

Charging the Space

How do we teach
to works of art?



A **guide** for
designing
aesthetic
education-driven
lessons

“We are interested in education here, not schooling. We are interested in openings, in unexplored possibilities, not in the predictable or the quantifiable, not as what is thought of as social control. For us, education signifies an initiation into new ways of seeing, hearing, feeling, and moving. It signifies the nurture of a special kind of reflectiveness and expressiveness, a reaching out for meaning, a learning to learn.”

– Maxine Greene

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Introduction to the guide

Inspired by the philosophical voices of Maxine Greene and John Dewey, and grounded in inquiry-based learning, McCallum Theatre Education provides a vital and specific approach to the study of works of art. The document before you is a guide to this teaching approach. We encourage you to think of it as a framework for inviting the arts into your classroom. As you do, consider: could this same pedagogical approach serve you in teaching to other subjects?

Imagination plays an important role in this kind of teaching and learning.

Imaginative thinking is the cognitive ability to visualize new possibilities. It allows students to develop the capacity to make connections, notice deeply, take action, and reflect. The application of these skills extends, clearly, across all disciplines. The ability to imagine, we believe, is a skill that can – and must – be cultivated. If imagination is engaged, creativity is sparked, and innovation closely follows. The fields of industry, education, research and government consistently cite these three elements – imagination, creativity, and innovation – as highly desirable in the 21st century workforce.

McCallum Theatre Education's approach to teaching and learning – developed initially through a close partnership with Lincoln Center Institute in New York – provides answers to the questions: How can imagination best be cultivated? How can students be at the center of their own learning? How can inquiry-based learning help develop self-motivated learners and creative problem-solvers? What can the study of works of art in combination with the aesthetic education model bring into the lives of students?

How can you put this guide to work for you? See what ideas you come up with!

...humans invented the arts to serve expressive functions... But the arts also make discovery possible. Discovery occurs as students learn through adventures in the arts something of the possibilities of human experience. The journeys they take through the patterned sound we call music, through the visual forms we call painting, and through the metaphorical discourse we call poetry and literature are means through which students can discover their potential to respond. In other words, the arts can help students find their individual capacity to feel and imagine.

— **Elliot Eisner** (1933-2014), professor of Art and Education at the Stanford Graduate School of Education

We know that imagination reaches towards a future, towards what might be, what should be, what is not yet. Or, as Dewey once described it: it is the capacity to look at things as if they could be otherwise. Or it may be conceived as a “passion for the possible.” Indeed, Emily Dickinson wrote: “Imagination lights the slow fuse of possibility.”

— **Maxine Greene** (1917-2014), American educational philosopher, author, social activist and teacher

Inquiry-based learning in the arts: McCallum Theatre Education's vision for every student

- **McCallum's Aesthetic Education Program** – an inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning focused on specific works of art in the disciplines of dance, music, theatre and the visual arts – helps students develop skills of perception, problem solving, collaboration, and constructive action.
- Students discover that through aesthetic education the experience of their world and approach to their everyday lives is changed. They become aware of the importance of creative problem solving in all aspects of their lives; of finding the extraordinary in the ordinary and in embracing new ideas. Making connections between the arts and their world through looking, reflecting on their experiences, asking questions and recognizing the possibilities of what could be, becomes part of their lived experience.
- The approach students learn to take when encountering works of art extends to other objects of study – texts, scientific phenomena, historical events and so on.
- These skills, developed in engagement with works of art, powerfully connect with the Common Core State Standards.
- Students emerge ready to participate fully in the challenges and opportunities of 21st century life.



Voices of aesthetic education

Aesthetic Education takes inspiration – as well as guiding concepts – from deep thinkers in the educational realm like Maxine Greene and John Dewey. What do you find inspiring here?

How are we to understand “aesthetic education?”... **Aesthetic**, of course, is an adjective used to describe or single out the mode of experience brought into being by encounters with works of art.

Education, as I view it, is a process of enabling persons to become different, to enter the multiple provinces of meaning that create perspectives on the work. To enter these provinces (be they those identified with the arts, the social sciences, the natural sciences), the learner must break with the taken-for-granted...and look through the lenses of various ways of knowing, seeing, and feeling in a conscious endeavor to impose different orders upon experience.

Aesthetic education...is an intentional undertaking designed to nurture appreciative, reflective, cultural, participatory engagements with the arts by enabling learners to notice what is there to be noticed, and to lend works of art their lives in such a way that they can achieve them as variously meaningful. When this happens, new connections are made in experience: new patterns are formed, new vistas are opened.

— Maxine Greene

from *Variations on a Blue Guitar: The Lincoln Center Institute Lectures on Aesthetic Education* (New York, Teachers College Press, 2001)

A curriculum in aesthetic education, then, is always in process, as we who are teachers try to make possible a continuing enlargement of experience. There must be open-mindedness and a sense of exploration; there must be breaks with ordinariness and stock response. If this is how we approach curriculum, there may be a new readiness, a new ripeness in our students and even in ourselves. There may be an increasing awareness of things in their particularity, of beauty and variety, and form. People may be brought to watch and to listen with heightened attentiveness and care. The questions may keep coming. We can ask no more of ourselves.

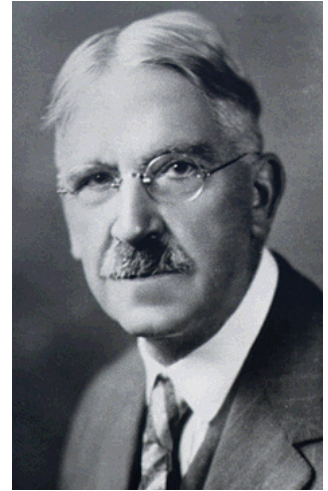
— Maxine Greene



...to perceive, a beholder must create his own experience. And his creation must include relations comparable to those which the original producer underwent. They are not the same in any literal sense. But with the perceiver, as with the artist, there must be an ordering of the elements of the whole that is in form, although not in details, the same as the process of organization the creator of the work consciously experienced. Without an act of recreation, the object is not perceived as a work of art. The artist selected, simplified, clarified, abridged and condensed according to his interest. The beholder must go through these operations according to his point of view and interest.

— **John Dewey**

(1859-1952), American philosopher, psychologist and educational reformer; from *Art As Experience*



Suppose...we are studying migration patterns in this country: movements to the west and then 'backtrailing' to the east; movements from south to north, south from the northern border, internal migrations from coast to Midwest. The facts become mere givens--names, dates, lines on maps. Yes, they need to be taken into account as beginnings, take-off points. Consider *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and the faces, the human presences it sets before us, people enslaved and free, with the open questions, the contradictions, the ambiguities on the journey to the always receding 'territory ahead'. All this is to be experienced, not to illustrate or motivate, but as an event within the reader's life. The imagination activated to bring the novel alive opens manifold intellectual possibilities: the impacts on adolescent life in the slave south; the persistence of old chivalric myths and disguises; the irresistible power of a new technology; the shapes of piety and evangelism.

Surely, teacher education in social studies would be enriched and complicated by the inclusion of the arts. Think, for example, of Jacob Lawrence's *Migration Series*, those remarkable paintings of African-Americans taking the trains to go north, arriving in an inhospitable Chicago. Think of linking some of the history of jazz – and, yes, I free associate to Edward Hopper and his renderings of empty city streets, lonely people in hotel rooms or in luncheonettes in early mornings. The patterns forming in experience will be multiple. The connections that are made are what give rise to meanings. Aesthetic education is an effort to make it more likely that people will lend their lives to forms of art, bringing them alive, opening the questions that keep human beings wide awake and in the world.

— **Maxine Greene**

from *Countering Indifference: The Role of the Arts*

The capacities for imaginative learning

Learners engaged in aesthetic education-driven explorations are stimulated to practice and develop the following capacities. These connect with and support development of Common Core State Standards skills.

Noticing Deeply

How many layers of detail can you identify if you take the time? Can you go deeper?

Embodying

What can you learn about a work of art by using your body to explore the ideas in the work?

Questioning

What do you wonder about the work of art? About your own process? What can you discover by asking “what if...?”

Making Connections

How can you connect what you notice and the patterns you see to your prior knowledge and experiences, as well as to others’ knowledge and experiences, and to text and multi-media resources?

Identifying Patterns

How can finding relationships among the details in a work of art, and grouping them, help you recognize patterns?

Exhibiting Empathy

Can you understand how others think and feel? What are their perspectives?

Living with Ambiguity

What if there is not just one answer? How can you be patient with complexity?

Creating Meaning

Based on what you’ve discovered so far, what new interpretations can you make?

Taking Action

What will you choose to do with your new ideas? How can you put them into practice?

Reflecting/Assessing

Looking back on what you’ve discovered, and what you have learned – what’s next?

— Based on Aesthetic Education, Inquiry and the Imagination ©2012 Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Inc. Developed by Lincoln Center Institute, now Lincoln Center Education

The inquiry process

Aesthetic Education – an inquiry process set in motion by combining four powerful core teaching concepts.



Art making

Participants engage in art-making experiences that focus on process and choice-making. They experiment with the formal elements of the art form and walk in the footsteps of the artist who created the work of art. The emphasis is problem-solving activities that engage the imagination of the individual or group. Multiple learning modalities are in use to help deepen the understanding of concepts and/or elements and to support different learning styles.

Questioning

Open-ended questioning is embedded throughout the instruction allowing for a student-centered experience of exploration and discovery. Open questions elicit description (pure noticing), analysis, and interpretation and actively build on participants' responses in a structure that allows for inquiry to flow from beginning to the end of instruction. This deliberate mode of questioning prepares participants for an open and active engagement with the work of art.

Reflection

Ample time is given to encourage participants to reflect on – think deeply and actively, come to new understandings about – their art-making. Reflection in aesthetic education is interwoven throughout a lesson and honors different modes. Group reflection is important to honor multiple perspectives, to validate individual response and create a community and forum that fosters new understandings.

Research

In aesthetic education research falls into two categories:

Experiential research is carried out by participants as they embody and actively investigate formal elements and conceptual ideas inherent in the work of art.

Contextual research concerns information that relates to the work of art, but is not the work of art. This includes information about the artist(s), cultural, social and historical references, and other works of art.

Research must be strategically placed within a workshop to advance inquiry.

The open-ended question – an important tool!

McCallum Theatre Education is dedicated to the process of asking and encouraging the use of open-ended questions to promote deeper understandings about specific works of art, ourselves and the world we live in.

This category of questions encourages full and meaningful answers using the subject's own knowledge and perspective, and nurtures critical and higher thinking skills.

The opposite of closed-ended questions, which encourage a short or single-word answer and often call for a specific response, open-ended questions are not leading and tend to be more objective than closed-ended questions.

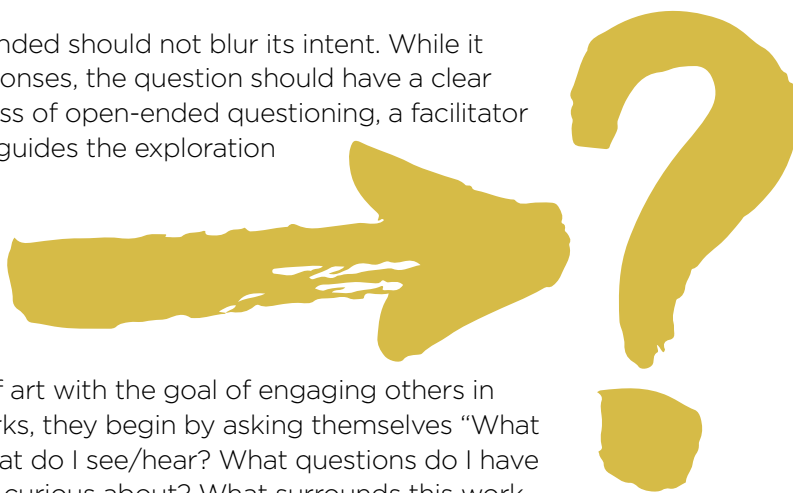
Typically open-ended questions begin with words such as "Why" and "How", or phrases such as "Tell me about..." Often they are not technically a question, but a statement which implicitly asks for a response. They elicit a range of responses and promote multiple perspectives, choices and solutions.

The fact that a question is open-ended should not blur its intent. While it may generate many different responses, the question should have a clear purpose. Once skilled in the process of open-ended questioning, a facilitator listens carefully to responses and guides the exploration with follow-up questions.

In aesthetic education, everything starts, ends and begins anew with open-ended questions. When teaching artists initially brainstorm works of art with the goal of engaging others in workshops that explore those works, they begin by asking themselves "What do I notice in this work of art? What do I see/hear? What questions do I have about this work of art? What am I curious about? What surrounds this work socially, culturally and historically? What personal or curricular connections does this work of art evoke? What experiential activities does it make me envision? What are some other ideas? What potential generative questions emerge as possible lines of inquiry (pathways) for a unit of study focused on this work of art? What are some of the key ideas inherent in my brainstorming process?"

The open-ended questioning process flows through planning meetings and workshops with teachers and in student workshops where facilitators (teaching artists and teachers) not only ask open questions eliciting three categories of response – description, analysis, interpretation – but also invite and encourage students to question throughout their explorations to further learning; to ask the question "What if?"

Asking and encouraging the use of open-ended questions is essential to the practice of aesthetic education.



Guiding the noticing: a method of noticing through questioning

Let the following three categories of questions serve as a guide when you facilitate an open-ended questioning process. This will allow your students to investigate a work of art, and/or other texts – print and non-print – that are part of an instructional unit.

Guiding the noticing through questioning promotes careful observations and thoughtful interpretations. It stimulates curiosity and sets the stage for inquiry. This is oftentimes not a linear process and it's crucial for the facilitator to ask questions that generate enough description to allow for informed analysis and interpretation.



DESCRIBE

Open questions that allow for an inventory of the parts: What is there to be noticed?

A few examples:

- What do you notice in this _____?
- What do you see?
- What do you hear?
- What more can you tell me about that? What else?

Exhaust description to allow for meaningful and informed analysis and interpretation.

ANALYZE

Open questions that elicit analysis: How do the parts work together?

A few examples:

- What makes you say that?
- What relationships do you notice?
- What do you see or hear that is similar? Different?
- How are the parts put together? What parts, if any, form a pattern?
- How do the parts contribute to the whole?
- Based on our description and analysis so far, what questions surface for you?

INTERPRET

Open questions that encourage students to find their own meaning in the work, based on full description and analysis.

A few examples:

- What do you think is going on in this _____?
- What are some possible ideas the artist is trying to convey?
- What might it represent? What else?
- What does it remind you of? What makes you say that?
- What does the work of art evoke in you? Other thoughts?
- What does it express?
- What other interpretations come up for you? Are there other possibilities?

Interpretations of works of art in dance, theater, music and visual art are not judged. Ask your students to describe and explain what evidence supports their interpretation. Always ask for multiple interpretations.

I have seen skilled teachers raise questions that ignited discussion, offer a question that promised to simmer over several days or pursue a line of questioning that led to understanding. ...These teachers suggest a...portrait of classroom questioning, one that contains detailed clues about how the language of classroom dialogue can be used to establish and sustain not just a momentary discussion but a lasting climate of inquiry.

...Students need the face-to-face skill of raising questions with other people: clarity about what they don't understand and want to know, the willingness to ask, the bravery to ask again. It is as central in chasing down the meaning of a dance, the lessons of the Korean war, or the uses and abuses of nuclear reactors. One could rephrase the Chinese proverb: Ask a man a question and he inquires for a day; teach a man to question and he inquires for life.

...Being asked and learning to pose strong questions might offer students a deeply-held, internal blueprint for inquiry apart from the prods and supports of questions from without. That blueprint would have many of the qualities that teachers' best questions do: range, arc, authenticity. But if the sum is greater than the parts, there might be an additional quality – call it a capacity for question finding. Question finding is the ability to go to a poem, a painting, a piece of music – or a document, a mathematical description, a science experiment – and locate a novel direction for investigation. This ability is difficult to teach directly, yet it may be one of the most important byproducts of learning in an educational climate in which the questions asked are varied, worth pursuit, authentic and humanely posed.

— **Dennie Palmer Wolf**

Educator, researcher, author and consultant to the College Boards Office of Academic Affairs
from *The Art of Questioning*



Further thoughts about dialogue

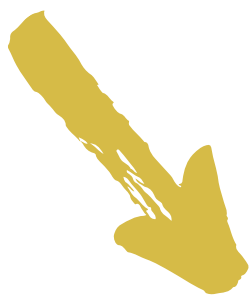
The CCSS Speaking and Listening Standard 1 for grades 3-5 – for example – cites the following capacity:

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

How can the following points from William Isaacs, a founder of MIT's Organizational Learning Center and author of *Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together*, spark our thinking about dialogue in the classroom?

- Dialogue is a conversation with a center, not sides.
- An idea is fragile when it emerges. If it's judged it will retreat and perish, it needs to be nourished in order to let it grow. We need to support it in order for it to develop.
- Discussion is about making a decision; dialogue is about exploring the nature of choice.
- In thinking together, we don't always think privately, we can think overtly and visibly. We can ask for thinking help and also aid others in thinking.
- You have to listen to yourself as much as others.
- The way one observes creates the reality. We see it differently and therefore it is subjective yet there is collectivity.
- Dialogue is a practice. Practicing thinking together. The more you practice the better you get at it and the better you get at thinking.
- Speaking can be creating, not simply something that reveals our thoughts.

How can these ideas lead to fully-engaged teaching and learning in the classroom?



Dialogue's roots tell us that dialogue is about the "flow of meaning": **dia** means through and logos is "word" or "meaning." Dialogue is meaning moving through oneself, or through a group of people, enlivening and changing them. This points to a core requirement for dialogue – the shift from an extractive to contributive mindset. Most people try to take some value from a conversation. Instead, we need to think about how what we add could be a **gift** to the people involved. Creativity requires an orientation in giving, not taking.

— William Isaacs

Some connections to the Common Core State Standards

At McCallum Theatre Education, we make the point that works of art in many disciplines can be studied as non-print texts. How do the words below from architects of the CCSS open the way for works of art as objects of study in your classroom?

Print and non-print text

If the definition of “text” may be expanded to include **non-print texts such as works of dance, music, theatre, visual art or media art**, then all of the standards in this category (reading), at every grade level, have direct references to arts-based content or investigations.

— College Board, The Arts and the Common Core:
A Review of the Connections between the CCSS and the National Core Arts Standards Conceptual Framework
New York, NY

Consider the following example in the area of language arts:

CCSS reading standards for literature and informational text

- **Kindergarten:** With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- **Grade 1:** Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- **Grade 2:** Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.
- **Grade 3:** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- **Grade 4:** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Grade 5:** Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Grade 6:** Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

How do these standards apply as fully to works in the disciplines of theater, dance, music and visual arts – as to works of literature?

How can the idea of text-dependent questioning live just as prominently in the study of non-print texts such as these?



Meaningful appreciation and study of works of art begins with close observation. The Core Standards in Literacy similarly describe reading as the product of sustained observation and attention to detail. Particularly when encountering complex art, or reading the level of complex text students will need to be ready for college and careers, students will need to learn to re-examine and observe closely.

— from *Guiding Principles for the Arts/Grades K-12*
David Coleman
 CCSS Architect, President and CEO, College Board

Lifelong goal #1: the arts as communication

Artistically literate citizens use a variety of artistic media, symbols and metaphors to independently create and perform work that expresses/conveys/communicates their own ideas and are able to respond by analyzing and interpreting the work of others.

— College Board, *The Arts and the Common Core: A Review of the Connections between the CCSS and the National Core Arts Standards Conceptual Framework*
 New York, NY

The types of questions that students are asked about a text influence how they read it. If students are asked recall and recitation questions, they learn to read for that type of information. If they are asked synthesis questions, they learn to read for that type of information. Unfortunately, many of the questions that students are asked are about personal connections, which may not even require that they have read the text at all.

The architects of the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts are challenging the practice of asking students questions that can be answered without reading the text. They are pressing for questions that instead require students to locate evidence within the text. Those text-dependent questions require students to read carefully and produce evidence in their verbal and written responses. This is not to say that personal connections should be avoided at all costs — after all, readers naturally compare the information they are reading with their experiences. The argument for text-dependent questions, however, asserts that discussions and writing prompts should focus on the text itself to build a strong foundation of knowledge. That purposefully built foundational knowledge can then be leveraged by learners to make personal connections that are meaningful and informed.

— **Douglas Fisher**, Professor of Educational Leadership at San Diego State University and **Nancy Frey**, Professor of Educational Leadership at San Diego State University from *Text-Dependent Questions*

As a partner with the McCallum Theatre Education, what would you say are the overlays of the Common Core State Standards and aesthetic education?

How does one go about studying a work of art?



Line of Inquiry

In Aesthetic Education, the first step toward teaching to a work of art is to create a question. We call this question a Line of Inquiry. Its focus is specific to the work of art – and to those aspects of the work the students will most deeply explore. It's a road map. It charts out the pathway the unit of study will take. The more thoughtfully constructed this question is, the richer each student's engagement with the ideas inherent in the work of art will be. The Line of Inquiry sits at the head of a lesson plan, and every step of the lesson actively explores the question it poses. It generates the lesson.

By extension, all the lessons in a unit of study are generated by a single, dynamic Line of Inquiry.

A Line of Inquiry typically asks how the artists whose work is to be studied do some particular thing. How do they explore a particular idea? How do they put formal elements of the discipline to work? How do they juxtapose one thing with another? How do they...?

A Line of Inquiry...

- concerns itself with the actual work of art – its formal elements – and not with its various contexts.
- refrains from offering interpretative takes on the work of art.
- doesn't address what the work of art is not, only what it is.
- is short and to the point.
- is a tool for teachers and teaching artists to plan creative inquiry-driven lessons for students.

Actions to facilitate learning

The lessons generated by a Line of Inquiry employ teaching actions that help facilitate imaginative learning. Here's a list:

Varying the personal and group dynamic

- Work in groups – whole group, small groups of varying sizes, pairs or individually.
- Change the pacing and rhythm of groups working together.
- Encourage students to take on different roles – such as demonstrator, documenter, and group leader for discussions or art making. (As the teacher, you don't have to do it all; turn it over to the learner.)

Weaving and layering

- Develop an idea or concept gradually.
- Pull ideas explored in one activity into the next.
- Keep a strand going through multiple activities.
- Keep touching base by asking guiding questions related to learning objectives.
- Look back, notice what has happened, and think forward.
- Keep in mind multiple focuses: the work of art, classroom connections and capacities for imaginative learning.

Guiding the noticing

- Start out with these questions: “What do you notice?” “What do you see or hear?” “How would you describe...?”
- Use further questions to get at more noticing. Go deeper.
- Get students to describe what they notice first, moving then through analysis to interpretation.
- Find ways for students to articulate what they notice without being told what there is to be noticed.
- Base your questions on students' responses.
- Anchor the viewing of the work of art – and student generated art – with a question.
- Summarize, state back, review what has been noticed and described.

Writing and journaling

- Have students...
 - keep a personal journal.
 - write a personal memory.
 - write a personal response to...
- Capture students' responses to questions on an open/wall journal. Refer back to, add to, and use these responses in further lesson exploration.
- Gather students' prior knowledge in peer interviews or sharing.
- Build vocabulary using students' responses: write their words and translate into the language of the art form.

Peer sharing

- In pairs, interview each other.
- In pairs, describe your partner's work.
- In small groups, record the discussion.

Using multiple modalities

- Active exploration and reflection in an art medium different from that of the focus work can encourage deeper insight into the work or idea you are exploring. An example of this strategy is asking the question: "If this sculpture could make a sound, what would it be?" By reflecting on the resulting sounds, a new awareness of the weight, volume, or mass of the sculpture can be revealed. Here are some further examples of this idea in action:
 - Capture in a drawing an aspect of the focus work: draw the melodic line of a musical composition, for example, or the shape of a dancer's pathway.
 - Physically embody the figures or objects in a painting or sculpture.
 - Improvise a conversation between dancers in a dance, or between figures in a visual art work.
 - Always bring the exploration back to the root art form of the focus work.

Putting students at the center of their own learning

- Ask questions in response to students' questions.
- Guide from the side, stepping out of the way of students' discovery.
- Support the discovery of connections to students' own lives.
- Avoid always positioning yourself at the front of the class.
- Create opportunities for students to ask their own questions, to initiate research and to reflect on their learning.
- Listen to students' voices.
- Purposefully restate and paraphrase what students say.
- Encourage students to summarize at the end of a lesson what was learned or discovered.

Creating a positive and safe environment for creative risk-taking, problem-solving and learning

- Create a safe environment for taking risks.
- Encourage exploration and trying new ideas.
- Keep instructions clear and simple. Back up verbal framing with visual (wall journal).
- Ask for clarification when puzzled by a student comment. Sincere desire to understand may lead to the revealing of pertinent connections not immediately apparent.
- Be a learner along with your students. Share in the wonder of discovery.

— Based on Aesthetic Education, Inquiry and the Imagination ©2012 Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Inc. Developed by Lincoln Center Institute, now Lincoln Center Education

The act of perception we learn by studying art becomes part of our lifestyle. It is a mode of thinking, observing and reacting. Personal taste and our expression of it are basic elements of the human condition; the applications are daily and infinite. Aesthetic considerations are essential to the satisfactory conduct of society. The aesthetic viewpoint empowers us to create our own best state of existence, to realize our finest human possibilities.

— **Charles Fowler** (1931-1995)
Music educator, author, arts activist

The collaborative process

Components of the Aesthetic Education Program partner with McCallum Theatre Education

What are the basic building blocks of this collaboration which Partnering Teachers enter into with Teaching Artists? What happens when? Who does what? What is the through-line of events? What are the different stages on the students' journey through the unit of study – and how is each component essential to the richness, variety, and value of the journey?



Here is a quick outline...

- Professional development** workshops at McCallum Theatre: Summer Institute and Fall workshops – Exploration of aesthetic education as an instructional method.
- School coordinator identified – a designated representative responsible for contact with McCallum Theatre Education.
 - Focus work selections submitted by coordinator for school team.

A two-hour **planning meeting** with the assigned Teaching Artist

- One per work of art explored in school year.
- Scheduled by the Teaching Artist and the school team via the school coordinator.
- All Partnering Teachers are required to attend.
- Discussion of proposed lesson plan by Teaching Artist.
- Teaching Artist and Partnering Teachers discuss and design **four companion lessons** to be carried out by the Partnering Teacher during the unit of study. A good tool for this is the Partnering Teacher Planning Tool (PTPT). The goal is a rich exploration of the focus work (non-print text) that addresses Common Core and VAPA standards.
- All scheduling for the unit is confirmed.

Experiential lessons

- In the weeks before – and after – the performance/exhibit date, Teaching Artist and Partnering Teachers each facilitate four experiential lessons in the classroom allowing students to explore the work of art in a total of eight workshops per unit. Usually six lessons are scheduled prior to with at least one Teaching Artist-led and one Partnering Teacher-led lesson following the performance or exhibit.
- Two units in each school year.

Performance or exhibit

- Takes place at the McCallum or at the school, depending on the work of art.
- All partnering students and teachers attend.
- Two in each school year.

Evaluation

Each Partnering Teacher fills out an online evaluation following each unit. A crucial piece of feedback.

Want greater detail? Have a look at this overview of the planning process/designing an instructional unit.

A unit of study

Each unit undertaken by a school team involves eight classroom sessions devoted to aesthetic education, four taught by the Teaching Artist (TA) and a minimum of four taught independently by the Partnering Teacher (PT). Each unit of study is built around a Focus Work (FW). These focus works will be performed or exhibited at the school or the McCallum Theatre.

Institute Teaching Artists work only with teachers who have attended the McCallum Theatre Summer Institute (An Introduction to Aesthetic Education) and who have participated in planning the unit. Partnering Teachers devote time – usually outside the regular school day – to plan and prepare each unit with their school team and the TA.

In order to maintain educational and artistic standards, each unit of study is evaluated by both the partnering school team and by the TA. A Unit of Study Partnering Teacher Evaluation Form will be made available at the end of a unit. Additionally, McCallum staff may regularly attend planning sessions and observe instructional sessions in the school.

In summary, a Unit of Study includes:

- A performance or exhibition selected from the Summer Institute Repertory
- One 2-hour planning meeting with TA and school team
- Minimum of four workshop sessions (class periods) per classroom by TA
- Minimum of four workshop sessions with students per classroom by PT
- Assessment form completed and returned to McCallum Theatre Education



Teacher team pre-planning

At the close of the Summer Institute, each school team selects one person to act as School Coordinator. This individual will work closely with the partnering teachers, McCallum Theatre Education staff and the TA assigned to their school to schedule and communicate program information among the program partners.

Everyone should have an opportunity to view the taped performance and/or study the printed materials available on the McCallum website. Digital footage can be viewed once as an overview and again for the purpose of analysis. During the viewing process it is a good idea to keep notes on questions, teaching themes and activity ideas. It is advisable for everyone on the team to download copies of the printed materials.

Prior to the planning session with the TA, the following questions can help you focus your discussion. All teachers partnering in the unit must meet as a group to discuss possible concepts to focus upon during the unit of study.

DESCRIBE

- Facts: what is the work made of, how is it made, when was it made?

ANALYZE

- What elements are found in the work?
- How are these elements organized?
- What choices did the creator make?

INTERPRET

- What does the work of art express?
- What does it mean to you? What might it mean to your students?
- What is the central problem of the work?
- What did it mean to people in the society in which it was created?
- What does it mean to people today? How is it related to other artworks?

Planning a unit of study with the TA

Once the school has been assigned a TA, the school coordinator will be sent the TA's name and contact information. The TA will contact the school coordinator shortly thereafter. The coordinator may also feel free to call the TA. The school coordinator and the TA should discuss the following items via email or phone call:

- The names of the teachers partnering in the unit
- The time and location for the planning meeting
- Possible visit dates and possible daily schedules once the TA is at the school
- Any special needs of the school team
- Travel directions to the school site
- Alternative space (multi-purpose room) for TA-led sessions

The planning session (two hours)

1. The team chooses concepts on which to focus

The planning session may begin with an activity guided by the TA. The purpose of the activity is to focus participants' thinking on the work under study. The TA shares a first draft of a workshop design including a line of inquiry (a generative question to guide the workshop design) and key ideas for the unit. PTs respond with ideas and suggestions, and potential modifications are made. Decisions are based upon some of the following considerations:

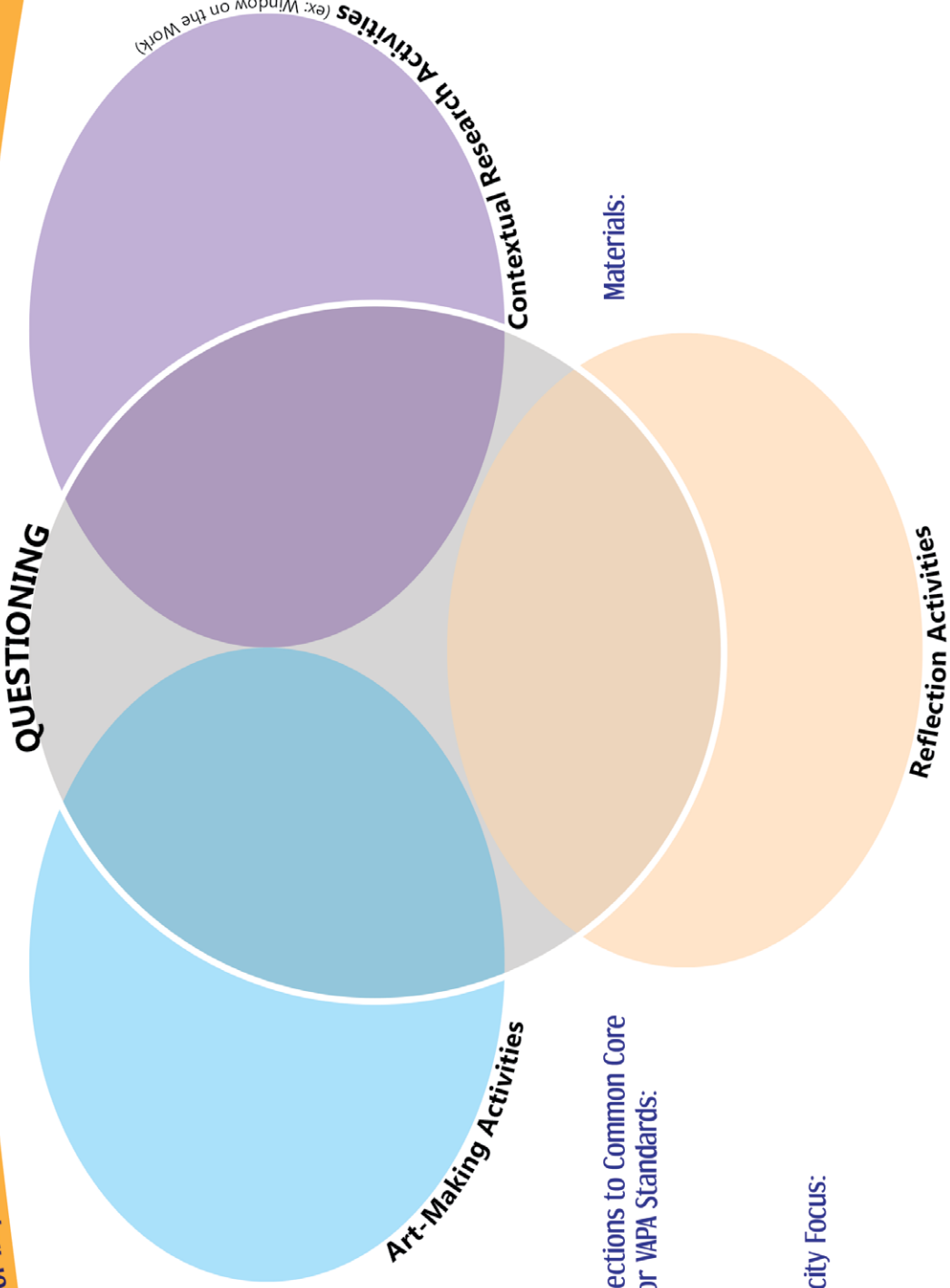
- What about the work do you personally find most striking?
- What makes this a compelling work of art?
- What do you think students will notice about the work? What might they miss?
- What will fundamentally change the students' experience of the work of art?

2. The team designs a series of activities to be carried out by the PT

The planning meeting is critically important in determining what the lessons facilitated by the PT will consist of. Making free use of the Partnering Teacher Planning Tool (PTPT), PTs and the TA collaborate to develop PT-led lessons made up of activities that support the discovery process, connect strongly to the focus work of art, and coordinate with the lessons the TA will facilitate. The importance of these PT-led lessons can hardly be overestimated. Using the four aesthetic education core teaching concepts – art making, questioning, context and reflection, these PT-led lessons may consist of a companion project spread over multiple sessions. They may take the form of language arts or visual arts projects that closely align to the Line of Inquiry as identified by the TA. Of course, the PT is also free to create companion lessons that encourage students to move, use their voices, or make music: the PTs make these choices, and the time for that is the planning session. The kinds of problem-solving activities decided on in the planning session will give students the opportunity to make choices and then discuss and analyze their choices in relation to those made by their classmates and by the professional artists who created and performed the work of art. Through these activities the students are able to develop a heightened perception of and deeper engagement with the works of art. Also, through this course of study, students develop a vocabulary and literacy in the arts.

Line of Inquiry:

Key Ideas:



TIMELINE

CIRCLE ONE

1 _____
PT / TA _____
Date: _____

2 _____
PT / TA _____
Date: _____

3 _____
PT / TA _____
Date: _____

4 _____
PT / TA _____
Date: _____

5 _____
PT / TA _____
Date: _____

6 _____
PT / TA _____
Date: _____

**PERFORMANCE /
EXHIBIT**
Date: _____
Time: _____

7 _____
PT / TA _____
Date: _____

8 _____
PT / TA _____
Date: _____

3. The team designs strategies for reflection

As the team plans the sequence of activities, they plan questions, writing or drawing assignments, peer interviews and other strategies that will help students reflect on their experience of activities.

During the two-hour planning meeting, the PTs and the TA develop a unit of study which outlines the goals and activities for the classroom work with students and designates who is responsible for carrying out each activity.

In addition, a schedule for TA visits is agreed upon and recorded. The TA will return this information to the McCallum and a School Record is created, which will be updated over the school year to track the program at the school. This School Record is periodically emailed to the School Coordinator and TA.

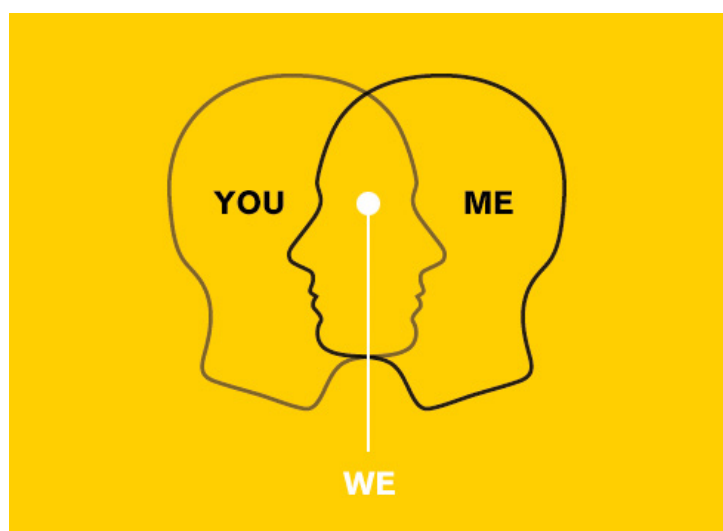
The planning session is the team's opportunity to discuss the work of art under study, develop an educational program tailored to the specific needs of each classroom, and to review classroom strategies. If time permits, the PTs and the TA try out activities to be used during the unit of study. Participation in the planning session makes it possible for the school team and the TA to structure an active partnership in the educational undertaking.

PT-led sessions

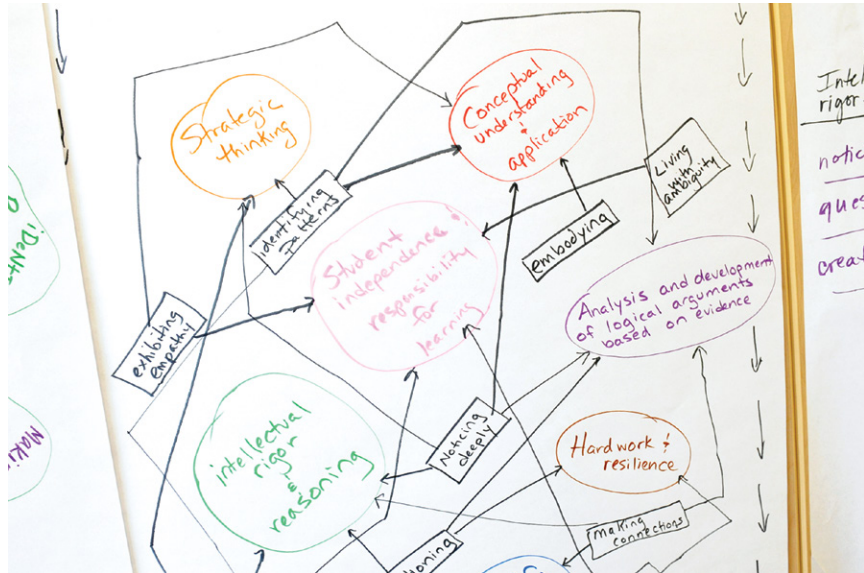
For each unit of study, PTs conduct a minimum of four classroom sessions on their own. The planning session is largely dedicated to discussing and beginning the design of these sessions.

TA-led sessions

The TA will work with students a minimum of four times in connection with each unit of study. The success of the TA involvement with students depends to a great extent on preparation of the students and active involvement in the lessons by the PT, the idea being that the unit of study powerfully connects to learning that is happening in other subject areas at that time.



What makes a proficient aesthetic education facilitator?



The facilitator

- gets out of the way of learning after setting the process in motion.
- guides the students' listening and looking through questioning.
- designs activities that are specific to the work of art or subject area.
- listens to - and honors - student responses.
- restates responses and bases questions on responses.
- gives clear directions and establishes clear transitions from one step to the next.
- uses different modalities to allow for different learning styles.
- makes mindful use of different groupings: solo, pairs, small groups, large groups.
- sequences activities so that tools are explored before application is made.
- engages students and collaborators.
- turns problems into possibilities.
- links the learning, referring back to learning that has already occurred.
- engages observers with active tasks.
- puts context to work as an active ingredient in explorations.
- interweaves doing and reflecting.

Where am I in my journey to adopt these ideas in my teaching?

McCallum Theatre Education's website as a resource

Here's where you sign in to our password-protected site:

<http://www.mccallumtheatre.com/index.php/education/aesthetic-education/partnering-teachers>

Here's what you can access there:

Windows on the Work

These comprehensive companion study guides help you – the classroom teacher – learn more about each focus work, what its ingredients and its contexts are. Colorful and fun, each Window provides information and inspiration for crafting Partnering Teacher-led lessons in the unit of study which will stimulate students' engagement with the ideas inherent in the work of art as well as the world that surrounds it.

Videos of the Theater, Music, and Dance focus works

These are always at your fingertips in case, for example, you missed them at the Summer Institute, or you want a quick peek as a refresher.

Reflections

Read what Partnering Teachers say about aesthetic education, its impact on students' lives and on their own!



Notes

Notes



McCallum Theatre Education

(known as McCallum Theatre Institute 1997-May 2017)

Since its launch in 1997, McCallum Theatre Education – the education department of McCallum Theatre – has served over 620,000 students, educators and community members with performances and arts education experiences. In close partnership with local education agencies, McCallum makes the arts available and accessible to youth in the area through its dynamic education programs. In addition, projects like the Choreography Festival and Open Call Talent Project serve as powerful vehicles for developing artists and present exciting and affordable performances open to the general public.

McCallum Theatre Education seeks to enhance the role of the arts by inspiring greater awareness of their educational, cognitive, emotional and spiritual power.

By encouraging an active and experiential study of the arts, McCallum Theatre Education advances the belief that all human beings are inherently creative. The programs developed by the McCallum are designed to build on that creativity by equipping individuals with the skills necessary for a life-long engagement with the arts and an understanding of their essential contribution to enlightened citizenship.

“To be petrified is to be incapable of learning, impervious to change. If the artistic-aesthetic can indeed open up a petrified world, provide new standpoints on what is taken for granted, those who are empowered to engage with the arts cannot but pose a range of questions that never occurred to them before. They cannot but do so in light of what they themselves are living, what they themselves are discovering, what they themselves want to know. And it is surely those who can pose their own questions; pose them in person, who are the ones ready to learn how to learn.”

– Maxine Greene



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