement, or an overview of artist style. A resource from a museum may be used on both Day 1, 2 or both. Students record questions as they observe.	Deeper observation Students can continue asking questions or making guesses about the artwork. Educators can add question prompts or ask questions and allow students to create a hypothesis on their own or with a group. Students observe the work by creating work: 3D work could be observed by contour or continuous line drawings of work 2D work could be observed by creating a color chart of colors that are shown Resources from an art museum would be beneficial to use on this day.	Meet the artist Artist talks to students about their process, materials, inspiration, motivation, and so on. Artist answers student questions and does demonstrations of process.	Reflect Students reflect on the connection of the artwork, information, and events of the week. These observations could be written, verbal, visual, or a combination of these.
Teacher task	Send the artist the questions from students to prepare them to answer	Prepare materials, explain or demo how to do blind contour or	Introduce the artist, and prep the room or location where the artist	Lead students in small group, full class, or written discussion to

Table 2 - Continued

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
	these queries. If resources are being used from an art museum education program, have them ready for students.	continuous line drawing of a 3D work. If making a color chart or doing another activity focusing on 2D art, have that lesson prepped.	will demo with materials or space to work.	better process the last three days.
Student task	Write questions and submit to your teacher to share with the artist.	Complete art centered tasks to more deeply examine artwork	Active listening, possibly taking notes or writing down questions during the talk	Participate in the discussion, and reflect on personal interests or thoughts.

Day 1

Introduce the artist and artwork to the students, leaving plenty of time for the students to observe, wonder, and analyze. Spend some time to establish who the artist is, the materials they use, and techniques or tools that are significant to the artist's process. Additionally, reading an artist statement or allowing students to explore the artist's website will allow them to become more familiar with this artist. The activities for this day are similar to those a teacher may plan for a pre-lesson prior to a field trip. Thus, when students experience art museums later in life, they may already have a process established for researching an exhibit before visiting a museum. If the artwork has important meanings, represents a specific culture, or contains profound concepts for which students need background information, take time to walk through these ideas with them.

Next, give students a clear outline of expectations on how to view the artwork. For example, explain if students are able to touch the work or if they can only view it. Beyond this, inform students they will be recording their questions for the artist. In a sketchbook or mini

notebook have students write down questions that come to them while viewing the work. In this vein, students who thrive when given clear expectations may benefit if the teacher sets an expectation for a certain number of questions. For example, list at least one question per piece or all of the questions from that day. You may prompt the students with sentence starters similar to the following:

- I wonder why …
- How did the artist make … ?
- This makes me feel [insert feeling]. Is that the intention of the artist?

Modify this for students with writing barriers or ESL students by printing prompts for them to fill in. Additionally, some students may benefit from asking their questions verbally instead of writing them down.

After students are briefed, allow them to view the artwork independently. To parallel the activities that occur in an art museum, allow students to lead the process of viewing and experiencing artwork. When an educator is allowing student choice, decision making and opportunity to have independence in this situation it can result in scaffolding, critical thinking and personal connections. This may look like allowing students to start with items they are most drawn to and spending an appropriate time observing and analyzing this item. Lastly, students who excel in a more structured environment may need time checks to ensure that they view every work of art in the allotted time.

Day 2

With most classes lasting between 30 and 50 minutes, students would spend less time in one class than they would viewing art in a museum setting. As Al-Radaideh (2012) noted, "educational programs in museum settings encourage students to interact with art works in

meaningful ways" (p. 506). Thus, using a second day to examine the art ensures students more time with the art and a deeper analysis of it. Utilize this second day for a structured activity to help students process the work they are seeing. Additionally, museums offer many wonderful resources online that can be tailored to artwork shown in your classroom. For example, the Toledo Art Museum offers school resources designed for educators in both the visual arts and other subject areas at all grade levels. Using these resources or activities for artwork in your school instead of a museum is similar to how a docent or museum educator would help students process work. Shown below in Figures 3 and 4 is a portion of an activity designed to use while looking at a 2D painting in the Toledo Museum of Art's collection. This could easily be translated to artwork shared in your classroom from local artists. In this vein, listed below is an activity designed by ceramic artist and emeritus professor of art education at Goshen College, Marvin Bartel. This drawing lesson allows students to observe 3D artworks, such as ceramics and sculpture, in a layered, in-depth way.

Observing by Drawing

In his writings entitled *Art Rituals in the Classroom*, Marvin Bartel (2010) discussed the practice of air drawing. This is a technique where students "do imaginary drawing in the air before drawing on paper" (p. 1). This practice occurs before a student draws on actual paper and does a preliminary drawing in the air with their finger. As a way to help build self-esteem, this activity directs students to carefully, slowly observe an object. In this act of air drawing, there is less focus on the product students are making on the paper in front of them and more focus on channeling the students' attention to examine the artwork. After making an air drawing, students can move into a contour drawing made for the practice of examining the artwork in front of them. On this subject, Bartel (2010) described contour drawing as a fundamental skill:

"Observation drawing develops the parts of the brain that help us see better. Drawing ability builds self-confidence" (p. 1).

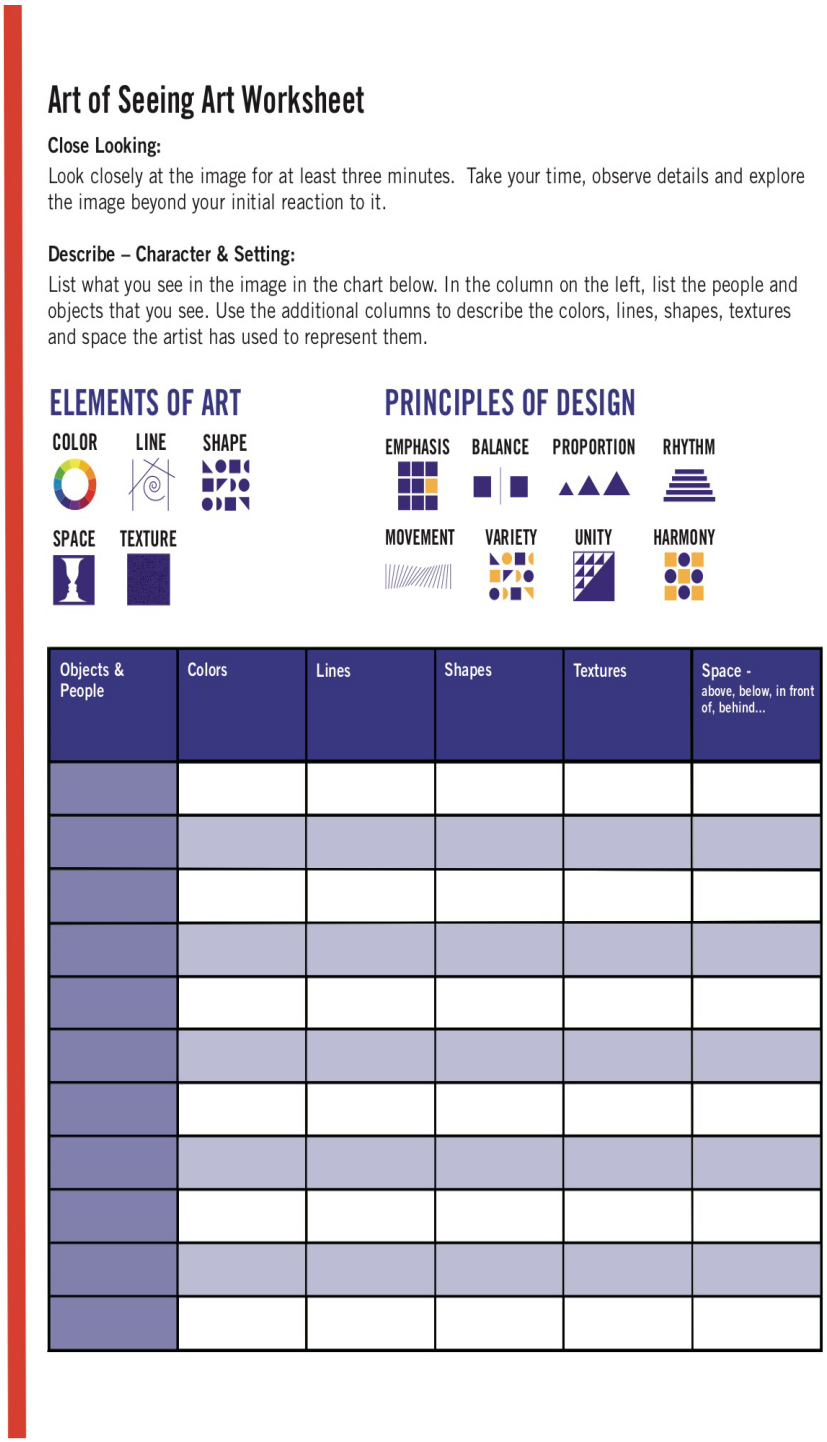
Day 3

On this day I introduce students to the artist. Here I may consider asking students to write notes or thoughts during this time. The artist can share his or her skills with the class. A deeper explanation of the artist statement or the artist's inspiration will help students grasp the meaning behind the work at a deeper level. Artwork that has been made in reaction to a life event, personal connection, or belief will be explained by the owner of these experiences and thoughts. When a teacher does this with reproductions instead of by hosting an artist, the authentic aspects can be lost or confused. If the artist has a special technique or process, it would be beneficial for them to demonstrate and explain their process and why they used it to make the particular work they are discussing. If possible, I would use this time to help students actively listen and participate to learn about the skills, tools, and materials the artist used to make the piece.

Use the questions from students recorded on Day 1 of this unit to direct conversation and alert the artist to the students' interests. While hosting visiting artists in my classroom, I have found that artist demonstrations have fascinated students and have been some of their most memorable experiences in class. If the artist can pass around tools or materials with which students can interact, the students can more deeply understand the artist's process. Additionally, students' handling a homemade clay tool with a particular texture or made from an unconventional material will help them better understand the artist's techniques.

Figure 2

Art Education Resource, Part 1 (Toledo Museum of Art, n.d.-b)



Art of Seeing Art Worksheet

Close Looking:

Look closely at the image for at least three minutes. Take your time, observe details and explore the image beyond your initial reaction to it.

Describe – Character & Setting:

List what you see in the image in the chart below. In the column on the left, list the people and objects that you see. Use the additional columns to describe the colors, lines, shapes, textures and space the artist has used to represent them.

ELEMENTS OF ART

COLOR LINE SHAPE

SPACE TEXTURE

PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

EMPHASIS BALANCE PROPORTION RHYTHM

MOVEMENT VARIETY UNITY HARMONY

Objects & People	Colors	Lines	Shapes	Textures	Space - above, below, in front of, behind...

Figure 3

Art Education Resource, Part 2 (Toledo Museum of Art, n.d.-a)

Character: Who do you think are the main characters in this story? Why?

Setting: Where do you think this scene is taking place? What do you see that makes you think that?

Analyze: Plot and Sequence

Take another look, can you start to uncover the story going on in this picture?
Use the chart below to identify the plot and sequence. Use clues you see in the image to support your story.

Beginning	Middle	End

One sentence summary of the story:

Day 4

Day 4 includes a closing discussion to summarize students' thoughts and transition into the next activity. Often, class speakers and visiting artists will take all of the allotted time in a class period. Following the artist talk, students may ponder and process what they saw and heard. To conclude this unit, consider allowing students to summarize these thoughts and observations. If the questions from Day 1 and the drawings or written activity from Day 2 were written in journals or sketchbooks, consider having students write follow-up thoughts with these materials. All of these resources can drive creative thinking and processing on future artmaking.

In my classroom, I asked students to write down one thing that surprised them, one thing that interested them, and one thing they wanted to further explore. After writing these three reflections, I asked the students to share their responses with a partner or small group. In future artmaking, students could return to these thoughts to inspire and cultivate new work.

Another follow up activity I have implemented is to have students use the artist's process as a starting point for exploring a medium in greater detail. For example, an artist who shows found objects in a collage could begin introducing a project where students collect items from nature or recycled or found articles to be used to construct new work. Additionally, a sculpture or ceramic artist making their own tools could inspire students to used nontraditional art tools to compose textures on the clay surface. Keep in mind that students are not trying to copy what was they just saw. That is, "[r]eal artwork is based on the child's own experience, memory, observation, and/or imagination" (Bartel, 2016, p. 1). Such work is created when the artist uses ideas as inspiration, not a reproduction of the work that was recently viewed. On this subject, Bartel (2016) elaborated further, saying the following:

Making an idea my own means I do not intend to return it. I choose it, improve it, shake it, pound it, deconstruct it, reengineer it, materialize it, test it, internalize it, and so on. I cannot simply copy it or rent it (p. 1). Students can use what an artists shared with them to influence their next steps in the creating and thinking process.

Conclusion

Students benefit from a well-developed art education experience, including viewing art not only from reproductions but also in person. A comprehensive curriculum includes a chance for students to talk with and learn from others besides their teachers, such as museum educators, working artists, and community members. Leaving the school setting and encountering a new space gives students a strong sense of community and expands their experiences. As explained by Al-Radaideh, “There are certain kinds of learning activities that are easy to implement in a museum environment which have the added advantage of having real things to observe, record, appraise and analyze” (Al-Radaideh, 2012 p.506). However, when budgets, time, or distance limit one’s ability to go to a museum, educators can resourcefully use artists and community members to bring these experiences to their students. “Not only is the use of genuine art objects an excellent way to teach the elements, formal properties, and techniques of art, but it is the best way to help students develop aesthetic sensibility” (Zeller, 1983, p. 43). This aesthetic sensibility to which Zeller refers correlates with the work of Unrath and Luehrman (2009) when they discussed how real art helps students develop “skills to interpret visual language” (p. 41). Additionally, they described art museums and working artist studios as “learning environment[s] where objects and experiences stimulate a curiosity that can be extended into the classroom and beyond” (p. 41).

The ability to view tangible art gives students a greater chance of creating a personal connection with that work. Once students have this connection, they can commence a learning process in which teachers can use a scaffolding technique where students use past experiences and personal connections to gain greater knowledge. This process occurs when students connect something familiar with the unfamiliar, as described in the writings of Crow and Bowles (2018). These researchers stated that "analogical reasoning – involves using perceived similarities between two concepts as a basis to infer some further similarity. As a tool for teaching, analogies can efficiently represent complex ideas with familiar and easy to understand comparisons" (p. 343). The use of real art in the classroom or a museum provides teachers and students with the chance to explore this technique. When students work to understand an artist's point of view, discuss artwork in groups, or talk with the creator of a work, they experience many positive effects, including increased empathy. That is, "[a]ccepting that others may have different interpretations than one's own is an important step toward becoming receptive to others" (Kratz & Downey, 2021, p. 40). Along with empathy, students can enhance their critical and creative thinking and their questioning skills (Greene et al., 2014; Kratz & Downey, 2021).

In this vein, studies like the Art Access Initiative give evidence that "arts learning experiences benefit students in terms of social, emotional, and academic outcomes" (Bowen & Kisida, 2019, p. 17). Programs like Project ARTS facilitate understanding of the importance of community connection and a well-rounded multicultural art education curriculum. This is demonstrated as follows: "When students from rural settings own artistic heritages, and those of their local communities, are incorporated into art curricula, students, parents, teachers, and community members can learn to value traditions of their own heritages and those of others" (Clark & Zimmerman, 2000, p. 39).

As demonstrated earlier, the challenges of organizing school visits to museums are familiar to museum educators and staff. In response, many reach out to educators to facilitate collaborations between museums and schools. From online resources and podcasts to teacher training programs and professional development, museum workers are helping educators incorporate art education into their curricular.

Furthermore, students working with original artwork and interacting with living, working artists learn to understand and value the arts as a viable career path. Visiting a museum, interacting with a working artist, and being given the tools to analyze artwork help students enjoy the arts throughout their lives. Through these connections with visiting artists, community centers, and museums, art educators can offer an enriching experience for students who could be future artists and museum guests. Although school funding for museum field trips has been declining, studies have shown that allowing students to interact with tangible artwork and artists is both possible and necessary. When students have the tools to explore, question, discover, and appreciate art in real life, they can embark upon a journey of lifelong enjoyment of the fine arts.

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