IMPROVING TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSING IN THE VISUAL ARTS

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Dedication

This project is dedicated to
my children, Braigh and Oliver,
and to
my husband, David.
Thank you for supporting me throughout this journey.
I love you.

Abstract

This project aims to clarify the definition of the visual arts in terms of constructs and curriculum, and the implications of this definition on pedagogy and assessment practice in the elementary generalist classroom. The identification and examination of visual arts constructs is central to the entire project, as all other decisions, pedagogically, contextually and in an assessment capacity, hinge on a clear understanding of these constructs. Further, an investigation of the historical significance of discipline-based art education, its interconnectedness with the Alberta Visual Arts Curriculum and the evidence of construct underrepresentation, provides understanding of the current state of the visual arts in many elementary generalist classrooms. Considerations of visual culture, infusing relevant and student-centered learning in visual arts education and discussion of professional development needs voiced by elementary generalists clarifies the direction that visual arts education needs to be moving in the future. The investigation of recent research and literature that supports generalist pedagogical and subject matter understandings in the visual arts, a balanced approach between intrinsic and instrumental instruction, general assessment practices, as well as the contextual nature of subject-specific assessment in the visual arts are also considered. The focuses on construct, curriculum, pedagogy, instruction, visual culture, professional development needs and authentic and contextual assessment practice provides a framework for a digital professional development resource for elementary generalists to teach the visual arts. The framework is outlined in detail, and complete digital resource on the Wix.com platform has been created in response to the literature considered for this project.

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The journey toward the completion of my Masters has been an invigorating, eye-opening and overwhelming experience, but one that has guided me towards deeper pedagogical understandings, the ongoing need to be a critical consumer of research in the field of education, and has sparked a new path and passion for me in teaching, learning and assessment. The rigor and dedication necessary to complete this degree should not be understated, and I am intensely proud of my work and my accomplishments throughout this process. That being said, this endeavour would not have been as worthwhile without the love and support of the people in my life that pushed me and encouraged me to persevere.

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Introduction

The visual arts hold significant importance for me, not only as an educator, but also as an artist. My passion stems from the beauty of self-discovery, the power of creativity, and the deep, experiential connections that creating and viewing art has provided for me, personally. My passion for the visual arts, and my recent focus on assessing, teaching and learning in the visual arts, has opened my eyes to the potential for expanding creative endeavours in the classroom, but also to the importance of providing students with opportunities to develop a sense of wonder, a sense of reflection, and most importantly, a sense of self. The visual arts can provide a platform for students to explore and inquire in a way that other subjects may not. Many students may naturally make connections through the visual arts that they may not be able to achieve in other subjects, and I believe that teachers owe it to their students to provide them with authentic opportunities to create, critique, reflect on and examine art in meaningful ways.

Visual expression through the visual arts provides significant opportunity for children to "grow and develop into learners who are stronger—intellectually, linguistically, physically, emotionally, perceptually, social and creatively" (Koster, 2014, p. 5) and "allows children to construct their own meanings, teaches diversity, fosters thinking skills, and encourages story telling through the sharing of personal experiences" (Mulcahey, 2009, p. xiii). Eisner (1985) asserts that what schools place value on in terms of what is taught, based on assumptions about subject specific importance, is what has led to the devaluation of the visual arts as an integral part of learning:

> What this conveys to the student is that the arts are essentially forms of play that one can engage in only after the real work of schooling has been finished . . .

> [and] reinforces the belief that the arts do not require rigorous and demanding thought and that they are really unimportant aspects of the school program. (p. 92)

While the visual arts should be afforded the same status and importance in schools as core subject areas due to the fact that “aesthetic enquiry, possibility thinking and creativity are interconnected entities/ constructs” (Pavlou, 2013, p. 86), the “[visual] arts are important in their own right, and should be justified in terms of the important and unique kinds of learning that arise” (Winner & Hetland, 2000, p. 7). Visual arts and visual expression should not be considered an add-on to the existing hierarchy of subject specific importance. Rather, they should—be considered a fundamental part of every elementary school classroom.

In my own experiences teaching at the elementary level, many of my colleagues have relied on craft-based activities and isolated art projects to teach the visual arts, without much thought to the curricular outcomes or understandings of the current scope and sequence of the Alberta Education Art Program of Studies. In past conversations with teachers, the emphasis placed on core subject areas has resulted in little time for a significant focus on the visual arts, and pressures to have students demonstrate high levels of academic achievement has diminished the importance of the visual arts as an integral part of student growth and development. While the deeper, underlying issues of the current structure of the education system are still prominent in our province, a move toward a more liberal educational experience, through the implementation of *Curriculum Development Prototyping* (Alberta Education, 2013), *Inspiring Education* (Alberta Education, 2010) and a revisiting of the visual arts program through the *K-12 Arts Curriculum Consultation Report* (Alberta Education, 2009) is promising for student

learning in the visual arts. However, elementary classrooms are a long way from placing the importance and value on art education that is necessary to support student learning and engagement with the visual arts authentically.

Rationale

The important work of this project is in response to the lived experiences of many elementary generalist teachers who are responsible for delivering the visual arts curriculum within their own classrooms, but who lack the subject-specific and pedagogical understandings necessary to provide their students with authentic learning experiences in the visual arts (Buldu & Shaban, 2010; Duncum, 1999; Watts, 2005). The intention of this project is to create a visual arts resource, grounded in research, that encompasses subject specific understandings (Pavlou, 2004; Prentice, 2002), exploration and application of varied processes of making art (Koster, 2014; Prentice, 2002; Thompson, 1997), investigation of authentic assessment strategies and tools that are valid and reliable (Davies, 2011; Dorn, Sabol, & Madeja, 2004; Gareis & Grant, 2015), as well as engagement with strategies to improve discussions, conversations and critical, formative feedback (Dorn et al., 2004; Duncum, 1999; Mulcahey, 2009) within the visual arts classroom. By creating this resource, it is hoped that elementary generalists will use it as a springboard to their own professional development, to improve their pedagogy and assessment practices, as well as create authentic and engaging learning experiences in the visual arts.

Inquiry Questions

How are the visual arts defined in terms of construct, curriculum, and within the field of visual arts education?

What are the implications of this definition, and how does it affect visual arts pedagogy and assessment in the elementary classroom?

What pedagogical, subject matter and assessment understandings should generalist elementary school teachers have in order to create authentic opportunities for meaningful student learning in the visual arts?

Definitions

Defining visual arts education and fine arts education is important to improve clarity throughout this paper. Visual arts education involves the creation of art forms, primarily for visual perception and enjoyment, such as drawing, painting, sculpture, graphics, architecture and the decorative arts. Visual arts education is also known as 'art education' and the two terms are used interchangeably in this writing. Fine arts education involves creative endeavours related to visual arts, drama, music or dance. Fine arts education is also known as 'the arts', and the two terms are also used interchangeably in this writing.

Literature Review

Identifying Constructs of Art

The complexity of identifying the constructs of the visual arts has been of significant discussion since before the inception of the discipline-based art education (DBAE), a visual arts curriculum created in the early 1980s, which constitutes the framework for the current Alberta visual arts curriculum. Historically, visual arts education "deviated from the mainstream of general education through its focus on child-centeredness . . . self expression, and creativity" (G. A. Clark, 1991, p. 18), but due to the significant focus on disciplines-centered curricula, the widespread rejection of

progressive education became more prevalent, and the child-centered orientation to teaching and learning evident in art education was challenged and questioned (G. A. Clark, 1991). As a result, discipline based art education began to take shape, largely influenced by the socio-cultural ideology of the time. Through the examination of the origins of DBAE, constructs of art will be developed. Further, an examination of the current Alberta visual arts curriculum, and its overlap with DBAE will be addressed. In addition, an overview of current perspectives of art education in Alberta will be reviewed in conjunction with recent research in the field of art education and its implications on the complexities of teaching and learning in the visual arts.

The Historical Evolution of Discipline-Based Art Education

During the late 1960s through the early 1980s, many perspectives of DBAE began to emerge. The social importance of multiculturalism (G. A. Clark, 1991; Delacruz & Dunn, 1996), together with the "neglect of art history and art theory, or aesthetics, was a glaring instance of imbalance in art instruction" (G. A. Clark, 1991, p. 11). These emerging perspectives encouraged a change in approaches to teaching and learning in the art classroom, and the introduction of textbooks that emphasized art analysis and art history became prominent in art education (G. A. Clark, 1991). This view of teaching and learning was in sharp contract to the emphasis on "creative self expression, which had dominated art education throughout the 1940's and 1950's" (Duke, 1988, p. 8). These notions of DBAE were further supported through the Kettering Project, headed by Eisner in the late 1960s, and the Penn State Seminar in 1965 (G. A. Clark, 1991). Both the project and the seminar aimed to reinforce the idea that "art curriculum offered to children should extend well beyond traditional art-making activities" through the use of

“sequential curriculum accompanied by practical support media”(G. A. Clark, 1991, p. 14). The Penn State Seminar provided a platform to address the need for a curriculum that drew on the experiences of artists in the field, and away from a focus on creative expression (G. A. Clark, 1991). The Kettering project was established in response to the Penn State Seminar, and aimed to develop an art curriculum that could be used in elementary school classrooms. The curriculum was created by a team of 11 staff, which included artists, art teachers, classroom teachers and curriculum specialists (G. A. Clark, 1991).

As a result of these dominant perspectives of DBAE infiltrating art education, The J. Paul Getty Trust, a “private operating foundation” (Duke, 1984, p. 612), saw this public dialogue as “an opportunity to work with school personnel and the arts communities to improve the quality of arts education” (Duke, 1984, p. 612). In 1983, the Getty Centre for Education in the Arts was conceived as the platform to encourage the exploration of discipline based art programs in elementary schools (Greer & Rush, 1985, p. 24), and, as a result, two significant programs were established by the Getty Center, including the *National Case Study Research Project* and *The Getty Institute for Educators* (Duke, 1984, p. 613). These two programs aimed to bridge the gap between the theories that had been circulating in the field of art education for 20 years, and the practice within American schools.

The intention of the *National Case Study Research Project* was to “understand the factors contributing to and constraining school programs in the visual arts” (Duke, 1984, p. 613). Through collaboration with analysts from the Rand corporation, research was conducted to “generate information about ways to provide effective art education in

elementary classrooms" (Greer & Rush, 1985, p. 24) and to evaluate the effectiveness of DBAE through observation, rating scales, anecdotal reports and personal interviews with the participants. The research was conducted with seven school districts scattered throughout the United States, which included "urban and suburban areas with diverse economic and social characteristics" (Duke, 1984, p. 613) and included cross-site analysis to discuss their similarities and differences.

The Getty Institute for Educators was a pilot effort designed to "aid participants in acquiring knowledge about art, teaching art, curriculum, and school and community art resources" by providing "rigorous and intensive engagement with concepts and processes intrinsic to the visual arts" (Greer & Rush, 1985, p. 24), as well as the guidance and support needed for participants to plan and implement DBAE programs within their own schools and districts. The institutes were experimental in nature, and included two related components. The first component consisted of in-service training for elementary teachers and principals that consisted of "a three week summer program followed by a year long implementation program" (Duke, 1984, p. 613). The second consisted of a seminar program for superintendents and school board members who represented the same districts as the teachers and principals involved in the in-service training.

Ultimately, through their research, engagement with the arts community, their pilot institutes and through "extensive consultations with professionals and academics in the field" (Duke, 1988, p. 8), the Getty Centre for Education in the Arts adopted DBAE as the central theoretical approach to art education. The goal of DBAE became to "develop students' abilities to understand and appreciate art" (G. A. Clark, 1991, p. 16) through sequential instruction that enabled students to "experience art by doing it, by

examining it, by reading about it, and by discussing it in ways that illuminate its meaning" (Duke, 1984, p. 613). The foundational constructs through which elementary students were afforded these learning opportunities were "derived primarily from the [four] disciplines of aesthetics, art criticism, art history and art production" (p. 16). Through engagement with the four disciplines, the DBAE approach "value[d] the art product, use[d] adult models of artistic accomplishment, and treat[ed] art . . . as a process of discovery about responding, understanding and making, which is 'taught' and not merely 'caught'" (Duke, 1988, p. 8).

Constructs of Discipline-Based Art Education

DBAE is defined as "an approach to instruction and learning in art that derives content from four foundational disciplines that contribute to the creation, understanding and appreciation of art" (Dobbs, 1992, p. 9). The DBAE approach is not intended to be "a specific curriculum" but to "exist in many forms" (Dobbs, 1992, p. 9), demonstrating a "flexible yet comprehensive approach that acknowledges and respects the differences in teacher training, student backgrounds, local circumstances and resources"(Dobbs, 1992, p. 12). While the actual implementation of DBAE can be flexible, certain features are required in order for the implementation to be successful. These features included a sequentially organized curriculum, implemented on a district-wide basis, and the development of student abilities to make art, critique and make judgments about art, as well as understanding of the importance of art history (Dobbs, 1992, p. 10).

The four disciplines of DBAE include art production, art history, art criticism and aesthetics (see Appendix A). It is through these four main disciplines that advocates of DBAE believe that students will acquire the content that makes art education "substantial

and consequential" while recognizing that "all of these areas of learning are necessary to a full and complete art education experience" (Dobbs, 1992, p. 22). Art production is defined as the "creative production of new works of art [that] involves the active manipulation of selected materials using various techniques that elicit the desired visual effects" (Dobbs, 1992, p. 21). Art history encompasses "understanding the multiple historical, cultural and stylistic dimensions of art" (Dobbs, 1992, p. 21). Art criticism requires the "ability to look at art, analyze the forms, offer multiple interpretations of meaning, make critical judgments and talk or write about what they see, think and feel" (Dobbs, 1992, p. 21). Aesthetics involves reflection on the "experience of art, its impact and its meaning . . . [and these] judgments depend on an understanding of art's meaning and value, the nature of art objects, and the elements"(Dobbs, 1992, p. 22) that make experiencing art unique and meaningful. Attention to the four disciplines is meant to encourage "the kind of sophisticated understanding that discipline based art endorses" (Greer, 1984, p. 217) while reinforcing one another through the interconnectedness of teaching them simultaneously.

Discipline-Based Art Education and the Alberta Elementary Visual Art Curriculum

The Alberta elementary visual arts curriculum rationale and philosophy states that "art education is concerned with the organization of visual material, ... with having individuals think and behave like artists," (Alberta Education, 1985, p. A.1) in addition to "pointing out the values that surround the creation and cherishing of art forms" (Alberta Education, 1985, p. A.1). Further, the program provides an emphasis on art education "dealing with ways in which people express their feelings in visual forms . . . [and] dealing with making and defending qualitative judgments about artworks . . . [through]

adopting the stance of a critic" (Alberta Education, 1985, p. A.1). The rationale and philosophy of the Alberta visual arts curriculum is further emphasized through General Learner Outcomes (GLO), the four major focuses of visual learning, their subsequent components and Specific Learner Outcomes.

The GLO are explained as experiences (See Appendix B). There are seven experiences that exploration of the curriculum should provide: individual, visual, learning, communication, creative, cultural and environmental experiences (Alberta Education, 1985, pp. B.1-B.2). The main goals of the experiences are to "grow and develop as an individual, develop perceptual awareness, learn visual arts skills and concepts, interpret and communicate with the visual symbol, the create, to value, reflect upon and appreciate the cultural aspects of art [and] to appreciate art in everyday life" (Alberta Education, 1985, p. B.1).

Attention to Specific Learner Outcomes starts with a focus on four major areas of visual learning, and their subsequent components (see Appendix C). The four major areas of visual learning are reflection, depiction, composition, and expression.

Reflection is described as "responses to visual forms in nature, designed objects and artworks" (Alberta Education, 1985, p. C.1). Through the components of reflection, students are required to analyze, assess and appreciate works of art, notice commonalities in natural and manmade forms, and interpret artworks in a literal sense (Alberta Education, 1985, p. C.3). Depiction is described as the "development of imagery based on observations of the visual world" (Alberta Education, 1985, p. C.1). Through the components of depiction, students need to attend to main forms and proportions, such as shapes and decorative style, actions and viewpoints and surface qualities and details of

objects and forms (Alberta Education, 1985, p. C.3). Composition is described as the "organization of images and their qualities in the creation of unified statements" (Alberta Education, 1985, p. C.1). Through the components of composition, students need to attend to creating emphasis, unity and rhythm, while also being mindful of adding finishing touches to their personal artwork (Alberta Education, 1985, p. C.3). Expression is described as the "use of materials as a vehicle or medium for saying something in a meaningful way" (Alberta Education, 1985, p. C.1). Through the components of expression, students need to document and record activities, people or stories and attend to subject matter (plants, animals, environments, fantasy, people and man-made or manufactured things), illustrate a story through their artwork, decorate items based on their own personal choices, express feelings or messages with artworks individually created, and explore and experiment with a variety of mediums and techniques, such as drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture (Alberta Education, 1985, pp. C.3-C.4).

What is important to note is that all constructs of the DBAE philosophy are accounted for in the Alberta elementary art curriculum (see Appendix D). All GLOs, or experiences, are explicitly accounted for, with the exception of GLO 1, an individual experience. It can be assumed that to achieve this GLO, students' engagement with all disciplines and components in the art curriculum will inherently support "self realization . . . [and] developing the ability to see, understand, react, create, appreciate and reach" (Alberta Education, 1985, p. B.1) However, there is a significant imbalance among the four disciplines of DBAE in terms of their representation in Level 1 (grade 1 and 2 curriculum). First, art production, art criticism and aesthetics are equally weighted in terms of attention to GLOs. Art history is underrepresented with one GLO only. Further,

a significant emphasis, through the mapping of components, indicates that art production and aesthetics are attended to in most detail in the overall curriculum, while art criticism is marginally represented, and with negligible attendance to art history.

In terms of impact on art instruction and student learning, this discrepancy should be considered in planning and preparation for student learning opportunities. While the Alberta elementary arts curriculum is meant to allow for flexibility, where "an art lesson with any of the four areas [could be] the nucleus from which learning in the other three areas evolves" (Alberta Education, 1985, p. C.1), it is imperative to be mindful of the underrepresentation present in the components and subsequent Specific Learner Outcomes in the program of studies. To provide a well-balanced visual arts program with depth and breadth, teachers should consider all four areas of visual learning as being of equal importance. Regardless of the underrepresentation within the visual arts curriculum documents, it becomes the teacher's responsibility to balance instruction, learning opportunities and assessment practices to ensure one area of visual learning is not more heavily relied on than any other.

Other Considerations in Art Education

While the foundational DBAE constructs of visual art are evident in the current Alberta curriculum, recent research in visual arts education indicates that the emphasis should shift and change in response to the need for a broadened curriculum that would "include the social and contextual parameters of art" (Delacruz & Dunn, 1996, p. 74), such as issues related to feminism, multiculturalism and environmentalism (Delacruz & Dunn, 1996, pp. 70-71). The expanding view of the visual arts, that includes "television, film and video, computer technology, fashion photography [and] advertising" (Freedman,

2000, p. 315) requires an openness to and a thoughtfulness about the importance of change in what society deems to be art. Most recently, current discussions and discourses around the transformation of art education toward a broadening of curriculum content has been largely in response to "the immediacy and mass distribution of imagery" (Freedman & Stuhr, 2004, pp. 815-816) in our vastly visual world. This view of curricular transformation is also in response to the need for a "new level of theorizing about art in education . . . based on this growing environment of intercultural, intracultural and transcultural visualizations" (Freedman & Stuhr, 2004, p. 816). By continuing to focus solely on the foundational constructs of art established through DBAE, the perpetuation of "blindness to contemporary art and its issues" (Wilson, 2003, p. 217) narrows the scope of what is taught in art classrooms, and what students learn in terms of relevance to their own visually cultural existence.

> The quick answer is that contemporary artworks, artifacts from visual culture, and the theories, ideas, and ideologies that surround them are of our time and they hold the possibility of informing us, more than art and artifacts of previous eras, about our contemporary lives, they probe and problematize contemporary society, and they raise pertinent issues pertaining to our values and our aspirations. (Wilson, 2003, p. 217)

Critics of visual culture argue that while critical examination of current art education is needed, the focuses of traditional art teaching and learning should not be abandoned "for some specious possibility of academic prestige or instance social relevance" (Smith, 2003, p. 7) in K-12 education. Attempts to include visual culture in art education are seen as a strategic movement away from the "traditional emphasis on

studio art into a dialog about art as a socially constructed object, devoid of expressive meaning" (Dorn, 2005, p. 47), and away from foundational emphasis. Further, issues with "the tacit and not so tacit political thread that appears to run through the study of visual culture" (Eisner, 2001, p. 8) aim to diminish "the productive young artist into an analytic spectator" (Eisner, 2001, p. 8). Ultimately, the critical view of visual culture is that its advocates aim to construct a singular focus on the critical analysis of the sociological, historical, cultural and economic factors that have influenced visual artistic decisions (Dorn, 2005; Eisner, 2001; Smith, 2003).

The issue in art education, then, becomes about balancing the importance of the four constructs of art, including art history, art production, art criticism and aesthetics, with the visual culture that continues to "fundamentally transform the nature of political discourse, social interaction and cultural identity" (Freedman, 2000, p. 315) that we experience in our everyday, 21st century lives. Advocates for the inclusion of visual culture believe that art education should be connected to how today's students live their lives, and should be a "social space where critical investigation . . . help[s] students inquire into the complexities and possibilities for understanding and expressing life" (Stuhr, 2003, p. 303). To ignore the importance of visual culture, particularly as it relates to students, is to ignore the very essence of who they are as individuals, and who we are as a society, socially, economically and culturally. However, that is not to say that advocates of visual culture are encouraging the removal of the traditional views of art education entirely. The essence of change comes from a need to broaden the domain of art education (Delacruz & Dunn, 1996; Freedman & Stuhr, 2004; Wilson, 2003) and for students and teachers to "play intertextually between the conventional content of their art

classes and the things that interest them from popular visual culture" (Wilson, 2003, p. 225). The intention becomes, then, about creating a balanced approach to art instruction and learning that melds art history, creativity, aesthetics and criticism, with a contemporary approach to visual culture.

The current state of the Alberta visual arts curriculum, and recent discussions and research around the need for change in art programs to include a focus on visual culture, creates significant complexities around teaching and learning in art, particularly in elementary schools. The impact is greatest on elementary generalists who are responsible for teaching art in their classrooms, but do not have the pedagogical understandings to provide sound instruction or engaging learning activities that involve both process and product, nor the changes suggested to the curriculum. Examination of the needs of elementary generalists, in relation to teaching and learning in the visual arts, will provide insight into determining supports needed in a professional development capacity to build proficiency and pedagogy.

Teaching Art in Elementary Classrooms

In many elementary schools today, a majority of generalist teachers, who provide art instruction to their students within the confines of their own classroom, have limited to no training in the arts (Buldu & Shaban, 2010; Duncum, 1999; Kowalchuk & Stone, 2000) and ultimately feel uncomfortable, under-equipped and ill-prepared for the task of teaching a subject area they know very little about (Buldu & Shaban, 2010; Kowalchuk & Stone, 2000; Thompson, 1997). This lack of comfort in teaching art is deeply connected to "limited time devoted to art during pre-service, inadequate in-service education, and competing curriculum demands" (Duncum, 1999, p. 33) which "conspire

to ensure that elementary generalists possess very little specialist knowledge in art" (Duncum, 1999, p. 33). Further, Watts (2005) suggests that "the renewed emphasis on . . . literacy and numeracy has led to a marked decrease in time allocated to teaching [the visual arts]" (p. 244), and the "reduction in both quantity of both in-service training . . . and resources allocated toward the [visual arts]" (p. 244) compounds a view of schooling that is entrenched in subject-specific traditions, with little importance or value placed on knowledge, instruction and pedagogical growth in the visual arts.

It is no surprise, then, that many elementary generalists who are expected to teach art "lack the confidence . . . to provide meaningful art activities for [their students]" (Pavlou, 2004, p. 43). Through her research on attitudes toward teaching art in primary school, Pavlou (2004) identified two categories of teachers that lack confidence in their ability to teach art: disappointed non-specialist and indifferent non-specialist (pp. 42-43). Disappointed non-specialists were considered teachers "who felt they did not have the subject knowledge, means or time to give art the attention it deserved" (Newton & Newton, 2005, p. 317), while indifferent non-specialists were considered teachers who "had little confidence in art teaching because they lacked knowledge"(p. 317) and, as a consequence, "art did not feature much in the children's lessons" (p. 317). Based on Pavlou's research on teacher attitudes, there is good reason why "subject matter knowledge has been the focus of several arguments in primary education" (2013, p. 36) to support improved teaching for generalists. It is important to note, however, that "subject matter knowledge itself [does not] guarantee quality [instruction], as a teacher's capacity to teach depends on . . . [a] blend of subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge" (Pavlou, 2013, p. 36). Further, it could be argued that "subject knowledge

and pedagogical knowledge ‘working’ together” (Pavlou, 2013, p. 36) could improve learning opportunities for students, as well as build generalist teachers’ confidence in teaching art if professional development in these areas is provided and supported.

Providing art education professional development for generalist teachers could be seen as a call to build “advocacy for visual arts teaching in elementary schools” (Buldu & Shaban, 2010, p. 346). Supporting and implementing professional development opportunities could mitigate the perception that “art education is simply a part of a classroom teacher’s responsibility . . . [and] a duty accepted as a professional obligation” (Thompson, 1997, p. 15). It could also improve “limited knowledge and experience . . . that contribute to teachers’ inability to connect art learning or ideas” (Kowalchuk & Stone, 2000, p. 30) in their own teaching. Implementing professional development opportunities that support teachers’ growth in pedagogical understanding, clarify curricular objectives and assessment practice, and encourage authentic student learning could help improve views of the importance of the visual arts in elementary schools, and positively impact generalist elementary teachers’ ability to confidently and effectively teach art.

The content and focus of professional development provided to non-specialist generalist teachers is critical to creating opportunities for subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge to work together. Thompson (1997) suggests that art education professional development should “focus on those dimensions of artistic learning that are most meaningful to elementary school children—the basic processes of making and responding to art” (p. 19). Additionally, understandings about how “classroom teachers can teach art in developmentally appropriate and meaningful ways” (Thompson, 1997,

p. 19) and knowledge of instructional approaches and uses of different mediums, such as "drawings, paintings, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics and handicrafts" (Buldu & Shaban, 2010, p. 345) is key to pedagogical growth and subject specific knowledge.

Subject knowledge, subject application and assessment practices are areas highlighted in Prentice's (2002) research that support primary teachers' abilities to effectively teach art to elementary students. First, an emphasis on understanding "the ways in which students acquire, develop and apply a subject-specific vocabulary in a variety of settings" (p. 80) is a key starting point to growing teacher subject and pedagogical understanding. Second, a focus on the "value of experiential learning . . . in which the relationship between subject knowledge and subject application is explicit" (p.79) articulates the importance of create opportunities for students to engage in a variety of processes. Last, importance is placed on the need to "raise the profile of [modes] of assessment that acknowledges a range of visual evidence of learning" (p. 79), expanding not only the understanding of why assessment is contextual, but also the repertoire of assessment tools most effective in the visual arts.

Duncum (1999) asserts that elementary generalist teachers need to understand various types and purposes of feedback to facilitate conversations that elicit deeper understandings of their students' learning, as well as their own engagement in the process of creating and talking about art. Four strategies to be used during the making or art, including the verbal reflection strategy, the conversational strategy, the perceptual strategy and the conventional strategy (pp. 34-36) are identified. In addition, two strategies with a focus on responding to art include the non-sequenced strategy and the inductive strategy (p. 36).

Engaging in conversations with students as they make art is critical to their learning. Duncum (1999) states that the verbal reflection strategy encourages "teachers to provide verbal feedback to children on their picture-making, with the intention that children reflect upon their own efforts (p. 34). When teachers engage in this type of feedback, it is most effective if teachers use "technical, formal terms like tone, shape, balance, as well as descriptive words like bumpy, wiggly and bright" (p. 34), which encourages the subject specific vocabulary to describe art. Conversational strategies "characteristically involve[s] interchange amongst children" (p. 34), and it becomes the teacher's responsibility to "organize classes so that children draw with and from each other" (p. 34) so that students are provided with opportunities to both talk about their art, and use each other as models for art creation. The perceptual strategy involves the "observation of real objects" (p. 35) and "focused attention, usually through specific questioning, about what students see before and/or during the act of drawing" (p. 35). Finally, the conventional strategy involves the idea imparting knowledge that is "discipline specific, [and involves] mastery of adult images . . . by examining the conventions of adult imagery . . . [and by] introduc[ing] children to the illusionistic and compositional tricks of the trade" (p. 36).

Equally important to student/teacher conversations about art is the development of student critical response, and the teacher's understanding of how to employ these strategies. Duncum (1999) states the non-sequenced strategy involves a series of questions that "are grouped in a circular fashion according to eight points on a compass" (p. 36). The series of questions involves close conversation, direct attention to conventions, a focus on stretching the imagination and historical research (p. 36). Last,

the inductive strategy "involves a predetermined sequence that shifts from a basic description to a sophisticated evaluation" (p. 36). This strategy requires the student to describe what they see first, then move forward into identifying what they think the focal points is, thereby encouraging children to "learn the difference between visual evidence and their own subjectivity as well as how these are blurred" (p. 37).

This research provides insight into what experts believe should be attended to in preparing elementary generalists to teach visual arts in their classrooms. What is equally important, however, is to place value on the voice of elementary generalist teachers who are responsible for teaching art. Considering an Alberta context, the voices of elementary generalists in this province provide significant insight into the support structure needed to improve pedagogy and assessment practices in the visual arts. The blending of research in the field of visual arts education, coupled with the voices of elementary generalists, provides information key to supporting teachers, both theoretically and practically.

New Directions for Visual Arts Curriculum

In 2008, Alberta Education created six K-12 arts education focus groups to provide a platform for "discussions with diverse stakeholders [who] informed the development of a *Draft K-12 Arts Education Curriculum Framework*" (Alberta Education, 2009, p. 1), which included a focus on all fine arts, including drama, music, dance and the visual arts. The goals of the focus group discussions included (a) to collect information regarding the status of fine arts programs in schools, (b) to ask focus group participants to consider a change in program terminology, (c) to consider why the arts are important in the 21st century and the role of Fine Arts Education in 21st century learning, and to (d) envision the key components of an fine arts education program (Alberta

Education, 2009, p. 1). Stakeholders included teachers of the arts, district consultants and practicing artists, representatives from arts organizations and post-secondary programs.

Through the focus groups, a number of challenges to implementing effective fine arts instruction were reported. These included challenges with curriculum, fine art integration, professional development, space and facilities, time, administration and staffing (Alberta Education, 2009, pp. 5-6). In terms of elementary instruction, teachers reported that they “lacked confidence in teaching the arts and needed support”(Alberta Education, 2009, p. 5) and had significant concerns “about fitting everything into an elementary program . . . [and that] the arts . . . often fell by the wayside” (Alberta Education, 2009, p. 6) as a result. It was also recognized that “knowledgeable educators in the fine arts are the cornerstone of successful programs” (Alberta Education, 2009, p. 6) but that a barrier to creating successful programs was not only staffing art specialists in schools, but a lack of “value placed on arts process and the intrinsic benefits of the arts” (Alberta Education, 2009) by school administrators.

In terms of new curriculum developments, focus group discussions led to changes and ideals that needed to be addressed in an effort to provide better fine arts learning opportunities. The “hope for a new curriculum” (Alberta Education, 2009, p. 7) included the fine arts as distinct disciplines, curricular changes, generalist-friendly language, resources, art as a core subject, and implementation support and links to assessment (Alberta Education, 2009, pp. 7-8). First, focus group participants shared the need to “maintain the integrity of individual fine arts disciplines . . . [and] did not want to see a new curriculum erode the rigor of individual disciplines” (Alberta Education, 2009, p. 7). Second, a call to “reduce the number of curricular outcomes to . . . allow for in-depth

exploration of key concepts" (Alberta Education, 2009, p. 7) and an "expressed desire for less technical, more accessible user-friendly documents" (Alberta Education, 2009, p. 7) was noted. Third, a need for resources was established, "including digital and visual examples of how to achieve curricular outcomes" (Alberta Education, 2009, p. 8). In order to implement the programs successfully, the requirement of both implementation support through "professional learning communities, in-servicing and mentorship" (Alberta Education, 2009, p. 8) and a need for assessment support "to provide assessment strategies and exemplars that honour the creative processes of the arts, encourage risk taking and promote adaptive thinking" (Alberta Education, 2009, p. 7) would be important to consider. Last, participants addressed the "hope that the arts would continue to be core curriculum at the elementary level" (Alberta Education, 2009, p. 7) with a belief that all students should be exposed to fine arts curriculum.

Twenty-first Century Classroom Assessment Practice

Twenty-first century assessment practice has become more commonplace in elementary classrooms in direct response to recent research on the positive effects that assessment can have on student learning, when applied with clear intention and purpose. A holistic understanding of 21st century assessment practice provides a frame of thinking around the importance of not only general use of classroom assessment, but also the contextual nature of assessment practices that should be considered. There is no "cookie-cutter" approach to assessment practice. Simply attending to *as*, *of* and *for* learning does not ensure valid and reliable assessment. A multitude of factors affect the reliability and validity of assessment, including attention to subject-specific constructs and contextual assessment practices. The intention of this section is to provide an overview of

assessment practice, but also to highlight the possible implications of employing generalized assessment practice without regard for contextual, subject-specific variables, particularly in the visual arts.

The emphasis, in recent years, on outcome-based assessment, increased student understanding and achievement, and the creation and use of valid and reliable measurements of student learning, has required assessment expertise at the classroom level, and a foundational understanding of what it means to be assessment literate in order to create environments conducive to meaningful assessment and learning (Stiggins, Chappuis, Chappuis, & Arter, 2012). Teachers who are assessment literate are equipped to “create and use valid and reliable assessments . . . to facilitate and communicate student learning” (Gareis & Grant, 2015) and to determine their own next courses of action as the key facilitators of learning in the classroom. The goal of classroom assessment should be to provide students with clear targets along their learning journey, and to encourage reciprocal engagement between student and teacher, where “ students shift from being passive learners to being actively involved in their own learning” (Davies, 2011, p. 5). By building classroom communities that demonstrate ongoing and meaningful feedback, support multiple opportunities for practice, encourage goal setting, self assessment, sharing of work and student involvement in the learning process (Davies, 2011; Gareis & Grant, 2015; Popham, 2014; Shepard, 2000; Stiggins et al., 2012) teachers are more likely to create a classroom environment that contributes to authentic assessment and increased student engagement and learning. Teaching, assessment and learning have an inherently symbiotic relationship in the classroom setting. Teaching is “a recursive, interdependent activity that relies on teachers to determine . . . what students

are learning, to what degree they are learning and what they are not learning" (Gareis & Grant, 2015, p. 3), while "assessment is integral to decisions that classroom teachers must make about instruction" (Gareis & Grant, 2015, p. 3) and furthering student learning.

The foundational building blocks of this symbiotic relationship between teaching and learning are assessment *for* learning, assessment *of* learning, and assessment *as* learning. Formative assessment, or assessment *for* learning, involves the use of dynamic and ongoing conversations and feedback, both formal and informal, to gather evidence of student learning (Shepard, 2000; Stiggins et al., 2012). Formative assessment should be interactive; creating opportunities for meaningful exchanges that encourage student and teacher to collaboratively scaffold next steps in the learning process (Shepard, 2000). Descriptive feedback is key, as it provides information that allows student to make informed decisions about how to improve. Further, formative assessment can also involve the use of models and exemplars as a way for students to gauge what quality work can look like (Davies, 2011).

Summative assessment, or assessment *of* learning refers to the confirmation of what students know and understand in relation to curricular outcomes that show, not only their depth and breadth of learning, but also their competence (Earl & Katz, 2006). Information collected from summative assessment is used to judge the degree of student learning and report the degree of learning to other stakeholders, including administrators and parents or guardians (Gareis & Grant, 2015). Summative assessments should not only include traditional methods of assessment, such as tests and examinations, but also a wide variety of demonstrations of learning, such as portfolios, exhibitions, performances or presentations to showcase what students know and understand (Earl & Katz, 2006).

Summative assessments chosen or created should correlate to the outcomes from the program of studies, and teachers should be mindful to create summative assessments that have intention and purpose.

Assessment *as* learning focuses on "students and emphasizes assessment as a process of metacognition (knowledge of one's own thought processes)" (Earl & Katz, 2006, p. 41) and is based on the notion that learning is "an active process of cognitive restructuring that occurs when individuals interact with new ideas" (Earl & Katz, 2006, p. 41). The ultimate goal, in terms of *as* learning, is for students to not only monitor their own learning independently, but to also set personal goals based on the decisions they make about their progress and the difficulties they had throughout the learning process (Earl & Katz, 2006). This aligns with the notion of self-assessment, which is defined as "the process of students assessing and providing feedback on their own work" (Brown & Harris, 2013, p. 368) and which is closely linked to self-evaluation and reflection. Teachers play an important role in the development of independent learners by modeling self-assessment skills, helping students set goals and monitor their own progress, and by providing specific, descriptive feedback about student metacognition (Earl & Katz, 2006).

Explicit criteria and transparency is key to effective assessment practice, not only in relation to outcomes from the program of studies, but also in connection to the constructs of the subject area being assessed. It is imperative that "students . . . have a clear understanding of criteria by which their work will be assessed" (Shepard, 2000, p. 11). Converting criteria, learning targets and subject specific understandings into student-friendly language increases student understanding of the concepts being attended

to and allows students to fully understand what is expected of them (Stiggins et al., 2012) as well as what constitutes the subject of study. Teacher-developed descriptions of learning targets, criteria and understandings into language more easily accessible to students "enhance[s] student learning and achievement . . . [through] consistent and intentional sharing" (C. M. Moss, Brookhart, & Long, 2011, p. 68) that encourages students to "become more capable decision makers who [know] where they are headed and who share responsibility for getting there" (C. M. Moss et al., 2011, p. 68). This emphasis on transparency of learner expectations helps to create learning partnerships between students and teachers, and is a springboard to authentic engagement in formative assessment conversations, and encourages "interactive ways of discussing work and criteria with students"(Shepard, 2000, p. 10). Transparency of learner expectations helps to "redistribute power [in the classroom] and establish more collaborative relationships with students" (Shepard, 2000, p. 10). Through this emphasis, the student-teacher dynamic becomes more about the learning process, and encourages a fundamental shift in the very nature of classroom assessment practice towards a more informative, meaningful interaction.

Student motivation to improve their own learning stems from both clear and specific targets and individual drive to be successful. Teaching students to set "proximal goals for themselves enhances their sense of cognitive efficiency . . . academic achievement, and . . . intrinsic interest in the subject matter"(B. J. Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992, p. 664). Once students have an idea of what they need to learn and where they need to be, it becomes much easier for them to set goals for themselves and decide what the next steps are in their learning (Davies, 2011). What is critical to the

success of student goal setting involves teachers and students cooperatively "setting appropriately challenging goals, developing commitment on the part of the teacher and student . . . to attain them, and intending to implement strategies to achieve them" (Andrade, 2013, p. 22). Further, specific and explicit feedback is imperative to successful setting and eventual achievement of goals. "Goal setting is most effective when there is feedback showing progress in relation to the goal" (Locke, 1996, p. 120), and the conversations had between teacher and student, in the form of formative feedback, help to solidify both direction and motivation toward student achievement and learning. Further these student/teacher interactions provide continual opportunities to gather evidence of learning, to support goal-setting decisions and to scaffold meaningful learning opportunities in the classroom.

A performance task, or performance assessment is defined as an assessment activity that is designed to assess a students' understanding and achievement of curricular outcomes (McTighe & Ferrara, 1994, p. 8) and should "allow students to construct a response, create a product, or to perform a demonstration to show what they understand and can do" (McTighe & Ferrara, 1994, p. 8). Performance tasks are "well suited to assessing application of content specific knowledge, integration of knowledge across subject areas, and lifelong learning competencies" (McTighe & Ferrara, 1994, p. 8). Supporters of the use of performance tasks argue that this type of assessment allows students to "concentrate on worthy, long-term goals and integrate their learning so they can solve problems, analyze text, and communicate their understanding in useful ways" (Baker, 1997, p. 248), while at the same time providing evidence, to both teacher and

student, about what students know and understand, as it relates to the curriculum and the subject being explored.

Performance tasks can be implemented in both formative and summative contexts. Summative performance tasks should be “designed to assess a range of skills and knowledge” (Lane, 2013, pp. 313-314) and allow for the “demonstration of an integrated, complex set of skills” (Lane, 2013, p. 314), while formative assessment tasks should require “the performance of interest [to be] much narrower” (Lane, 2013, p. 314) in focus. In a formative sense, the performance task “is designed to assess in that it leads to the generation of evidence about learning . . . in that there are opportunities for that evidence to develop a learning dialogue” (Black, 2013, p. 169) with a limited focus. As a result of the duality of performance assessment, it is reasonable to assume that task characteristics and expectations may vary, depending on the intention of the task as well as the context within which it is being administered. Assessing students using an open performance task would “provide the opportunities for students to develop their own strategies for solving a problem” (Lane, 2013, p. 314), while a rich performance task “would require substantial content knowledge” (Lane, 2013, p. 314). Either of these types of performance tasks could be used formatively or summatively, depending on the purpose of the task being provided to students.

Assessment in the classroom should not be done in a single snapshot, but should involve a collection of “evidence over time and across different tasks, [which] increases the validity and reliability of the assessment” (Davies, 2011, p. 74). Collection of this data should involve a variety of sources, including “observations of learning, products students create, and conversations with students about learning” (Davies, 2011, p. 45),

which is known as triangulation. Triangulation of evidence occurs when the observations, products and conversations align with the same intended learner outcomes, and a clear picture is formed about student understanding, within the context of the intended learner outcomes being achieved.

In essence, this collection of evidence relates most heavily to concurrent validity, which is when an "assessment equates with another assessment that . . . measures the same intended learning outcome" (Gareis & Grant, 2015, p. 33). By collecting evidence of student learning through a number of assessments, teachers are able to compare student understanding from one assessment form to another, gathering proof that allows them to make reasoned judgments about where students are at on the learning continuum. Reliability of assessments is also important to the collection of data. Reliability is defined as the "consistency and dependability of the results of an assessment" (Gareis & Grant, 2015, p. 37) and is concerned with "whether a student's performance on an assessment is a true indication of the student's learning, and not unduly influenced by error" (Gareis & Grant, 2015, p. 39). By collecting evidence of student learning through a variety of assessments, teachers may be more likely to see discrepancies in student achievement of intended learning outcomes from one assessment to another, and become more mindful of the potential systematic or random errors (Gareis & Grant, 2015, p. 38) that could impact the assessment results. Teachers can then make decisions about further assessments or revisiting of outcomes that are of particular issue or consequence.

Validity in *data collection* is incredibly important, but so is validity in the *creation* of assessment tools used in the classroom. Without validity in creation of assessment tools, the collection of data through those assessment tools becomes largely

irrelevant. Two types of validity should be most predominantly attended to when creating assessment tools: construct validity and content validity. Construct validity is defined as "the concern with how accurately an assessment aligns with the theoretical concepts or mental framework of the intended learning outcomes or objectives . . . in a unit" (Gareis & Grant, 2015, p. 29). Construct validity begs the question "does the assessment measure what it purports to measure? " (Gareis & Grant, 2015, p. 29), and in order to gauge construct validity accurately, a clear understanding of what constitutes the construct of a given subject area must be identified. Before assessment even takes place "the teacher needs to clarify...what the construct is in the first place" (Gareis & Grant, 2015, p. 31) and determine not only what is being attended to, but also what is missing from the curriculum that is imperative to the subject itself. What threatens construct validity is "underrepresentation of the construct and variance irrelevant to the construct" (P. A. Moss, 1992, p. 234). This simply means teachers need to be aware of the shortcomings of the programs of study they use, attempt to be considerate of the limited, and often sanitized versions, of the curriculum they teach, and, ultimately, how this could impact the validity of assessment creation. Further, when assessing student understanding, teachers need to be mindful that "nothing irrelevant be added that interferes with the . . . construct assessment" (Messick, 1996, p. 5), such as using subject-specific vocabulary unknown to the student, or placing emphasis on reading comprehension on a math test.

Content validity, is "concerned with how adequately an assessment samples the intended learning outcomes of an instructional unit" (Gareis & Grant, 2015, p. 31). It does not refer to " the specific subject matter of an assessment . . . rather, [it] is concerned with ensuring that an assessment adequately samples from the intended learning

outcomes" (Gareis & Grant, 2015, p. 31), and attends to over-sampling or under-sampling of skills and constructs represented by the curriculum. When teachers create an assessment, it is a necessity to ensure that the "items [or] tasks composing the [assessment] are representative of the targeted content domain" (Sireci, 1998, p. 299), ultimately creating an alignment between the assessment and the intended curriculum to be covered.

Assessment in the Visual Arts Classroom

Assessment practices are significantly impacted by the context within which teachers are teaching and students are learning. Assessment in the art classroom is no exception. While the implications of 21st century assessment practices on art assessment are positive, "it becomes a delicate process to dissect those components of the artistic process and evaluate them separately without losing the essence of creation" (Bensur, 2002, p. 21). Concerns from art teachers in the field express that the directions students take their work, through exploration, "[compounds] the dilemma in assessing creativity" (Bensur, 2002, p. 21), while juxtaposed perspectives of developing accountability measures may "[stifle] creativity if criteria are too specific" (Bensur, 2002, p. 21). The discourse around what is most important to assess, and what should not be assessed continues to cause dissention in the classroom, and creates problems and issues for art teachers. However, by examining ways to effectively and validly assess the constructs of art, and by establishing clear intentions, as well as opportunities for transparency of expectations, many of these issues can be mitigated.

When art teachers "realize that . . . different instructional purposes [can be used] at different times . . . and different evaluation procedures are appropriate according to the

specific instructional need to be open to and embrace different methods of assessment in order to more accurately assess student work.

An important consideration is to connect the constructs of visual art to the contextually appropriate assessment tools that could measure them most accurately (see Appendix E). By looking specifically at art production, art history, aesthetics and art criticism, and identifying what assessment tools would be most beneficial to use in order to assess accurately, an increase in the validity and reliability of assessment is attended to in a different way. For example, it would likely be less reliable and valid to assess student art production summatively through informal observation, but would be more reliable and valid to do so through performance tasks, portfolios, rubrics, etc. By thinking critically about what assessment tools work best for what constructs of art, teachers become more thoughtful about not only what they are assessing, by why they are assessing the way they are.

Formative assessment in the art classroom is essential to supporting student learning and growth through timely feedback. Assessment for learning “promotes the foundational skills needed for creative development” (DeLuca, 2010, p. 6) by enhancing a students abilities to “self-reflect, critique, evaluate, [and] understand learning and development processes” (DeLuca, 2010, p. 6). These foundations for creative development are the very “skills that artists and artists-in-the-making [require] to develop their art forms and deepen their creative capacity through self evaluation and critique” (DeLuca, 2010, p. 6). This form of assessment can be conducted through “a variety of means, such as interviews . . . critiques and conversations” (Popovich, 2006, p. 38), with teachers, peers or individually, which emphasizes and places importance on “a

community of learners who value critical reflection and process learning" (DeLuca, 2010, p. 6). This openness to feedback, and the development of a learning climate that involves all stakeholders in the classroom community, reinforces the importance of the interconnectedness between growth, learning and assessment.

Interviews and conversations with students about the art they produce and the processes through which they produce them are powerful tools to assess progress and achievement in art, as well as to provide feedback to students (Ross & Mitchell, 1993; Stokrocki, 2005; Stout, 1995; E. Zimmerman, 1992). In such interviews, teachers can gather information about student achievement as they create works of art and also provide a platform for students to reflect on their learning, problem solve and troubleshoot works in progress, and set goals for themselves (E. Zimmerman, 2003, p. 100). Through these opportunities to look at student artwork and set new directions for learning, teachers can use questioning to guide the discussion and elicit more information about student understanding of processes, aesthetics, and art criticism (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, 2009, p. 14). By having students and teachers come together "in a cooperative, constructive manner of talk, and equally, to listen, [conversations] can serve as a catalyst to . . . consider . . . alternative perspectives" (Stout, 1995, p. 176) and gain deeper knowledge and abilities to apply what they are learning to make their art stronger.

Critiques and questioning, (Barrett, 2004; DeLuca, 2010; Duncum, 1999; Pavlou, 2013) as a part of individual conversations, or as small and large group discussions, can support and enhance student understanding of key concepts being examined, provide teachers with clearer understandings of what students know and understand, and provide

opportunities for growth in student understanding of art process, production and aesthetics throughout the learning process. Barrett (2004) states that what is key is to lead conversations with descriptive prompts, interpretation prompts and judgment prompts (pp. 88-92). “Description itself counts as criticism, and careful description [of works of art] may provide sufficient learning” (p. 89), by asking questions about what they actually see in the work of art, which can relate to the elements and principles of art addressed and explored. Interpretation prompts, such as “ ‘what is it about?’ ‘What does it mean?’ ‘How do you know?’” (p. 90), can provide “stimulating and thoughtful discussion, especially when the artists responsible for the piece are present” (p. 90). Judgment “is the process of discovering the value of a work” (p. 91) and can be administered when a work of art is finished, or when it is a work-in-progress. Questions such as “ ‘How is this a good work of art?’ [and] ‘This is good: How might it be even better?’” (pp. 91-92) are framed positively and attempt to elicit responses that show what individual students value and why they value them. When making judgments on a work of art students should have “ (1) a clear statement of appraisal, and (2) reasons for the appraisal” (p. 92), not simply phrase their judgment based on liking or disliking it.

Self-reflection is an innate part of the creative process, and in terms of teaching and learning in the art classroom “metacognitive skills such as thinking about planning processes, goal setting, strategies for mapping and investigating information, and reflecting on decisions and actions” (Sullivan, 1993, p. 9) are desired skills that enhance art making abilities. The use of “languages of thinking . . . to engage students in the higher order thinking processes necessary for learners to come to understand an apply knowledge” (Sullivan, 1993, p. 9) can support student engagement in thinking about their

own art, and the art of others. Effective student self-reflection could involve "compar[ing] work done earlier in the [year] with that done later" (Hume, 2010, p. 22) through discussions or writing, as well as sharing what they like about their work or what they might change to make it stronger. Teachers could also "have students describe the medium they used, and identify and describe how they used at least one element in their artwork . . . [and] review what they did [throughout the] project" (Hume, 2010, p. 9) with a focus on outcomes and understandings of the art curriculum. Through the use of self-reflection, students "learn the importance of measuring their progress and approach assessment as the opportunity for developing life-long skills of self-evaluation" (Bensur, 2002, p. 22) which can then be applied to other learning opportunities, such as critiques, peer feedback and discussions, in a cyclical and meaningful way.

In elementary art classrooms, "formal and informal observations are very important assessment strategies" (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, 2009, p. 14) to gather information about student learning. Using observation, "a teacher might observe students at work and subjectively determine the degree to which they have satisfied lesson objectives" (R. Clark, 2002, p. 30) and also provides "valuable information on every aspect of student learning" (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, 2009, p. 14). The most effective use of observation as a means to gather information is when " teachers focus on specific curricular outcomes and design ways to record what has been observed" (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, 2009, p. 14), such as lesson/objective specific checklists and written anecdotal notes. Observations can provide information about (a) day to day performances, (b) abilities to work independently and collaboratively in art making, (c) preferred learning

styles and (d) development of ideas and understanding (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, 2009, p. 14).

Summative assessment, or assessment *of* learning, serves the function of "measuring and reporting student achievement at the end of a reporting period" (DeLuca, 2010, p. 6). In response to the focus of standardized assessment in art, "alternative strategies are used within classrooms to assess diverse forms of student achievement" (DeLuca, 2010, p. 6). There are a variety of assessment tools that can be used in the art classroom to gather evidence of student learning. The measures of authentic assessment that have been demonstrated to be effective include collection of student work samples (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, 2009) which can be gathered from formative or summative performance tasks, portfolios of student work in which the student work samples are housed (Beattie, 2006; Day, 1985; Dorn, Sabol, & Madeja, 2004; Popovich, 2006; E. Zimmerman, 1992, 2003), and performance tasks or performance assessments (Day, 1985; Dorn, 2002; Dorn et al., 2004). While there are other methods of summative assessment that can be used, the aforementioned tools are both effective and realistic in their scope and manageability in a generalist elementary classroom setting.

Collecting student work throughout the process of art making is an important part of both formative and summative assessment practices. The creation of performance tasks that "attend to real-life situations of making and responding to art"(E. Zimmerman, 1992), but with a focus on a "balanced approach to both student engagement in the process of creation and the quality of the resulting product or performance" (R. Clark, 2002, p. 30) are key to validly assessing samples of student work in relation to art

curricular outcomes. The process of creating art refers to the "entire range of activities required to produce a work of . . . art, from concept to creation" (R. Clark, 2002, p. 30), while creating an art product refers to "the aesthetic quality of the student's finished result or work of art" (R. Clark, 2002, p. 30). Teachers need to "recognize the importance of using [process and product] approaches when grading student learning and work" (R. Clark, 2002, p. 30) . . . because "without meaningful involvement, depth of understanding, adequately developed skills, and committed effort on the part of the student" (R. Clark, 2002, p. 30), the end product will likely be less successful than intended. In this way, performance tasks created for *formative* purposes can provide students and teachers with much needed information about next steps in the process of art creation and shed light on needed instructional focuses for further learning. Performance tasks created for *summative* purposes can be used, alongside *formative* student work samples, to report student proficiency and achievement of both process and product in their artwork, as well.

Another form of assessment is the use of portfolios. Portfolios are defined as " a portable case for carrying newspapers, prints or artworks" (Dorn et al., 2004, p. 51). In the context of classrooms, a portfolio is likely to contain collections of individual student artworks, with the intention that they are "reviewed and graded by an art teacher" (Dorn et al., 2004, p. 52) for formative or summative assessment purposes. There are two main types of portfolios: a process portfolio and a product portfolio. A process portfolio is used to gather "purposeful collections of student work in progress and final products [that are] assessed in one or several art areas" (E. Zimmerman, 2003, p. 100). Product portfolios, on the other hand, are an accumulation of artworks "at specific times from items in the

process portfolio" (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, 2009, p. 15), likely during the end of each reporting period in a school year. In either case, "students become participants . . . in their own assessments . . . [and] are involved in selecting contents of their portfolio" (E. Zimmerman, 2003, p. 100). On a smaller scale, the notion of a mini-portfolio (Beattie, 1994) could also be used to document and keep examples of student work. In a mini-portfolio, the intention is to collect "a small cohesive body of work limited to a time period no longer than six weeks" (Beattie, 1994, p. 14) and can also function in both a formative and summative assessment context. As a means of formative assessment, the mini-portfolio "can provided information to teachers and pupils ability to create a [smaller] body of work during a course of study" (Beattie, 2006, p. 14) and with a narrower focus of in terms of curricular outcomes. As a means of summative assessment, the mini-portfolio "can be expanded to assess the comprehensive art course or the culmination of an entire art curriculum" (Beattie, 2006, p. 14). The use of portfolios as assessment measures "allows students . . . to be observed through a wide lens in which they can be observed taking risks, solving problems creatively" (E. Zimmerman, 2003, p. 100) and also provides a springboard to conversations, questioning, critique and self-reflection that can support instructional decisions and next steps for individual student needs (R. Clark, 2002).

Performance tasks and portfolios often rely on the use of rubrics as an effective evaluation tool. In order to assess processes and products in the visual arts, it is "useful to establish a set of criteria that demark the quality of performance across a range" (DeLuca, 2010, p. 15) which teachers and students can use formatively and summatively to assess student learning and to provide guidance for next steps in the learning process. Criteria

rubrics can serve to guide and stimulate “artistic and intellectual assessment . . . [by] providing a description of varying levels of productive completion” (McCollister, 2002, p. 47). Categories for rubric development can include in-progress, novice, intermediate and advanced levels (McCollister, 2002, p. 47). The in-progress category “notes prerequisite skills [and] what a student needs to get started”(McCollister, 2002, p. 47). The novice category includes “expectations for all students, the essential artistic requirements of the lesson”(McCollister, 2002, p. 47). The intermediate category “indicates the presence of stronger visual and intellectual qualities in finished work”(McCollister, 2002, p. 47). The advanced category “characterizes the qualities of the most successful solutions in terms of creativity, intentions and material use” (McCollister, 2002, p. 47). While these categories are specific in terms of levels of achievement, “the rubric can be elastic and responsive” (McCollister, 2002, p. 47) to the needs of the students and the purposes of the activity being explored.

A rubric is defined as “a scaled set of criteria that clearly defines for the student and teacher what a range of acceptable and unacceptable performance looks like” (Wenzlaff, Fager, & Coleman, 1999, p. 41). The criteria provide descriptors of performance levels, and are often created in terms of what students should be able to do, according to the curriculum being attended to (Wenzlaff et al., 1999). Wht is also important to consider is how the criteria are chosen. The visual arts curriculum does not always account for the four main disciplines, or constructs, of the visual arts. Ultimately, it is up to the professional judgment of teachers to determine what is being assessed, but it is essential to think about what aspects of the curriculum and the constructs of a subject of study are being emphasized and which are being neglected when building rubrics in

relation to an assignment or performance task. By being mindful of overrepresented or underrepresented criteria and constructs, and adapting rubrics, if necessary, to ensure they measure what they are intended to measure, validity of rubric design will be significantly increased, and the likelihood of authentic data being obtained is also amplified.

Rubrics can be limiting to students in terms of "potentially narrowing . . . artistic vision . . . or fragmenting a performance because the rubric leads the students to pay attention to the parts at the expense of the whole" (Connelly & Wolf, 2007, p. 280). As a result, it is important to be mindful of creating criteria that is "enabling to creativity [by] not pre-establish[ing] processes or products of learning . . . [but] also constraining [by] providing students with a set of parameters" (DeLuca, 2010, p. 6) that makes the expectations clear and attainable. When rubrics are carefully and thoughtfully designed, "rubrics not only guide the assessment process . . . they enrich the learning experience" (Connelly & Wolf, 2007, p. 280) by providing students with guidance and language related to what is important.

Anecdotal records or notes can also be used as both " a vehicle for planning instruction and documenting progress, but also [provides] a story about the individual (Rhodes & Nathenson-Mejia, 1992, p. 503). While anecdotal records have largely been used to record observations related to process and product in reading and writing (Rhodes & Nathenson-Mejia, 1992, p. 502), recording observations of students throughout the process of their art making, and as they complete works of art, could easily be adapted from research on literacy assessment. The "open-ended nature of anecdotal record taking . . . allows teachers to determine what details are important to record"(Rhodes & Nathenson-Mejia, 1992, p. 502) and can provide evidence, alongside collections of

student artwork, of growth and development. When recording anecdotal notes, it is most effective to " (a) describe a specific event or product, [and] (b) report rather than evaluate or interpret" (Rhodes & Nathenson-Mejia, 1992, p. 502) while "maintaining a standards-based focus" (p. 502), paying particular attention to the "key verbs from the content standards [as it] saves time with on the spot recording" (Boyd-Batstone, 2004, p. 232) and helps to focus the intention of note taking. Managing the significant task of recording anecdotal notes related to student progress and art production can be mitigated by focusing on "a handful of students to observe each day . . . and, prior to observation . . . establish a focus" (Boyd-Batstone, 2004, p. 231) to ensure attention is paid to "what students know and can do with regard to instructional content" (Boyd-Batstone, 2004, p. 231). In this way, anecdotal notes can help support other forms of formative and summative assessment.

Using a wide range of assessment tools in the visual arts classroom is imperative to authentic assessment practices. What is important to note is that many assessment tools can be used for multiple purposes (see Appendix E). How multi-faceted an assessment tool is can be correlated to the *intention* of use. How a teacher intends to use an assessment tool determines whether it is best suited formatively, summatively or metacognitively. For example, the use of a mini-portfolio could require formative conversations between a teacher and a student about how to improve artwork in progress, which provides an opportunity for the student to engage in metacognitive practices, and articulate what they will do to make changes to the works and reasons for their thought processes. Further, the mini-portfolio would be submitted to the teacher for a summative grade after a period of time, resulting in this tool being used for all three modes of

assessment. Teachers, when equipped with the understanding of intentionality in assessment practice, are able to utilize assessment tools more effectively and efficiently. This also allows for continuity of focus, and encourages meaningful, cyclical triangulation of assessment data.

Instructional Approaches in the Visual Arts Classroom

To choose a method of instruction as part of the "rationale for art education that has integrity within the domains of art and education . . . and [informs] teaching and learning, is no simple task" (Sullivan, 1993, p. 5) and, as a result, the field of art education has, over time, "adopt[ed] an eclectic stance in search of an identity" (Sullivan, 1993, p. 5). Current research in the field has identified two types of instructional practices prevalent in art education: instrumental instruction and intrinsic instruction (Brewer, 2002; Hamblen, 1993; Sahasrabudhe, 2006; Sullivan, 1993). Instrumental art instruction, "serves as a means to . . . bring about knowledge in another academic subject" (Brewer, 2002, p. 354) where art is combined "with another subject, and correlated art shows the mutual relationships between art and another subject" (Brewer, 2002, p. 354). Advocates for instrumental instruction believe that "art experiences and activities [should be] linked horizontally to learning in language arts or social studies" (Sahasrabudhe, 2006, p. 79) or should be "designed to accommodate learning historical facts, or landscapes in geography" (Sahasrabudhe, 2006, p. 79). Further, instrumentalists suggest that the study of art "promotes creative behaviours, critical thinking, self-awareness, [and] social relations . . . in other subject areas" (Hamblen, 1993, p. 191) and, therefore, can be used as a springboard to deepen learning and understanding in core subject areas.

Intrinsic, or studio-based, instruction has been largely equated with discipline based art education, and encourages " instruction located within and belonging to the real nature of a thing (art)" (Brewer, 2002). Art is taught "as a discreet subject . . . where media dictates curriculum content and materials, tools and techniques used by artists and mostly teachers trained as artists to teach the subject" (Sahasrabudhe, 2006, p. 79). Advocates for intrinsic instruction believe that the "art production, art criticism, art history and aesthetics . . . should be taught not as independent strands, but in relation to one another" (Brandt, 1988, p. 7) and to "teach [art] as a subject with its own particular characteristics, [and] its own continuity and development" (Brandt, 1988, p. 8) is most beneficial. By creating " a block of time during the week . . . assigned to teaching the arts" (Brandt, 1988, pp. 8-9), the focus on art as a subject of study is preserved and supported.

Research conducted by Brewer (2002) emphasized the debate between "instrinsic and instrumental curricular purposes" (p. 355) by "examin[ing] how the absence (no instruction), presence (intrinsic, studio-based) and type of instruction (instrumental, integrated) affected students' artistic development" (p. 355) and sought to examine learning of both approaches to art education. The results of the research indicates that the use of "intrinsic or instrumental instruction showed no differences by group or by group and gender" (p. 371) in terms of one instructional approach being more beneficial than the other. However, "the clearest difference in the study came from art instruction either being absent or present . . . [as] no instruction was a significant detriment" (p. 371) to student learning and understanding in the visual arts. While the results raised "some serious research design questions" (Brewer, 2002, p. 371) related to he benefit of one

instructional approach over another, conclusions can still be drawn that the absence of art instruction, altogether, is inherently disadvantageous to student learning in the visual arts.

The instructional approach best suited to teach the visual arts is still up for debate. However, given the state of flux that our current curriculum is in, between a focus on DBAE, and one that supports and promotes an instrumentalist and interdisciplinary/cross-curricular approaches and examination of visual culture, to art instruction, it would be advantageous to maintain a balance of focus that addressed both ways of teaching and learning. According to Hamblen (1993) links between learning in the arts and other subjects "are strongest and instrumental instruction most justifiable, when an art program exists in its own right, when there is a specific need for instrumental outcomes, and when there is a conscious effort to facilitate transfer" (p. 196). Further, Lindström (2012) states "aesthetic learning should support and be facilitated by a balanced curriculum based on teaching and learning about, in, with and through the arts" (Lindström, 2012, p. 178). The conscious balance between approaching art as a subject of study, coupled with a focus on interdisciplinary thinking and cross-curricular teaching and learning, could provide the best of both instructional practices to meet the needs of student engagement in the visual arts. Further, in order to provide a well-rounded visual arts education experience, all constructs of art must be attended to. It seems most advantageous to balance the two approaches that characteristically could not attend to the constructs of visual art individually. By balancing the approaches, the correlation between instructional strategies, constructs of visual art and authentically meeting the needs of students in the visual arts classroom are considered.

Creating a Resource for Teachers

The research outlined in the Literature Review provides insight into the historical development of the DBAE movement, its impact on the current Alberta elementary visual arts curriculum, as well as current research and movements in art education. This view of curriculum, past, present and future, coupled with an understanding of the needs of elementary generalists in teaching the visual arts, guides not only authentic assessment practices in art, but also decisions about the most effective form of instructional practices to employ. Through the use of this research, this project provides a user-friendly, teacher and student focused website that houses pedagogical understandings of the elements of art and principles of design, a visual representation of the current Alberta elementary visual arts curriculum, and attention to authentic assessments in the art classroom. It provides guidance and support for implementation of sound art instruction through unit plans, with a focus on both instrumental and intrinsic instructions.

Digital Art Resource Website

The Digital Art Resource website consists of five sections/tabs for ease of access: Home Page, Learn About Art, Unit Plans, Learn About Art Assessment and Contact Information. Each section/tab, with the exception of the Home Page, has a dropdown menu that allows users to quickly access professional development information or units of study with accompanying assessment. Each section/tab is designed to be both user-friendly and content rich. The vision for the website is clearly articulated, however, modifications and additions will continue to made well after the Masters project is completed, as it is imperative to its success and effectiveness as a professional development tool.

Home Page

The Home Page is designed to provide a brief overview of the intention of the website, and an idea of how to navigate it effectively. This overview is in the form of a video, which includes a personal introduction, identifies the intention of the resource as a tool for grade 1 and 2 teachers to improve their pedagogy and practice in teaching visual arts, as well as identifying the purpose of each of the tabs/sections, as well as the information found in the dropdown menus for each tab/section.

Learn About Art

The Learn About Art section/tab is a series of professional development information in the form of text, PDF and video. The drop down menu includes three sub-sections: Alberta Curriculum, Elements of Art and Principles of Design. What is of particular importance is the inclusion of the elements of art and principles of design. While they are not explicitly mentioned in DBAE or in the Alberta Education Visual Arts Program of Studies, they are implied in the constructs of art. Foundationally, the elements and principles are needed, as an understanding of them impacts all four domains that make up the constructs of the visual arts. Without a foundation in the elements and principles, the ability for students and teachers to engage meaningfully with art production, aesthetics, art criticism and art history is limited. The elements of art and principles of design provide the vocabulary and framework through which engagement with the constructs becomes more intentional.

Elements of art. This section introduces the seven elements of art, which include line, shape, colour, value, form, texture and space. The intention is to provide clear definitions for each of the elements, (Hume, 2010; The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2011a), as

well as visual representations, using personally created images and images from the University of Lethbridge Art Gallery (with permissions) that illustrate the elements effectively. While the primary focus of this section is to be used as professional development, the video and text could potentially be used as a teaching tool with students as well. In addition, two links are embedded on this page to access a PowerPoint presentation on elements and principles (Hager, n.d.), as well as a PDF handout titled *Understanding Formal Analysis: Elements of Art* (The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2011a).

Principles of art. This section introduces the seven principles of art, which include balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, rhythm and unity. The intention is to provide clear definitions for each of the principles (Hume, 2010; The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2011b), as well as provide visual representations, using personally created images and images from the University of Lethbridge Art Gallery (with permissions) that illustrate the principles effectively. Again, the primary focus of this section is to be used as professional development, the video, text and images could potentially be used as a teaching tool with students as well. As well, a link will be provided to a PDF handout titled *Understanding Formal Analysis: Principles of Design* (The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2011b).

The Alberta curriculum. Through the use of a short video, teachers will first be introduced to the GLO, or experiences, which students are expected to engage in. The video will then begin to unpack the curriculum further to identify the four major areas of visual learning; reflection, depiction, composition and expression. By examining each of the four major areas, and their components, as well as the Specific Learner Outcomes, teachers will have a clear understanding of what the Level 1 curriculum is asking them to

be thinking about in terms of visual arts instruction. Further, a visual representation of the Level 1 curriculum is provided to on this page. It is downloadable, in PDF format, and mirrors the video in terms of content. It has been noted in the literature review that the visual arts curriculum is not user-friendly, as the "language [within the program of studies] is difficult for generalists to understand" (Alberta Education, 2009, p. 7). The intention of the video and the reconstructed visual representation of the curriculum is to help demystify the intentions of the curriculum.

Assessment

An introduction to valid and reliable assessment practices, with a significant emphasis on of and for learning, as it pertains to assessment in art, will be the focus of this section/tab. The dropdown menus will include Authentic Assessment, Formative Feedback, I Can Statements, Portfolios and Performance Tasks and Collecting Data.

Authentic assessment. This sub-section is a platform to share research that supports and justifies the assessment practices and assessment tools used in the digital resource in a video format. Defining authentic assessment practice as it relates to as, of and for learning (Davies, 2011; Earl & Katz, 2006; Shepard, 2000; Stiggins et al., 2012), and providing context with understanding about assessment in art (Bensur, 2002; Day, 1985; DeLuca, 2010) provides a basic guideline for assessment practices, as well as a specific context to assessment in art. The video also addresses triangulation of evidence (Davies, 2011), as well as validity and reliability issues (Gareis & Grant, 2015) to help support teachers in understanding how "to draw inferences about the nature and degree of student learning" (Gareis & Grant, 2015, p. 43) as well as "to distinguish between the

student who has truly acquired those learning outcomes and the student who has not" (Gareis & Grant, 2015, pp. 43-44).

Formative feedback. This sub-section provides practical examples for teacher use in terms of formative feedback strategies in the art classroom. This includes strategies for interviewing and conferencing with students (Ross & Mitchell, 1993; Stokrocki, 2005; E. Zimmerman, 1992), student self-reflection (DeLuca, 2010; Popovich, 2006) as well as questioning strategies (Beattie, 2006; Stokrocki, 2005; Taunton, 1983) to elicit insights from students about their work and the work of others. Further, suggestions for how to create conversations with students that build aesthetic awareness through reflective dialogue related to the elements and principles of art (Duncum, 1999; Yenawine, 2013). Practical, PDF downloadable examples are embedded, adapted from various sources (McCollister, 2002; Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, 2009), and appropriately referenced, for teachers to use as a references and guides in formative assessment implementation.

I can statements. A focus on outcomes based assessment practices, and providing students with clear targets (Davies, 2011; C. M. Moss et al., 2011) is attended to briefly in this section. As well, a PDF document, identifying specific curricular outcomes from Level 1 in the program of students, as well as fully articulated I Can Statements, is available for teachers to use as a reference and guide when planning and implementing assessment.

Performance tasks and portfolios. A brief overview of performance tasks (Beattie, 2006; Black, 2013; Lane, 2013; Popovich, 2006) and portfolio use (Dorn et al., 2004; E. Zimmerman, 2003), both process and product (R. Clark, 2002), is addressed. As

well, a focus on rubric development (Connelly & Wolf, 2007; DeLuca, 2010; McCollister, 2002) in relation to validity and reliability is also a focus of this section.

Unit Plans

The Unit Plan section/tab allows teachers to access one fully formed unit of study for grades 1 and 2, as well as information about the instructional philosophy behind the construction of the unit plans available. The drop down menu consists of three parts: Instructional Philosophy, Grade 1 Unit Plans and Grade 2 Unit Plans.

Instructional philosophy. This sub section identifies the components of both an instrumental (Brewer, 2002; Hamblen, 1993; Sahasrabudhe, 2006) and an intrinsic (Brandt, 1988; Brewer, 2002) approach to art instruction, with the intention of illustrating the importance of a balanced approach to instruction (Bachar & Glaubman, 2006; Hamblen, 1993; Lindström, 2012). The unit plans, and subsequent lessons plans, have been created within the context of a balanced approach to teaching and learning in the visual arts.

Unit plans. The art curriculum from the Alberta Education Program of Studies blends grade 1 and grade 2 learner outcomes into what is considered “Level 1”. No specific curriculum exists for each grade independent of one the other. The elementary art program is structured in a “unified, sequential course that focuses on four major components of visual learning” (Alberta Education, 1983, p. C.1), and has been scaffolded to build in complexity from Level 1 (grade 1 and 2) through Level 3 (grade 5 and 6). The foundational understandings of art are embedded in the Level 1 curricular outcomes, so building a unit of study for grade one and two is a logical place to start. Unit plans, lesson plans and assessment tools have been created based on my own

professional judgment of the outcomes most appropriate grades 1 and 2 and, in some cases, in conjunction with other subject areas and mentor texts in an effort to attend to cross-curricular application. The intention was not to have unit plans that cover the entire Level 1 curriculum. Rather, I have created two units of study, one for each grade level, that have fully developed lesson plans for teachers to download and use.

Results/Analysis

Analysis of the impact of the digital resource on increased teacher pedagogical understandings will not take place within the timeframe this Master's project. However, the long-term goal is to use this resource in a mentorship/residency capacity as a basis for PhD work in the future. Once the project is fully developed for grade 1 and 2, the ultimate goal is to work closely with non-major generalists who are responsible for teaching art within their individual classrooms and are interested in growing their pedagogy and assessment practice in relation to teaching art. Working with teachers through a mentorship capacity will allow me to evaluate the usefulness of the tool, in practice, on the development of teacher pedagogy in the visual arts.

Conclusion

The visual arts should be an integral part of learning in the classroom, and the only way to ensure that students are provided with authentic and creative learning opportunities in the visual arts is to provide guidance to elementary generalist teachers, supporting the aim to improve pedagogy and assessment practice. It is imperative that teachers are provided with the foundational understanding of the constructs of visual arts, a clear understanding of where the visual arts are moving, both educationally and societally, and the skills to look critically at the curriculum they are charged with

teaching. Awareness of the contextual nature of assessment practice and the complexities of subject specific constructs in the visual arts equips teachers to think critically about what they are teaching, what they are assessing and the opportunities they provide for student learning. Teachers must be aware that simply attending to *as*, *of* and *for* learning does not imply authentic assessment. Consideration of contextual assessment practice, coupled with a clearer understanding of the curriculum and the constructs akin to the visual arts, will help to increase the validity and reliability of the assessment tools they use. Further, a balanced instructional approach, combining a focus on foundations of art and interdisciplinary connections, will help build teacher competence in providing meaningful learning opportunities for students in the visual arts.

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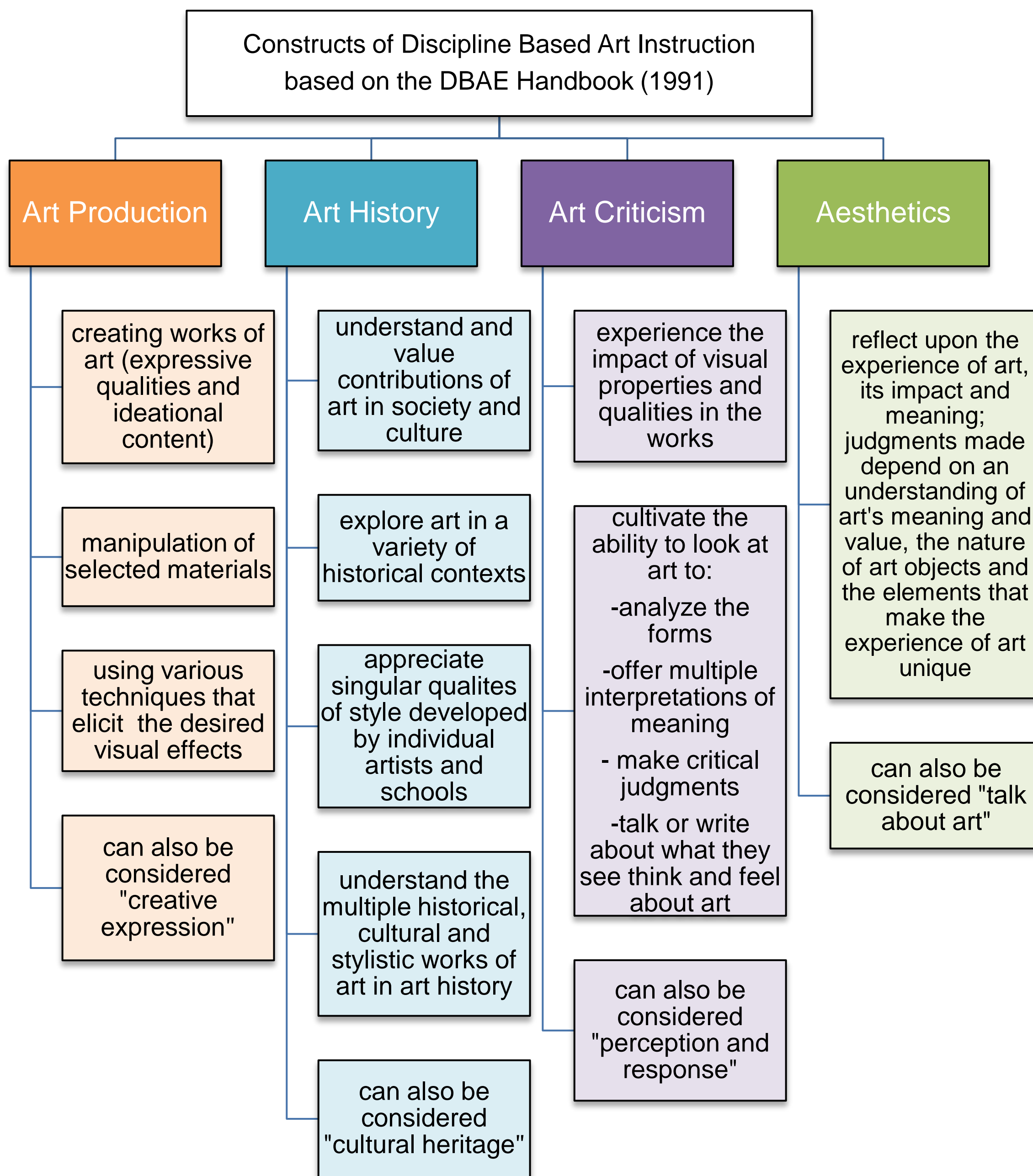
Appendix A

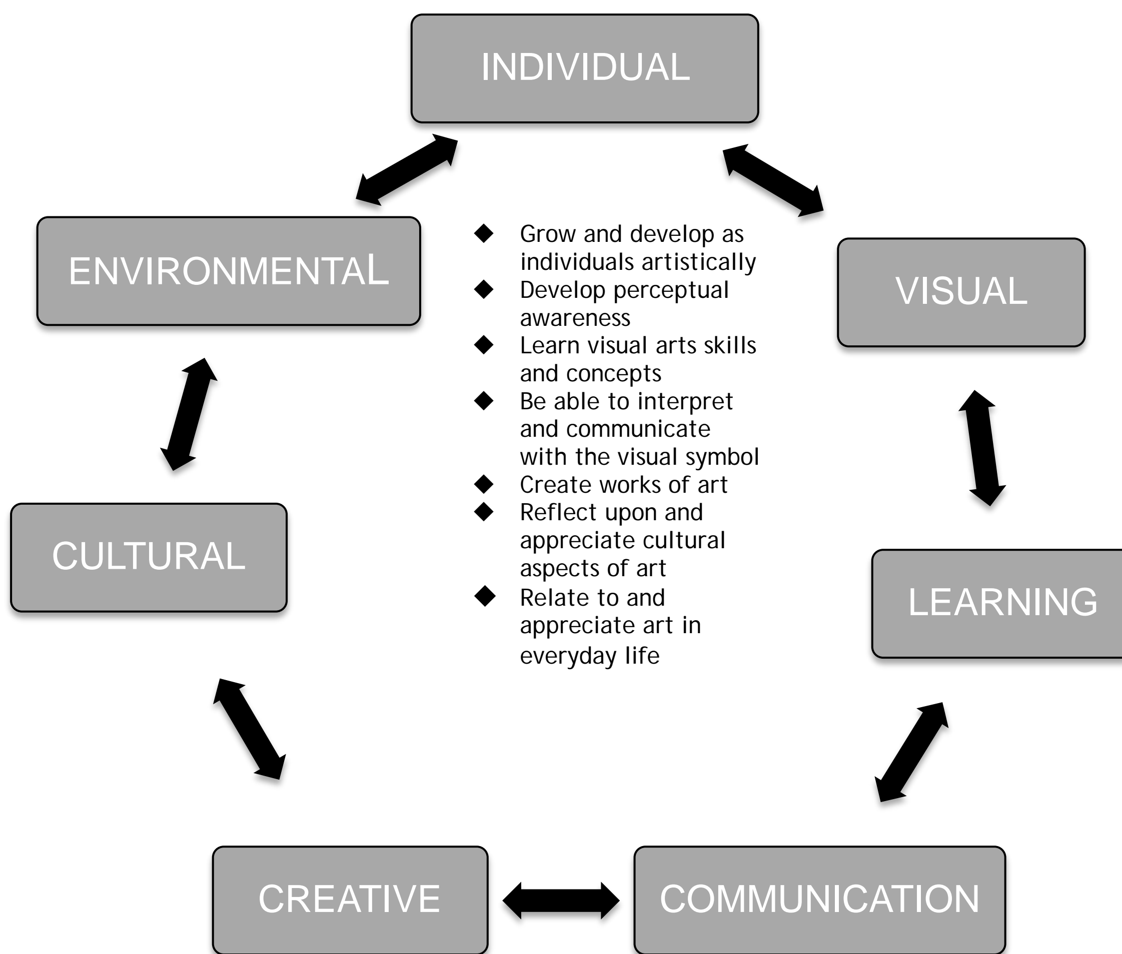
Discipline-Based Art Education



Adapted from Dobbs, S. M. (1992). *The DBAE Handbook: An Overview of Discipline-Based Art Education*. Santa Monica, California: The J. Paul Getty Trust.

Appendix B

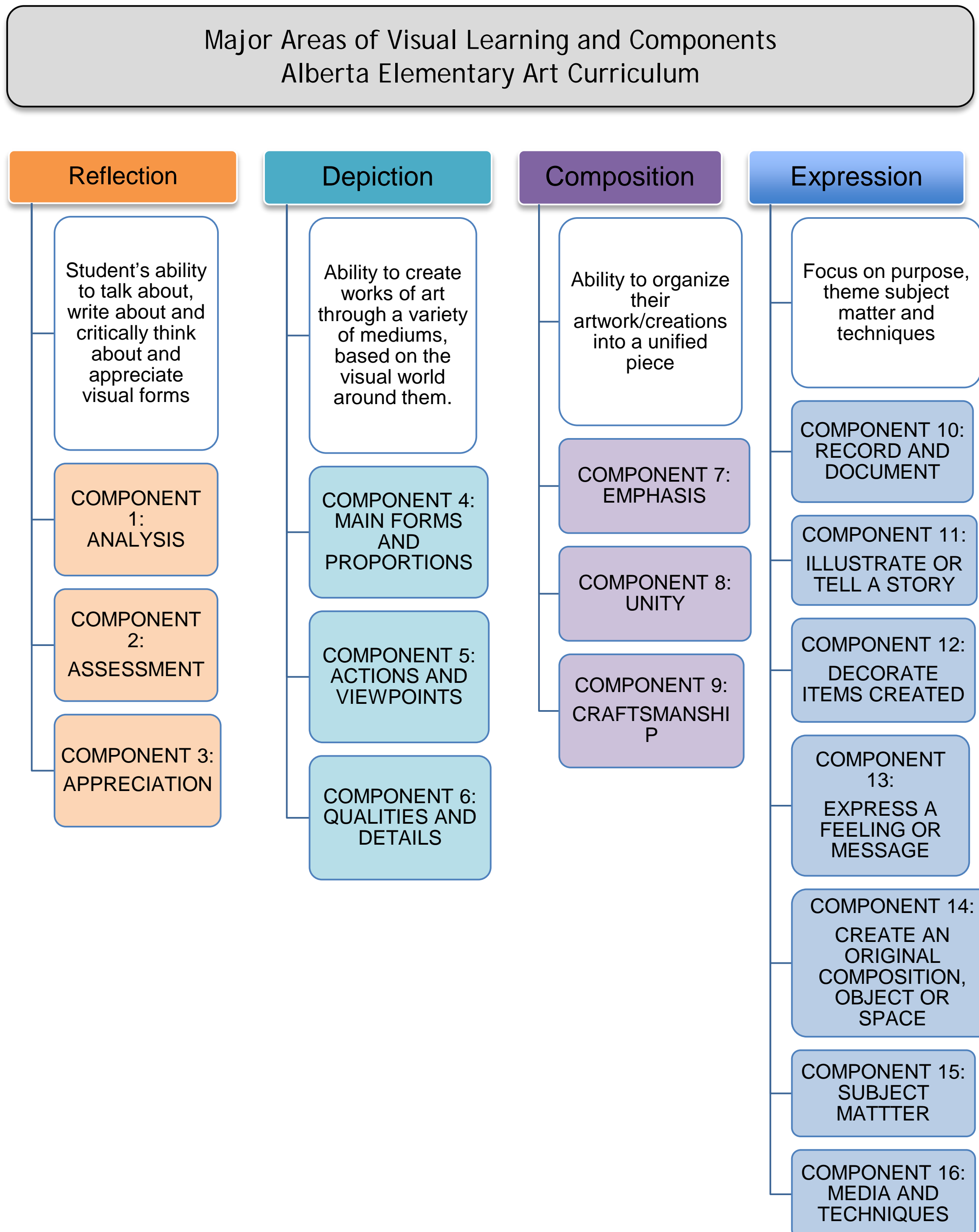
General Learner Outcomes



Adapted from Alberta Education. (1983). *Elementary art program of studies*. Edmonton, AB: Alberta Education.

Appendix C

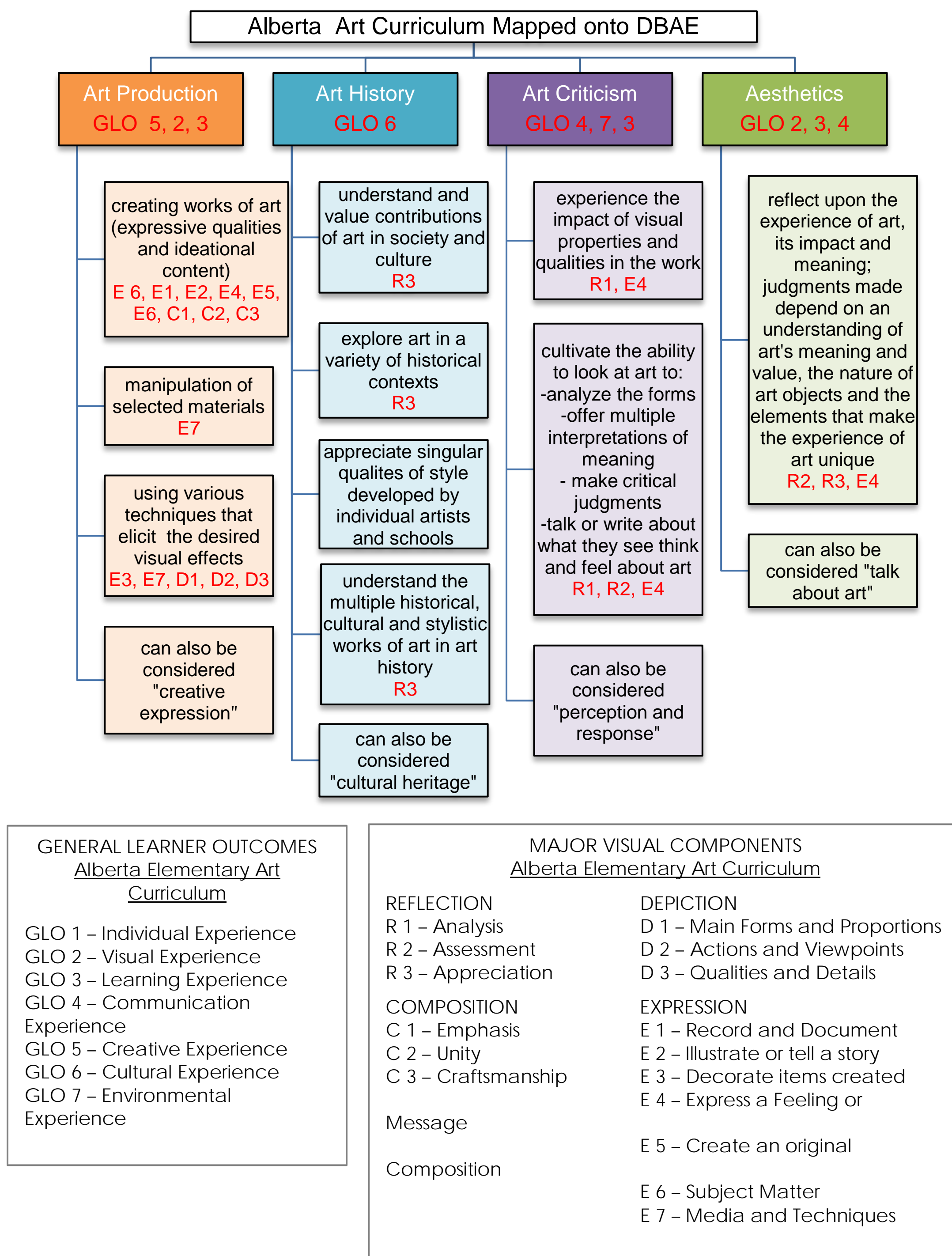
Specific Learner Outcome



Adapted from Alberta Education. (1983). *Elementary art program of studies*. Edmonton, AB: Alberta Education.

Appendix D

Alberta Elementary Art Curriculum



Adapted from Alberta Education. (1983). *Elementary art program of studies*. Edmonton, AB: Alberta Education.

Adapted from Dobbs, S. M. (1992). *The DBAE Handbook: An Overview of Discipline-Based Art Education*. Santa Monica, California: The J. Paul Getty Trust.

Appendix E

Assessment Tools

ASSESSING CONSTRUCTS OF THE VISUAL ARTS THROUGH CONTEXTUAL ASSESSMENT TOOLS

AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT PRACTICE	Interviews	Critiques	Conversations	Questioning	Self-Reflection	Informal Observation	Formal Observation	Formative Performance Task	Summative Performance Task	Mini-Portfolio	Process Portfolio	Product Portfolio	Rubrics	Anecdotal Records
Assessment FOR Learning (Formative)	P H A C	P A C	P H A C	P H A C	P A C	P H A C	P H A C	P A C	P A C	P A C	P A C	P A C	P H A C	P H A C
Assessment AS Learning (Metacognitive)	P H A C	P A C	P H A C		P A C			P A C	P A C	P A C	P A C	P H A C		
Assessment OF Learning (Summative)	P H A C	P A C	P H A C				P H A C		P A C	P A C	P A C	P A C	P H A C	P H A C

<u>Constructs of DBAE</u>

P – Art Production
H – Art History
A – Aesthetics
C – Art Criticism