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## The Currents of Learning Motivation: Learners' Stories From Arts-Integrated, Regular Classroom Landscapes

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Doctor of Philosophy

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## Abstract

Intrinsic learning motivation can facilitate learners' meaningful scholarship, creativity, and interest in life-long learning. Over time, however, elementary learners' intrinsic motivation can decline. This decline is of particular concern to inclusive educators who are tasked with fostering the intrinsic motivation of their diverse learners. To meet this challenge, some educators have turned to arts-integrated instruction, which has been found to facilitate positive outcomes for diverse learners in various subject areas. Our understanding, however, of learners' quality of motivation when learning through the arts is limited. Accordingly, I explored four research puzzles through the methodological framework of narrative inquiry: (a) What stories do learners tell about their motivation when learning through the arts in their inclusive classrooms? (b) What do learners' stories reveal about their quality of motivation when learning through the arts in their inclusive classrooms? (c) In what ways do the stories of learners with exceptionalities and their peers without exceptionalities differ from or relate to each other? and (d) In what ways do learners' stories differ from or relate to each other when considering the style of arts integration that they are exposed to? To explore these research puzzles, the experiences of ten Grade 6, 7, and 8 learners were garnered from two inclusive classrooms in Ontario, Canada. Informed by self-determination theory, several meanings were gleaned from participants' accounts, two of which included that (a) arts integration facilitated learners' expressions of their identity, flexible thinking, and positive classroom relationships and (b) much like the currents of a river, learners' quality of motivation when learning through the arts varied in response to changing personal and social factors. The former finding highlights the ways in which arts integration can foster diverse learners' quality of motivation by supporting their feelings of autonomy, competence, and relatedness; the latter finding underscores the importance for educators to know the varying abilities and interests of their learners, so as to provide them with multiple entry points and ways over the course of a lesson or task through which they can engage meaningfully with their learning.

*Keywords:* arts integration, arts-based education, inclusive education, learning motivation, motivation to learn, narrative inquiry, quality of motivation, self-determination theory, special education

## **Dedication**

This work is dedicated to my parents and my grandparents, without whose love, support, sacrifices, and prayers I would not have had the opportunity to dream of or pursue higher education.

## **Acknowledgments**

My deep gratitude goes towards my Doctoral Supervisor, Dr. Jacqueline Specht, for her unwavering expert guidance, patient support, and insightful feedback throughout the planning of my research design, the collection and exploration of my field texts, and the writing of my thesis. I am humbled to have been mentored by you during my doctoral journey.

I would like to thank Dr. Kathryn Hibbert and Dr. Peter Bates, the members of my Supervisory Committee, whose expert insights on the planning of my research design and feedback on an early draft of my thesis helped to strengthen the quality of the work that I share with you here.

Thank you to the parents, teachers, and school administrators for agreeing to be involved in this inquiry. Moreover, I thank each learner who participated in my inquiry; I am grateful for and am humbled by your willingness to share candidly with me your experiences with arts integration, which made this journey for me so much more worthwhile.

I thank my husband Stavros, whose never-ending understanding, patience, and encouragement throughout this journey made it not only possible but, also, enjoyable.

I am thankful, too, to my grandparents, parents, and siblings; this journey would never have started had it not been for your love and support motivating me from the start of my schooling career to shoot for the stars.

Last, but certainly not least, I am thankful to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for all the challenges and opportunities that He has granted me in this life, as well as His All-Holy Mother the Theotokos and the Saints for their intercessions during my times of need. Glory Be to God for All Things.

From the bottom of my grateful heart, I thank you all.

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## Chapter 1

### 1 Introduction

*Motivation in the classroom is dynamic—it ebbs and it flows, but it is always there. When teachers and students take a stance to harness motivation and use it in productive ways, they meet their goals.* (Middleton & Perks, 2014, p. 8)

Although intangible and imperceptible, the influential role of learning motivation on learners' educational experiences cannot be understated. The quote at the start of this chapter paints a picture of an ever-changing phenomenon that can be likened to the current of a river (Middleton & Perks, 2014). Similar to the effect that spatial and temporal properties have on water flow (Nittrouer, Shaw, Lamb, & Mohrig, 2012), learning motivation can direct a learner's energy and effort towards a learning destination. Moreover, throughout such a journey, learning motivation can change across space (i.e., in its quality and intensity) and time (i.e., throughout a lesson or task). The changes experienced are related, in large part, to the way that learners perceive and experience their environments, as shaped by their social and cultural experiences (Knight, 1991). As an individually-mediated construct, then, we can appreciate that learning experiences may not be equally-motivating among those co-experiencing them. It is this understanding in particular that catalyzed my interest in my inquiry, in which I was interested in garnering the experiences of diverse learners in inclusive classrooms when learning through the arts. While much of the research literature on arts integration highlights the motivating effect that arts-integrated experiences can have on learners, in my inquiry I wished to explore what their experiences revealed about their quality of motivation in these learning environments—an area of study that prior research explorations have not yet investigated.

Defined as the drive to engage in an activity—be it for its own sake (i.e., intrinsic) or for gains unrelated to the activity (i.e., extrinsic; Gillet, Vallerand, & Lafrenière, 2012)—learning motivation's elusive and dynamic nature has drawn education researchers to conduct explorations of it since at least the 1940s (Boekaerts, 2001; Weiner, 1990). Over the last several decades and through various conceptualizations, their findings have helped to shape general understandings of this complex phenomenon. In recent years, however, education researchers have focused more particularly on exploring learners' *quality of learning motivation* and the role that it plays in their

learning (Ryan & Deci, 2000b; see Appendix A for definitions of all italicized terms, unless defined herein). Their findings have suggested a positive correlation between intrinsic learning motivation and various other elements of learners' schooling experiences, such as academic achievement (Broussard & Garrison, 2004; Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002), engagement (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Deci, 2006), and learning attitude (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Intrinsic learning motivation has also been found to foster important twenty-first century skills such as creativity (Hennessey, 2000) and critical thinking (Halonen, 1995), as well as an interest in life-long learning (Nolen, 1988). It is disconcerting, then, that elementary school learners' quality of learning motivation appears to decline over time (Gillet et al., 2012; Hayenga & Corpus, 2010; Lepola, 2004; Lepper, Corpus, & Iyengar, 2005).

In Ontario—one of Canada's most populated provinces and the province within which my doctoral inquiry unfolded—learners of diverse backgrounds and abilities characterize educators' classrooms. More than one fourth of Ontarians were born outside of Canada (Statistics Canada, 2009b), and around the same number of Ontarians speak a mother tongue language other than English (Statistics Canada, 2009a). Furthermore, approximately eighty percent of Ontario's 300,000 learners who have been identified with exceptionalities spend more than half of their day in an inclusive or *regular classroom* (Bennett, 2009). Recognizing the need to offer equitable, quality educational opportunities for all learners, the Ontario Ministry of Education (2005) has promoted the tenets of inclusive education. With the wealth of diverse backgrounds and life experiences that children bring into the classroom, we can begin to appreciate the challenges that Ontarian educators face when planning and implementing curricular programming that fosters their diverse learners' motivation and engagement. To realize the Ministry's goals of inclusion, educators have used various inclusive instructional approaches, such as cooperative learning, differentiated instruction, project-based learning, and arts integration—the latter of which was the focus of my inquiry.

Various definitions of inclusive education exist around the world (Waitoller & Artiles, 2013). Although the global research community generally describes it as having transpired “as a response to the exclusion of students who [are] viewed as different (e.g., students with disabilities, students of color, students from lower caste backgrounds,

students from low socioeconomic status [SES] backgrounds) by educational systems” (Waitoller & Artiles, 2013, p. 321), many researchers within the field of education have operationalized the term to mean “access to the general education classroom for students with disabilities (Artiles & Kozleski, 2007; McLaughlin & Jordan, 2005)” (p. 321). For my inquiry, I contextualize inclusive education to mean the latter, as I am interested in exploring the arts-integrated experiences of learners with exceptionalities and their peers without exceptionalities in their inclusive classrooms.

The research literature abounds with information on inclusive education. While some studies have shed light on educators’ experiences with implementing various inclusion strategies (Hamilton-Jones & Vail, 2014; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Smith & Leonard, 2005), others have garnered the perceptions of learners, parents, and educators pertaining to inclusive education (Chmiliar, 2009; Humphrey & Lewis, 2008; Saggars, 2015). Furthermore, researchers have explored various instructional approaches (Alquraini & Gut, 2012; Fahsl, 2007; Hart & Whalon, 2011; Inclusion International, 2009; Johnson, 1999; Lindsay, Proulx, Scott, & Thomson, 2014) and non-instructional supports that educators use to teach inclusively, such as assistive technologies and environmental accommodations (Turnbull, Turnbull, Wehmeyer, & Shogren, 2013; Wurdinger, Haar, Hugg, & Bezon, 2007).

A search of the research literature has revealed, however, that few studies have explored the first-hand experiences of *learners with exceptionalities* and/or their peers without exceptionalities pertaining to inclusive teaching strategies or programs. (see Fisher, 2012; Humphrey & Symes, 2010; Hynan, Murray, & Goldbart, 2014; Whalon & Hart, 2011). Two such examples include a study that explored the experiences of students with intellectual disabilities pertaining to their paraprofessional supports (Broer, Doyle, & Giangreco, 2005) and another study in which students with autism in inclusive classrooms shared their experiences with an instructional approach to support the development of their reading skills (Whalon & Hart, 2011). Considering that learners with exceptionalities and their peers without exceptionalities are the beneficiaries of inclusive education, it is imperative that inquirers provide more opportunities to both groups of learners to share their experiences with the strategies and programs being used to support their learning in inclusive classrooms. In this way, a better understanding can

be had of how these approaches are being experienced by the very individuals who they are meant to benefit. It is with this in mind that I introduce my qualitative inquiry.

### **1.1 Research Puzzles Guiding My Inquiry**

I note, first, that, given that my inquiry is one involving narrative as my research methodology, I have chosen to frame my research questions as *research puzzles* (Clandinin, 2013). This is because narrative inquirers are driven by particular wonderings and the word *puzzle* imbues “a sense of search, a ‘re-search,’ [and] . . . continual reformulation’ (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 124)” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 42). In my inquiry, four research puzzles guided my exploration of the data collected: (a) What stories do learners tell about their motivation when learning through the arts in their inclusive classrooms? (b) What do learners’ stories reveal about their quality of motivation when learning through the arts in their inclusive classrooms? (c) In what ways do the stories of learners with exceptionalities and their peers without exceptionalities differ from or relate to each other? and (d) In what ways do learners’ stories differ from or relate to each other when considering the style of arts integration that they are exposed to?

The first research puzzle allowed me to explore, more generally, the stories that learners shared about their motivation when engaged with arts-integrated tasks. The second research puzzle allowed me to explore, more specifically, learners’ quality of learning motivation in arts-integrated learning environments. The third research puzzle allowed me to explore the differences and similarities between the accounts of learners with exceptionalities and their peers without exceptionalities. The fourth and final research puzzle allowed me to explore, more particularly, the relationship between the style of arts integration and learners’ quality of learning motivation. In order to answer this last research puzzle, Bresler’s (1995) typology of arts integration provided the conceptual framework with which I identified the type of arts integration that learners were exposed to. In section 2.2.2 of the next chapter, I provide a detailed description of Bresler’s (1995) typology, delineating each of the four arts integration styles: (a) *affective*, (b) *co-equal*, (c) *social*, and (d) *subservient*.

### **1.2 Design of My Inquiry**

To answer my inquiry’s research puzzles, which pertained to exploring learners’

*learning motivation* (henceforth referred to as *motivation* when referring to the motivation of learners), I selected narrative inquiry as the methodological framework guiding my inquiry design. Moreover, the theoretical framework undergirding my inquiry is that of self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985), which conceptualizes motivation as a construct that is influenced by three basic psychological needs: *autonomy, competence, and relatedness*. More particularly, SDT postulates that *quality of motivation* is fostered by the degree to which these three basic psychological needs are nurtured (Ryan & Deci, 2009). Within the context of education, learners' feelings of autonomy can relate to elements of cognitive flexibility, competence can involve self-confidence, and feelings of relatedness can refer to relationships with other members of the classroom or school community (Baeten, Struyven, & Dochy, 2013).

Informing this inquiry are the narratives of 10 learners from Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 who were exposed to visual arts integration within their respective inclusive classroom (henceforth referred to as *regular classroom* when referring to my inquiry). Two of the 10 learners had an Individual Education Plan (IEP) in place, necessitating various in-class and/or out-of-class learning supports; with that said, they did not have a formally-identified exceptionality. In Ontario, an IEP can be created and implemented for learners without an identified exceptionality who may be deemed at-risk and in need of additional learning supports to facilitate their access to education curricula (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013).

Participants were recruited from two different inclusive classrooms within a culturally-diverse school, which was located in a large schoolboard in southern Ontario. My inquiry's research puzzles were explored through various data—which narrative inquirers refer to as *field texts* (Clandinin, Pushor, & Orr, 2007) to recognize “that the texts we compose . . . are experiential, intersubjective texts rather than objective texts” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 46). These field texts included (a) field notes from my in-class observations of each learner's quality of motivation when learning through the arts, (b) participants' responses during their individual interview and member-checking session, and (c) participants' arts-integrated work. Because representational items can facilitate children's comfortableness in interview settings, as well as their ability to communicate their stories (Keats, 2009), participants were asked to bring and share one item at their



interview that represented what it felt like for them to learn through the arts. Six of the 10 participants brought a representational item to share and four others spoke about the item that they had in mind but could not, for one reason or another, bring it to their interview to share with me. One to three weeks following their interview, participants were invited to take part in a member-checking session (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), during which I shared my initial interpretations of their interview responses and provided them with the opportunity to modify or expand upon their accounts, as well as add to, correct, and/or verify my initial interpretations.

### **1.3 Rationale for My Inquiry**

In recent years, SDT researchers have begun exploring learners' motivation through qualitative means, both at the elementary and secondary school levels (Dawes & Larson, 2011; Garn & Jolly, 2014; Hutman, Konieczna, Kerner, Armstrong, & Fitzpatrick, 2012), as well as the post-secondary level (Griffin, 2006). The majority of SDT-informed education studies, however, have explored the phenomenon of motivation primarily through quantitative measures and scales (Ryan & Deci, 2009), such as the Basic Psychological Needs Scale (BPNS), the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI), and the Self-Regulation Questionnaires (SRQ; Ryan & Deci, 2015). As a constructivist, I question—as do other researchers (see Pressick-Kilborn, Sainsbury, & Walker, 2005)—the suitability of solely using quantitative measures to explore such a culturally- and socially-mediated construct as motivation. Moreover, various education researchers and scholars have contended that *arts integration* “in its natural environment is best examined by qualitative methodologies that involve extensive observations and immersion in the setting” (Bresler, 1995, p. 32). For these reasons, and because I was interested in gaining an authentic understanding of learners' quality of motivation when learning through the arts, I was compelled to use a qualitative methodological framework with which to explore my inquiry's research puzzles.

### **1.4 My Positionality as Inquirer**

For qualitative researchers, the process of positioning themselves in their inquiry is of the utmost importance. As the primary instruments of their inquiries (Stake, 2010), it is important for inquirers to be mindful of the prior lived experiences that have motivated them to conduct their inquiries and how these might influence their impartiality when

conducting them. Achieving impartiality is, arguably, not entirely possible for inquirers (Bourke, 2014); however the process that an inquirer goes through in order to acknowledge and address such motivations is one of the key elements in facilitating trustworthy inquiries. Such motivations, if not examined and monitored, can jeopardize the accuracy, relevancy, representativeness, and trustworthiness of an inquirer's findings—be it through intentional or unintentional omissions or through making value-laden interpretations of participants' experiences that may not authentically reflect the meanings that were intended (Stake, 2010). When inquirers reflect upon, pre-identify, and are aware of their initial beliefs, they can make transparent their influence on the process that they undertake to explore their data (Hutman et al., 2012).

Accordingly, I note that my interest in this inquiry was first catalyzed by my personal and professional experiences with *the arts*. It was, then, spurred on by promising findings from my qualitative Master of Education (M.Ed.) study (Karagiorgakis, 2013), as well my interest in addressing the several overlooked areas of inquiry that were uncovered by my exploration of the research literature, which I outline in the next chapter. As a learner in the Ontario public school system, I remember the excitement that I felt every time I was given the opportunity to engage with artistic tasks—be they through direct arts instruction or through arts-integrated instruction (although the latter opportunities were few and far between). Perhaps it was due to these positive schooling experiences that I felt compelled to pursue a post-secondary education and career in the arts (namely, fashion design). My longing for the classroom remained, however, and with a desire for a career in education, I returned to university to earn a Bachelor of Education as a Junior/Intermediate Visual Arts educator.

As a pre-service and in-service educator, I kept noticing that many learners—especially those identified with exceptionalities—appeared to enjoy the opportunity to engage in various arts-related tasks. Various learners displayed an interest in several artistic forms of expression, including singing, drawing, playing a musical instrument, and acting. As a Visual Arts educator, I became particularly fascinated that many upper elementary school learners enjoyed doodling on the sidelines of their worksheets and notebooks.

As a M.Ed. candidate, I had the opportunity to explore qualitatively the ways in

which visual arts-based tasks in Language Arts and History incited the learning attitude, engagement, and academic self-efficacy of two Grade 7 students with learning disabilities. My findings revealed that visual arts integration supported each student's learning attitude, engagement, and academic self-efficacy for the subject that they least favoured. Most notably, visual arts integration fostered their meaningful processing skills and emotional engagement—both for the individual tasks themselves and, more generally, for their learning in those subject areas. These findings compelled me to wonder about arts integration as an approach for realizing inclusion within the classroom.

Moreover, my review of the research literature, as explored in the next chapter, was instrumental in furthering my interest in pursuing this area of inquiry. With inclusive education as the ideal in Ontario schools (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2001, 2004, 2005), educators' classrooms have become a microcosm of the multicultural society in which they live. In response to the challenges associated with supporting their learners' diverse educational needs, educators can be found integrating the arts in their instruction, so as to engage them with their learning (Loughlin & Anderson, 2015). This is evidenced by various qualitative studies in recent years that have explored the influence of this inclusive instructional approach on teaching and learning (see Glass Frog, 2015; Lackey & Huxhold, 2016; Mason, Steedly, & Thormann, 2008; Robinson, 2013). Few studies, however, have provided learners with the opportunity to share their experiences when learning through the arts.

For inquirers, separating themselves from their subjectivities can be a tall order; some even argue it to be an impossible task (Bourke, 2014). By relating the prior experiences that have motivated me to explore the four research puzzles guiding my inquiry, I acknowledge my subjectivities. I acknowledge, too, that, based on my personal and professional experiences, as well as my review of the research literature, I believe that the arts deserve a strong presence in education curricula, just as the sciences and the humanities do. If, indeed, the aim of education is to “be concerned with the total development of children” (Noddings, 2005, p. 6), then learners should be privy to rich arts experiences to accomplish such a mandate. Acknowledging my underlying beliefs and motivations prior to designing and undertaking my inquiry allowed me to become fully aware of them so that, through the design and implementation of my inquiry, I could

mitigate (to the extent possible) their influence on my openness to perceive and explore authentically the meanings that participants held of their motivation-related experiences with arts integration. After all, inquirers “have to position [themselves] somewhere in order to say anything at all” (Hall, 1990, p. 18). Accordingly, to position myself further in my inquiry, I relate briefly the reasons for my interchangeable use of three seemingly-similar terms; that is, *researcher* versus *inquirer*, *student* versus *learner*, and *teacher* versus *educator*.

#### **1.4.1 The Roles of the Inquirer, Learner, and Educator**

In recent years, education researchers and scholars have called attention to the issue of power imbalances that can exist between the roles of various groups of individuals, as well as the way that power imbalances can be perpetuated through the use of language that denotes and refers to each group in relation to the other. Two such discussions have influenced my inquiry; the relationship between teacher and student (with or without exceptionalities) and the relationship between researcher and student (with or without exceptionalities). Although my inquiry’s focus does not afford me the opportunity to explore more deeply and critically the issue of power imbalances that can exist between the teacher-student and researcher-student relationships, I acknowledge that these power imbalances do exist. With this in mind, I wanted to play a small part in this growing social consciousness by limiting within the design of my inquiry any “research practices that privilege the view and authority of the researcher (Dorsey & Murdaugh, 2003; Wilson & Neville, 2009)” (Parr, 2010, p. 452). Moreover, I designed my inquiry keeping in mind the ethical dilemmas that are involved when including children in education-related inquiries: These ethical dilemmas include, first,

the perceived control and power of . . . researchers; second, [children] may be limited by their cognitive capacity and ability to communicate; and, third, [children] are subject to the formal authority of an institutionalized school system where the research is being conducted. (Parr, 2010, p. 452)

Furthermore, when referring to my inquiry and in general discussions, I use the three terms in this section’s heading exclusively. Their corresponding synonyms, *researcher*, *student*, and *teacher*, can imbue the type of power imbalances that Parr (2010) called attention to. I use these terms only when referring directly to previous inquiries and other documents that have included them, so as to convey authentically the

language used by their authors; however, this is not to say that through their use of these terms, these authors intended to denote or perpetuate any power imbalances between these groups of individuals. Moreover, I use the term teacher exclusively when referring to an educator's role in the school (e.g., the learner's teacher, teacher colleague) or an educator's title/role (e.g., classroom teacher, substitute teacher).

I note lastly that, historically, learners with exceptionalities have been marginalized and viewed through the lens of the deficit model of disability, where their exceptionalities have been perceived as abnormal and in need of identification and remediation (Ashby, 2012). No education system is perfect and, as such, remnants of this model still exist. In a perfect world, such reactive measures would not be necessary, as the educational needs of all learners would be met proactively within their inclusive classrooms, without the need for their formal identification and remediation. This is not our current reality, however, thus necessitating formal identification processes and special education provisions that can provide learners with exceptionalities the supports that they need to reach their full potential.

An inquirer's positionality is incomplete without acknowledging the ontological and epistemological frameworks through which the inquirer views the nature of reality and the nature of knowing, respectively. Inquirers' awareness of these underlying worldviews can help them become "more clearly positioned to iteratively reflect upon, and define how best to engage with, their research projects" (Bracken, 2010, p. 1). Accordingly, I identify next the ontological and epistemological lenses through which I have made sense of my experiences during this inquiry and which have, subsequently, shaped the research puzzles that I wondered about and the methodological framework through which I was interested in exploring those research puzzles.

#### **1.4.2 Ontological Framework**

The ontological lens through which, in this inquiry, I have understood the world aligns with that of constructivist realism (Cupchik, 2001). The constructivist realism ontology marries elements of the positivist and constructivist views of reality and the nature of being. Like positivists, constructivist realists maintain that, whether or not they are there to perceive it, the world and reality exist, as do the people and phenomena in it; how individuals make sense of them, however, is another matter entirely. Like

constructivists, constructivist realists believe that both human perception and human experience of the world differ from person to person (Charon, 2001; Cupchik, 2001).

From a constructivist realist's point of view, the way in which individuals experience the world is influenced by their cognitive and affective states of mind and the socially-constructed lenses through which they interact and perceive it—lenses which are shaped by life experiences, such as cultural-, ethnic-, faith-, SES-based. Even so, it is important to note that while groups of individuals share various similarities (such as values, geographic location, religion) that might allow them to engage in meaning-making through a similar lens, it is possible that individuals within the same group can construe reality in different ways (Morrison, 2002). It is for this reason that inquirers operating under this ontological lens are interested not only in the experiential accounts of individuals (Cupchik, 2001), but also in contextualizing their experiences within the physical or social phenomena and environments that they are exposed to.

### **1.4.3 Epistemological Framework**

With a constructivist realist view of the nature of reality, in my inquiry I have subscribed to constructivist notions of the nature of knowledge and learning. I have viewed knowledge as “temporary, developmental, non-objective, internally constructed, and socially and culturally mediated” (Fosnot, 1996, p. ix). Moreover, I have viewed learning as a self-regulatory process that involves a constant negotiation between existing world views and new understandings (Fosnot, 1996). Learning involves using the tools and symbols of a culture to make sense of the world “through cooperative social activity, discourse, and debate” (Fosnot, 1996, p. ix). Constructivists maintain that knowledge does not exist outside of the knower and that knowledge comes into existence when the knower actively engages in the process of learning. This process is also referred to in the research literature as *meaning-making* or *knowledge construction*.

Two positions—cognitive and social (Fosnot, 1996)—inform the constructivist view, both of which were developed concurrently in the early twentieth century. Both similarly assert that (a) the process of meaning-making is an individual activity that occurs when interacting with physical and social environments and (b) it is not possible for individuals to construct objective interpretations of reality (Powell & Kalina, 2009). This epistemological stance aligns with the ontology of constructivist realism in that it

acknowledges that there are as many interpretations of physical and social phenomena as there are individuals perceiving them and that one interpretation cannot be considered better or more accurate than another. This position compels constructivist inquirers to employ methodologies that allow them to garner participants' multiple perspectives on the phenomena they are interested in exploring.

The cognitive and social constructivism positions differ, however, in their focus. Cognitive constructivists—influenced by Piaget's (1953) theory of cognitive development—focus their attention on exploring the cognitive structures involved in the process of individual meaning-making. Social constructivists—influenced by Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory (also referred to as *cultural-historical theory* or *socio-historical theory*; Van der Veer & van IJzendoorn, 1985)—are more interested in exploring constructions of knowledge as situated within social, cultural, and historical contexts (Agbenyega, 2009).

Although the notions that underpin both the cognitive and social constructivism perspectives are similar, one difference that separates the two is that cognitive constructivists believe that thinking precedes language, while social constructivists believe that the opposite is the case (Powell & Kalina, 2009). As a constructivist realist, I position myself in the former camp. I believe that in order for children to adopt any one of the five semiotic systems of society—that is, (a) linguistic (e.g., reading, writing), (b) visual (e.g., colour, shapes), (c) auditory (e.g., pitch, rhythm), (d) gestural (e.g., facial or bodily expressions), and (e) spatial (e.g., layout and/or organization of objects in space; Anstey & Bull, 2006)—their capacity for thinking must be activated, even if their awareness of language has not yet developed. In other words, I believe that an individual's cognition begins to develop (and, hence, so does the individual's social nature) when the individual's mechanisms for thinking begin operating. I would be remiss if I did not note, however, that while I subscribe to cognitive constructivist notions of initial constructions of meaning, scholars have maintained that the positions of both cognitive and social constructivist approaches can inform educators (Powell & Kalina, 2009) and inquirers (Fosnot, 1996) on the individual and social qualities involved in knowledge construction. Accordingly, both Piaget's developmental stage theory and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory inform my position on the nature of knowledge and how

it is attained.

### **1.5 Situating My Inquiry Within the Research Literature**

I situate briefly my inquiry within the larger research literature that informs my inquiry. Even though this is done more comprehensively in the next chapter, I do so here so as to provide a general sense of the areas of study that the meanings gleaned from my inquiry can contribute towards. Arts integration is an example of an instructional approach that educators have used in their inclusive classrooms (Aprill, 2010). They have done so to support not only learners with exceptionalities (Piske, Stoltz, & Machado, 2014; Robinson, 2013; Wilhelm, 1995) but also other diverse learners, such as English Language Learners (Brouillette & Jennings, 2010; Lorimer, 2011), as well as those from non-dominant cultural groups (Gay & Hanley, 1999) and low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds (Catterall, 1998). A search of the research literature on arts integration has revealed a lack of qualitative explorations involving learners' first-hand accounts of being exposed to this inclusive instructional approach. Moreover, although various styles of arts integration exist (see Bresler, 1995; Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 2002; Cornett, 2007; Russell-Bowie, 2009; Uhrmacher & Moroye, 2007). and although each style can foster different learning experiences (Mishook & Kornhaber, 2006), the research literature is limited when it comes to explorations of learners' experiences in relation to the style of arts integration that they are engaged with.

Various research findings on *direct arts instruction* and arts-integrated instruction appear to merit further exploration of this area of inquiry. Not only have administrators, teachers, and parents reported noticing the positive influence that arts integration has on learners' motivation and engagement (Upitis & Smithrim, 2003), but some researchers have concluded that arts integration can foster various cognitive benefits for learners. Such benefits include improved math skills through music integration (Vaughn, 2000), enhanced written and oral communication skills through drama integration (Podlozny, 2000), and increased critical thinking skills of learners with behavioural challenges through visual arts integration (McDermott, Rothenberg, & Hollinde, 2005).

With these outcomes, it is understandable that many educators have implemented arts integration to transform their typical classroom environments into motivating, engaging, and cognitively-stimulating spaces for their diverse learners (Gerber &



Horoschak, 2012). The findings from previous inquiries tell us that their sentiments are not misguided; there is evidence to suggest that classroom environments can influence learners' quality of motivation and learning experiences (Anderman, 2013; Hanrahan, 1998; Mitchell, 2008; Turner, 1995; Wijnia, Loyens, & Derous, 2011). Certainly, fostering learners' motivation is an important aim for educators, as it can catalyze learners' actions and behaviours; however, it appears that learners' quality of motivation is what educators should be concerned with, as intrinsically-motivated learners act and behave in ways that can give rise to more meaningful, enduring, and transformative learning experiences. Not only can they perform better academically than their extrinsically-motivated peers, but they can, also, have a more positive outlook on their learning, demonstrate increased effort (Patall, Cooper, & Robinson, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2002), and express increased interest in and satisfaction with their learning (Vansteenkiste et al., 2006).

Although the research is limited pertaining to the influence of arts-integrated learning environments on learners' motivation, there is evidence to suggest that there may be a link between the two. Classroom environments that are conducive to fostering motivation are those that are cognitively stimulating, autonomy-supportive, and welcoming to all learners (Anderman, 2013)—and it appears that arts integration can foster these types of classroom environments (Burnaford, Aprill, & Weiss, 2001). The research literature is limited, too, pertaining to learners' quality of motivation when learning through the arts. Accordingly, this is one of the areas towards which I hope to contribute through my inquiry.

## **1.6 Chapter Summary and Concluding Thoughts**

As a constructivist, I appreciate the uniqueness of individual experiences (Piaget, 1953), and I, also, acknowledge the roles that cultural and social interactions play in the meaning-making process (Vygotsky, 1978). These understandings draw me to phenomena that concern and are influenced by both individual cognition and social interactions. Hence, for my inquiry I have engaged with a narrative inquiry methodological framework to allow me to gain a deeper understanding of what learners' stories reveal about their quality of motivation when learning through the arts.

Over the past many years, educators have used several different inclusive

instructional strategies and programs to motivate their learners; yet, few researchers have garnered learners' experiences with such approaches (see Broer, Doyle, & Giangreco, 2005; Correa-Torres, 2008; Egilson & Traustadottir, 2009; Fisher, 2012; Humphrey & Symes, 2010; Hynan, Murray, & Goldbart, 2014; Whalon & Hart, 2011). Limited, too, are inquiries that have explored learners' motivation through qualitative means, and, more particularly, learners' quality of motivation when learning through the arts. It is my sincere hope that the meanings gleaned from my qualitative inquiry will help to foster an increased understanding as it pertains to these areas of study.

### **1.7 Overview of Chapters**

In this chapter, I introduced my inquiry and the research puzzles guiding it. I positioned myself as a researcher in my exploration and positioned my exploration within the arts integration research literature. In the next chapter, I explore more comprehensively the research literature pertaining to inclusive education and arts-related education. I, also, detail Bresler's (1995) typology of arts integration, which served as the conceptual framework that allowed me to identify the type of arts-integrated instructional approaches that the participants involved in my inquiry were exposed to and, therefore, explore my fourth research puzzle on the relationship between the style of arts integration and learners' quality of motivation. I conclude Chapter 2 by identifying the areas of study towards which my inquiry can contribute.

In Chapter 3, I detail self-determination theory (SDT), which is the theoretical framework that I used to conceptualize motivation. I, also, explore the education-related research literature informed by SDT. Following this, in Chapter 4 I describe my inquiry design, which focusses particularly on narrative inquiry as the methodological framework through which I garnered and explored my inquiry's field texts. In Chapter 5, I explore participants' lived experiences with arts integration in relation to each of my inquiry's four research puzzles. This is followed by Chapter 6, wherein I extend the meanings gleaned and shared in the preceding chapter by contextualizing them through the various research literature. In this final chapter, I share the limitations of my inquiry, implications for classroom practice, opportunities for future research directions, and my concluding thoughts. I hope that you enjoy the journey.

## Chapter 2

*Art speaks to all of us. It breaks down communication barriers and empowers teachers to reach all students regardless of age, sex, race, or cultural background.* (Wallin & Durr, 2002, p. 30)

### 2 Literature Review

As an instructional approach for effective inclusion, prior research studies have revealed that arts-related educational experiences can provide some promise. As the above quote reveals, the arts can be a great equalizer to support diverse learners within the inclusive classroom setting. The literature presented in this chapter tells a story that suggests as much, while also pointing to the arts as facilitators of learners' motivated and meaningful learning experiences.

The research literature on arts integration and motivation reveals several gaps that, through my inquiry, I intended to address. More particularly, although several research findings have pointed towards arts integration as fostering diverse learners' motivation (DeMoss & Morris, 2005; Duma & Silverstein, 2014; Robinson, 2013), they have not spoken to the quality of motivation that, as a result of engaging in arts integration, can be fostered within learners. This is important to explore because, according to self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985), learners' quality of motivation shapes their classroom experiences and influences their learning outcomes (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999; Froiland & Worrell, 2016; Grolnick & Ryan, 1987; Patall et al., 2008; Ryan & Connell, 1989; Ryan & Deci, 2002).

Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that the majority of SDT-informed studies in education are quantitative in nature (Ryan & Deci, 2009). While these have done much to further our awareness of the importance of learners' quality of motivation within the classroom, they have done little to deepen our understanding of this area of inquiry—in ways that a qualitative inquiry could. Although a few SDT-informed qualitative inquiries exist pertaining to learners' quality of motivation (see Bourgeois & Boberg, 2016; Dawes & Larson, 2011; Garn & Jolly, 2014; Hutman et al., 2012), there remains much room for such in-depth inquiries, especially in the area of learners' quality of motivation when learning through the arts, which is an area of inquiry towards which the findings of my inquiry can contribute.

This chapter is divided into two main sections; the first involves inclusive

education, and the next focuses on arts-related education. My review of the research literature includes primarily that which involves elementary school children—and, when available, that which involves the Canadian context. To reiterate from the previous chapter, in its broadest sense inclusive education refers to the educational inclusion of children from diverse backgrounds, based on such attributes as ability, culture, language, race, religion, and SES. In my inquiry, however, as well as in my review of the inclusive education research literature presented here, I focused primarily on the concept of inclusion as it relates to ability.

## **2.1 Inclusive Education**

Canada has a proud history in its efforts to include all Canadians within every facet of society. In 1982, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms was passed (Hutchinson, 2017). Prior to its passing, political leaders heeded the voices of Canadians with exceptionalities and included them as an equity group under section 15 of the Charter, which pertained to equal rights. When section 15 took effect a few years later, Canada became the first country to guarantee equal rights to all (Sokal & Katz, 2015). As Section 15(1) of the Charter states,

Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability. (Government of Canada, 2014, para. 1)

It is this section of the Charter that provided parents the impetus to advocate for their children with exceptionalities to be taught in inclusive classrooms alongside their peers without exceptionalities.

Since 1985, the topic of inclusive education has been at the forefront of the minds of many Canadian policy-makers, administrators, and educators, and has become widely accepted as the ideal educational philosophy in Canadian classrooms (Goodfellow, 2012). Although the Charter guarantees the rights of all Canadian children, it is up to each province and territory to create and enforce education laws that address and abide by section 15 (Anderson & Jaafar, 2006). Furthermore, it is up to each school board to allocate funds for inclusionary initiatives to be realized within their schools (Bennett & Gallagher, 2013). As a result of their autonomous control, there have been differences over the years in the responsiveness of provinces and territories and their school boards to

implement section 15 of the Charter (Gordon, 2010), as well as in the quantity, quality, and design of inclusive education initiatives and programs (Sokal & Katz, 2015).

Within Ontario, several policies played a role in the extent to which the promise of educational inclusion was realized in its classrooms. Two such policies included the *Policy/Program Memorandum No. 115*—which, when passed in 1992, promoted the integration of learners with exceptionalities into the inclusive classroom—and the *Fewer School Boards Act*—which, when implemented in 1997, saw the reduction and consolidation of Ontario’s school boards from 129 to 72 as a cost-saving measure to decrease administrative roles and minimize service duplication (Anderson & Jaafar, 2003). Then in 2002, the Ontario Ministry of Education appointed supervisors to manage the operations and spending reductions of three large Ontarian school boards—Toronto, Ottawa, and Hamilton (Anderson & Jaafar, 2003). As a result, various cuts to resources and services were made that impacted the quality of educational inclusion realized within these boards, such as limited access to classroom computers, decreased transportation services for learners with exceptionalities, and reduced positions for special education teachers and educational assistants (EAs; Anderson & Jaafar, 2003).

### **2.1.1 Inclusive Education in the Research Literature**

As acceptance for inclusive education has increased over the last several years, so, too, has researchers’ interest in garnering individuals’ experiences with inclusive education. Through their studies, researchers have explored the experiences of not only learners (see Katz, Porath, Bendu, & Epp, 2012; Koller & San Juan, 2015), but also of administrators (see Irvine, Lupart, Loreman, & McGhie-Richmond, 2010), educators and EAs (see Bennett & Gallagher, 2013; Chmiliar, 2009; Idol, 2006), and parents (see Bennett & Gallagher, 2013; Villeneuve et al., 2013). Generally, their findings have shed light on what inclusive education looks like in practice, subsequently increasing our appreciation of the challenges of implementation and the benefits of well-implemented inclusive education programs for learners with exceptionalities, such as those related to health, social skills, and successful workforce transitioning (Bennett & Gallagher, 2013; Crawford, 2004; Timmons & Wagner, 2008).

Although our understanding has grown over the last several years of what it means to practice effective educational inclusion, research explorations have revealed

that schools have been slow to put into place the actions and systems that would support the implementation of effective inclusion (Sokal & Katz, 2015). The Ontario Ministry of Education (2014) has acknowledged, too, that the road towards educational inclusion involves an ongoing process “that requires shared commitment and leadership . . . to meet the ever-evolving, complex issues and concerns of our communities and schools” (p. 5). In the pursuit towards effective educational inclusion, is it enough to provide learners with exceptionalities access to inclusive, age-appropriate classrooms in their neighbourhood schools? When section 15 was enacted, the proliferation of separate schools and separate classrooms may have compelled inclusion advocates to answer “yes” to this question. Currently, however, our growing understanding of what it means to practice effective educational inclusion has changed, leading us to answer this question with “it is a start.” Effective inclusion not only requires learners’ physical inclusion in classrooms, but also their academic and social-emotional inclusion (Crawford, 2004; Katz et al., 2012; Sokal & Katz, 2015). In the following pages, I take a closer look at each of these two types inclusion and the role that each plays in fostering the effective educational inclusion of all learners.

### **2.1.2 Academic Inclusion**

The premise of academic inclusion is for educators to offer learners with exceptionalities equitable schooling opportunities. This entails “that they learn in interaction with their peers—not separately or parallel, and not solely through adult (e.g., educational assistant) support” (Katz et al., 2012, p. 3). Practicing academic inclusion requires educators to know all their learners’ strengths and challenges and to provide them with the necessary supports to make curricula fully accessible to them. One source from which educators can garner information about learners with exceptionalities is their Individual Education Plan (IEP), which is a formal document that outlines, among other things, learners’ strengths and needs, as well as the educational programs and/or support services needed to facilitate their learning in their inclusive or special education classroom (Jordan, 2001).

Within Ontario, IEPs can be developed for learners who (a) have been formally identified as exceptional by the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) or (b) have not gone through the IPRC process but who require accommodations

(Hutchinson, 2017). One of the primary roles of the IPRC is to determine if, based on the evidence gathered, the learner in question can be formally identified as exceptional. Within Ontario, the list of approved exceptionalities include *behaviour* (i.e., characterized by an inability to build or maintain social relationships and/or a tendency to react compulsively; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2001); *communication* (e.g., autism spectrum disorder, learning disabilities); *intellectual* (e.g., mild intellectual disabilities, giftedness); *physical* (e.g., blind and low vision, physical exceptionalities); and *multiple* (i.e., a combination of exceptionalities from the previous four categories, each of which has an equal impact on the learner). Once identified, the IPRC is tasked with assigning an appropriate placement for the learner. Consistent with the values of inclusive education, the first placement consideration is in an inclusive classroom with any necessary supports and services. The IPRC, however, has the power to question this placement (as do parents) if it feels that the inclusive classroom would be ill-suited to meet the learner's educational needs.

As it pertains to the roles and responsibilities of Ontario's school boards towards achieving educational inclusion, section 8.29(1) of the Education Act indicates that they must develop and implement "an equity and inclusive Education policy, and, if required by the Minister . . . implement changes to the policy as directed by the Minister" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2017, pg. 24). Accordingly, several guides and policy documents have been published over the past two decades (e.g., Ontario Ministry of Education, 2001, 2004, 2005, 2009a, 2013, 2014). Two documents in particular—*Education for All* and *Learning for All*—outline several approaches for implementing effective inclusive teaching, learning, and assessment. In *Learning for All*, in particular, three approaches to inclusion are identified: universal design for learning (UDL), differentiated instruction (DI), and the tiered approach to prevention and intervention, which some scholars refer to as response to intervention (RTI; Hutchinson, 2017, Robinson & Hutchinson, 2014). In the section following that of social-emotional inclusion, I outline these three approaches as a means of achieving the ideal of inclusive education—all three of which have been designed to address both the academic and social-emotional inclusion of learners within the inclusive classroom.

### 2.1.3 Social-Emotional Inclusion

If, indeed, it is “evident that humans are social animals” (Dijksterhuis, 2005, p. 207), it would follow that teacher and peer relationships are an integral component of learners’ schooling experiences. What does it mean to foster learners’ social-emotional inclusion? Generally, this involves all learners feeling “a sense of belonging, of being included and cared for, and of interconnectedness with something larger than themselves—of being a part of a community” (Katz et al., 2012, p. 3). In conjunction with academic inclusion, this type of inclusion is a necessary element in creating inclusive educational experiences; it can nurture a sense of school belonging for all learners, especially those with exceptionalities (Knesting, Hokanson, & Waldron, 2008), which can promote their increased attendance, retention (Graham & Harwood, 2011), sense of school satisfaction, and academic achievement (McMahon, Keys, Berardi, & Crouch, 2011; McMahon, Keys, Berardi, Crouch, & Coker, 2016).

The influence of positive relationships can be further appreciated when looking beyond the social to the physical implications. For Canadian learners with exceptionalities, there appears to be a striking connection between their quality of health and the quality of their inclusionary experiences (Timmons & Wagner, 2008). These findings come from a study in which the researchers analyzed a large-scale data set retrieved from the 2001 Children’s Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (Timmons & Wagner, 2008). While Timmons and Wagner noted a positive correlation between quality of inclusionary experiences and quality of social interactions, they concluded that there was a statistically significant relationship between quality of inclusionary experiences and students’ overall quality of health. Furthermore, when considering the percentage of students with exceptionalities who indicated poor social relationships with their peers without exceptionalities, the figure was higher for students in the low-inclusion group in comparison with students in the middle-inclusion and high-inclusion groups (Timmons & Wagner, 2008). What these findings tell us is that the quality of learners’ inclusionary experiences plays a role in their perceived satisfaction with social relationships and that learners in low-inclusion environments are at a higher risk of experiencing health issues.

Cultivating social-emotional inclusion for all learners, be it in formal and informal



settings, can occur through the explicit and implicit instruction of social-emotional learning (SEL) skills and can focus on changing the learning environment or the individual. Focusing on changing the learning environment can involve creating well-managed classroom settings in which learners feel supported and cared for, valued as contributing members of their school/classroom community, and physically and emotionally safe (Reicher, 2010). This can be accomplished through educators' implicit modelling, where learners can see, experience, and practice social-emotional inclusion (Reicher, 2010). Focusing on changing the individual can involve providing learners with and without exceptionalities the opportunity to develop their SEL skills, such as through instructional strategies (Pitre, Stewart, Adams, Bedard, & Landry, 2007), curricula (Kramer, Caldarella, Christensen, & Shatzer, 2010), and programs (Greenberg et al., 2003; Laugeson, Ellingsen, Sanderson, Tucci, & Bates, 2014; McPherson, Aslam, McKeever, & Wright, 2012; Radley et al., 2014; Tavares, 2011). Many of these approaches have resulted in increases in learners' SEL skills and their acceptance of peers with diverse abilities.

#### **2.1.4 UDL, DI, and RTI**

Inspired by the Universal Design movement in architecture, UDL is a framework that can be used for any subject area and grade level, with the goal of effective inclusive education for all learners. This framework involves a proactive approach to inclusive education, where learning environments are designed from the start to meet the educational needs of a diverse group of learners, so as to provide them with equal access to curricula (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005). This is done by "identifying barriers to learning and working to remove them" (Doran, 2015, p. 4) and is an important approach particularly to meet the educational needs of learners with exceptionalities within the inclusive classroom (McGuire, Scott, & Shaw, 2006). With the belief that no single instructional approach can meet the educational needs of all learners, UDL is guided by three principles: providing learners multiple means of (a) representation (i.e., options for attaining information or knowledge); (b) engagement (i.e., options for self-regulation, sustaining effort or persistence, and fostering interest); and (c) expression (i.e., options for demonstrating knowledge; CAST, 2011). With these core principles in mind, both upper elementary and secondary school educators have been successful in

designing flexible and supportive learning opportunities that promote their learners' mindset on the applicability of learning content, participation with and access to curricula, and ownership of their learning (Abell, Jung, & Taylor, 2011).

Differentiated instruction (DI) is an instructional model that guides educators to consider each learner's level of readiness, interests, and learning profiles when planning curricular units of study (Tomlinson, 2013). With an understanding of and an appreciation for the ways in which each learner is unique, educators can differentiate their learners' educational experiences through content (e.g., topic information), process (e.g., learning resources, learning materials), product (e.g., assignments, tasks), and learning environment (e.g., feeling valued, respected, and accepted by teachers and peers). At the core of DI, six key principles guide its effective implementation: building community, establishing high-quality learning goals, conducting ongoing assessment, forming flexible groupings, providing respectful tasks, and teaching up (i.e., using formative assessments to monitor learners' progress and responding appropriately through instruction; Tomlinson & Javious, 2012). Effective implementation of DI within the inclusive classroom can complement any inclusive instructional approach and has been found, for example, to support at-risk learners with developing their reading comprehension and fluency skills (Reis, McCoach, Little, Muller, & Kaniskan, 2011).

Through progress monitoring, the main goals of RTI (otherwise known as the tiered approach to prevention and intervention [Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013]) are prevention and early intervention for learners at-risk of school failure (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). The RTI approach involves "high-quality instruction and supplemental differentiated support through a multi-tiered intervention hierarchy" (Gettinger & Stoiber, 2012, p. 13). Implementation of RTI approaches can vary between schools, but it generally involves four key elements: "(a) screening, (b) tiered levels of evidence-based, high-quality instruction, (c) ongoing progress monitoring, and (d) decision making about the delivery of instruction based on progress-monitoring data" (Gettinger & Stoiber, 2012, p. 13). With the focus of my inquiry being on exploring learners' quality of motivation when learning through the arts within their regular classroom, the research literature that follows focuses on that which illuminates learners' accounts of their perspectives and experiences with inclusive education.

### **2.1.5 Learners' Experiences With and Perspectives of Inclusive Education**

In Cook-Sather's (2002) article on the inclusion of student perspectives in qualitative education research, she rationalized the importance of recognizing, restructuring, and equalizing the power imbalance present between researchers and their student participants. By listening to the voices of students, Cook-Sather (2002) argued that researchers can garner insights into the accessibility of educational practices and provisions, so as to inform education leaders on what effective educational environments might look like in practice. In recent years, this argument has been echoed by other inclusive education researchers who have contended that, as participants and beneficiaries of inclusionary measures, learners' perspectives of these learning environments should be garnered and explored (see Gordon, 2010).

The value and importance of listening to what learners have to say about their experiences with inclusion is evident when considering the findings of a Canadian study on schools' architectural barriers for inclusion (Pivik, 2010). Pivik garnered environmental assessments from students with physical exceptionalities ( $n = 29$ , one student per participating elementary/high school) and from students without physical exceptionalities ( $n = 22$ , one student per participating elementary/high school). The environmental assessments of principals and special education resource teachers (SERTs) were also garnered from each participating school. The environmental assessment produced by each participant involved a school walkthrough while taking note of all the barriers to accessibility. Of all study participant groups, the students with physical exceptionalities reported more environmental barriers to inclusion—the vast majority of which were related to mobility (Pivik, 2010). Students without physical exceptionalities, however, reported more environmental barriers than their school principals and SERTs, and they noted more barriers related to hearing than their peers with physical exceptionalities in other schools (Pivik, 2010). These findings highlight the varying perspectives held by different groups of individuals when viewing and interacting with their schooling environments and the influential role that individuals' positionalities play on shaping their variable perspectives.

Up until the recent past, these types of student-informed qualitative studies were infrequent (Cole & Knowles, 2000). Infrequent still has been (and continues to be) the

inclusion of the perspectives of learners with exceptionalities and those identified as at-risk (Koller & San Juan, 2015; see Nicholls, McKenzie, & Shufro, 1994; Richards, Casanova, Placier, & Guilfoyle, 1989). Some scholars have argued that this may be the case due to researchers underestimating the value of children's contributions to their explorations (Burke, 2007) or, perhaps, due to the difficulties experienced in gaining access to this population of learners. It is with this understanding of the limitations of this research landscape that I explore here several studies that shed light on the inclusive schooling and/or classroom experiences of learners with exceptionalities and their peers without exceptionalities—the majority of which reflect the Canadian context.

In a study of the attitudes that students without exceptionalities hold towards their peers with exceptionalities, Grade 5 to Grade 13 students ( $N = 65$ ) were interviewed from inclusive schools and schools with pull-out programs (Bunch & Valeo, 2004). Bunch and Valeo (2004) found that students in inclusive schools reported being friends with at least one peer with exceptionalities. In contrast, students in schools with pull-out programs reported having no friends with exceptionalities (Bunch & Valeo, 2004). Moreover, students in inclusive schools witnessed fewer instances of abuse towards their peers with exceptionalities, potentially resulting from their increased opportunities to interact respectfully with their diverse peers (Bunch & Valeo, 2004). Other studies have similarly revealed that students without exceptionalities value the opportunity to learn in inclusive classrooms because, in these settings, they have opportunities to develop friendships with their peers with exceptionalities (Copeland et al., 2004) and can gain an appreciation for and an understanding of their peers' unique qualities (Krajewski & Hyde, 2000).

In another study, researchers evaluated a play-based interview method for interviewing students without exceptionalities about their perspectives on inclusive education, as well as their awareness of exceptionalities and the quality of relationships that they have with their peers (Koller & San Juan, 2015). Although the focus of the study was on evaluating this interview method, Koller and San Juan noted several findings pertaining to students' conceptions of, awareness of, and relationships in inclusive classroom contexts. Participants involved in the researchers' study included children aged between three-and-half and eight years old ( $N = 12$ ) who were recruited from an inclusive early childcare center and a family resource center. During their semi-

structured interviews, students were asked questions such as “Here are some pictures of kids in a day care. Can you tell me about them?” (Koller & San Juan, 2015, p. 615) and were shown corresponding props such as dolls and images depicting children with various non-physical and physical exceptionalities.

The findings revealed that, when shown the prop dolls, most children were generally aware of the salient features that related to physical exceptionalities (such as the presence of adaptive equipment); many students, however, assumed that children who did not have adaptive equipment or other such visual indicators (e.g., a leg cast) did not have an exceptionality (Koller & San Juan, 2015). As it related to their relationships with children with exceptionalities in inclusive settings, many of the children expressed the belief that, along with adults, they could help them out when needed; five children, however, expressed that it was others’ responsibility to provide the needed supports (Koller & San Juan, 2015). It appears that, while young learners may demonstrate the ability to recognize and support children with physical exceptionalities, the same may not be the case in situations involving children with non-physical, or non-visible, exceptionalities, suggesting the need for educators to support young learners’ development of disability awareness.

In another study, researchers explored the attitudes and opinions of middle school students without exceptionalities towards the academic and social inclusion of students with exceptionalities, as well as the perceived factors that could facilitate or impede their academic and social inclusion (Katz et al., 2012). The interview data for this study was drawn from a larger, existing study (Katz & Porath, 2011) and included randomly-selected students between Grade 4 and Grade 7 ( $N = 31$ ) from five inclusive schools. During their interviews, students were presented with two scenarios, each of which depicted a male student with an exceptionality (one visible and the other non-visible) and described the student’s classroom actions and decisions. Katz et al. found that the students expressed increased empathy for the student with a visible exceptionality and that the actions and decisions of the student with a non-visible exceptionality were deemed less acceptable, suggesting the need for exposing students to discussions and curricula that foster their increased disability awareness. These findings highlight the importance of providing students without exceptionalities the necessary skills and

strategies to be able to work cooperatively with their peers with exceptionalities (Katz et al., 2012).

Thus far, the perspectives of learners without exceptionalities regarding inclusive education measures have been explored in the research literature, but what do the accounts of learners with exceptionalities reveal? To date, very few qualitative studies have shed light on this question (Gordon, 2010). Those that do exist, however, suggest a different story to that of their peers without exceptionalities—one of hopefulness for the promise of inclusion.

In one action research study, the researcher (who was, also, a teacher of an inclusive classroom) interviewed her students—those with exceptionalities and those without exceptionalities—so as to explore the effectiveness of team teaching to facilitate meaningful relationships between her students (Zindler, 2009). Although Zindler reported that students were generally happy in their classrooms, three groups of students felt socially-excluded: students of colour, students from low SES backgrounds, and students with exceptionalities. The researcher concluded that schools should provide their teachers explicit training on how to foster students' cooperation skills and should facilitate inclusive, community-building activities that engage all students to become more socially-inclusive towards their peers (Zindler, 2009).

Researchers of another study explored the inclusionary experiences of Grade 4 and Grade 5 students with learning disabilities ( $N = 20$ ; Pavri & Monda-Amaya, 2000). Pavri and Monda-Amaya were interested particularly in garnering students' experiences with loneliness in their inclusive classrooms. Their findings revealed that most students felt lonely and lacked opportunities for peer interaction, which, as they indicated, was consistent with previous studies (see Margalit, 1998). They also noted that students' reports of feeling lonely were attributed to a lack of friendships or not having something to do (Pavri & Monda-Amaya, 2000). Students, however, did not report a connection between feelings of loneliness and being bullied, excluded, teased, or disliked by peers, which suggested that they felt included by their peers or that their conceptions of loneliness were not associated with negative peer relationships (Pavri & Monda-Amaya, 2000).

In another study, the inclusive experiences of Grade 5 and Grade 6 male students

with learning disabilities ( $N = 5$ ) were explored, as well as those of their teachers and parents (Chmiliar, 2009). Among other findings, what the students liked best about being in an inclusive classroom was having friends and having a supportive teacher who provided positive feedback (Chmiliar, 2009). While three of the five students expressed being frustrated with the teasing or bullying that they experienced at school, all students indicated “that this year was the best year compared to previous years and that they were doing ‘better this year’” (Chmiliar, 2009, p. 80). They indicated, too, that they preferred being in their regular classroom rather than in their learning assistance classroom (Chmiliar, 2009). This finding, Chmiliar noted, may have been due to their increased positive teacher and peer relationships and/or to the students feeling academically supported by the individual adaptations that were in place to support their learning.

### **2.1.6 Reservations About Inclusive Education**

Although the merits of inclusive education have been lauded by proponents, critics have argued that the benefits that learners gain from these types of classroom environments are exaggerated (Kavale & Mostert, 2003), that inclusive learning spaces do not benefit learners with exceptionalities any more than segregated ones (Karsten, Peetsma, Roeleveld, & Vergeer, 2001), and that inclusive practices can influence negatively the quality of learning opportunities for learners without exceptionalities (Dyson, Farrell, Polat, Hutcheson, & Gallannaugh, 2004; Filler, 1996). Critics of inclusive education have maintained, too, that quality inclusive education is easier said than done and that, without making efforts to practice full inclusion, these learning environments do little to support the academic and social-emotional needs of learners with exceptionalities (Frostad & Pijl, 2007; Villeneuve et al., 2013). Ineffective educational inclusion, critics have argued, may do more harm than good for learners with exceptionalities and can sometimes result in their teasing and bullying (Ring & Travers, 2005), low academic outcomes, negative feelings of school belonging, and poor mental health (de Boer, Pijl, & Minnaert, 2012).

Proponents of inclusion have contended that the benefits of inclusion far outweigh the drawbacks. Others still have maintained that inclusive education is in a state of becoming—that is, the promise of inclusive education is a process that requires a common vision and commitment among all those involved. It appears, then, that the

criticisms against inclusion pertain primarily to inclusionary efforts that are in the process of becoming or that are disconnected from the ideal of inclusion. With time and effort, the ideal of inclusive education can be achieved, resulting in an education system that not only welcomes all learners to learn in and from a community of their peers but also provides them with opportunities to meet and exceed their academic and social-emotional needs and goals.

## **2.2 Arts-Related Education in the Research Literature**

In this section, I take a look at the history and research literature pertaining to direct arts instruction and arts-integrated instruction. Because the participants involved in my inquiry engaged in arts integration involving Visual Arts, the primary focus of this review will be on the research literature involving visual arts integration, even if in conjunction with other arts areas. I preface this section by stating that, by exploring the research literature that connects learners' experiences in the arts with various non-arts outcomes, by no means do I intend to justify the place of arts-related curricula based on the benefits that they afford learners in other domains. As some have argued, I acknowledge that researchers that have undertaken arts-related inquiries in education may inadvertently do just that in their efforts to report learners' arts-related outcomes (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 2000).

Even so, I echo the stance held by Burton et al. (2000) on the matter of arts-related transfer of learning. They argued that transfer of learning can happen across all domains; when individuals engage in knowledge construction, neurological connections are made “across a broad front of stimuli – or across intelligences” (Burton et al., 2000, p. 228). Therefore, the competencies gained through arts learning can also, under nurturing learning conditions (Abrami et al., 2008), find applications in other domains (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 1999)—just as the competencies gained through learning in domains such as the sciences or humanities can, too, be applied in the arts. I, also, tend to agree with Burton et al. (1999) that discussions of learning transfer involving the arts can obscure the importance of ensuring that the arts are “exercised broadly across different knowledge domains. Given this interpretation, no subject has prior rights over any other subject, for to diminish one is to diminish the possibility and promise of them all” (p. 45). It is with this stance in mind that I note that my inquiry on arts integration is intended to



add to the conversation of how students experience quality of motivation when learning through the arts, rather than to be considered as another inquiry that speaks to the benefits that arts integration can offer learners in other domains. To this end, the research literature that I explore in the coming pages on learners' arts-related experiences and outcomes helps to set the stage for contextualizing my inquiry within the field towards which I wish to contribute.

Before delving further into my review of the literature, however, I share four points about the writing and selection of the research literature presented here. First, a search of the literature on arts integration reveals that researchers have used different terminology when referring to mixing the arts with other subject areas; see Appendix A for a list of related terms and their differences (under *arts integration*). For the sake of consistency, throughout my review of the literature I have used variants of *arts education*, *arts integration*, *arts-integrated instruction*, and *arts-integrated education*. Second, arts-integrated instruction was born out of direct arts instruction and, as such, they share a common history. It is for this reason that I share their history in an interchangeable fashion. Third, historic references to direct arts instruction and arts-integrated instruction have referred primarily to the visual arts. As a school subject, Visual Arts was among the first to be included in learners' schooling experiences. Thus, the history of arts education presented here reflects that of the visual arts rather than that of any other arts discipline. Fourth, because of the limited literature available pertaining to the Canadian context, the majority of the literature reviewed here reflects the large body of research produced within the United States of America (henceforth referred to as *U.S.*). Where available, I have included Canadian and/or Ontarian literature, so as to assist with contextualizing my inquiry. As a constructivist who acknowledges that individual perceptions and interpretations of reality are culturally- and socially-mediated, I appreciate the implications of sharing U.S.-based research literature. That is, the nuances that exist within each context—such as the variability of funding for arts programs and the differences in arts curricula, learning objectives, and access to quality arts resources—can result in differing arts-related schooling experiences between learners in the U.S. and in Canada.

Even with this latter understanding, it is important to note that much of Canada's

history pertaining to direct arts instruction and arts-integrated instruction mirrors that of the U.S.'s. That is, within similar time periods, proponents on both sides of the border have encountered parallel challenges, influences, and milestones. A recent case in point pertaining to this mirroring of milestones includes the shift from STEM education (i.e., Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) to STEAM education (i.e., the Arts added to STEM). Although this shift was U.S.-instigated (STEAM Education, 2015; STEM to STEAM, 2015), it quickly gained traction within Ontario, both at the provincial level (see The Ontario Art Education Association, 2015; University of Ontario Institute of Technology, 2017) and at the local level (see Thames Valley District School Board, n.d.). With this in mind, it may be appropriate to conclude that the arts-related schooling experiences of learners in Canada resemble those of their counterparts in the U.S. living in parallel contexts (e.g., urban vs. rural, low-SES vs. high-SES). Having noted these four points, I proceed by offering a history of arts-related education.

### **2.2.1 A History of Direct Arts Instruction and Arts-Integrated Instruction**

The arts have long been recognized as one of the first means through which humans have communicated and societies have transmitted their knowledge, culture, and history to future generations (Dissanayake, 1992). Through the use of “symbols to manipulate images and concepts” (Wright, 2012, p. 2), the arts act as facilitators of not only our ability to make meaning of the world around us (McArdle, 2012), but also of our ability to understand abstract concepts and to express ourselves to others (Eisner, 2003). Moreover, engaging with the arts can activate our senses and affective cognition (Arnheim, 1954; Wright, 2012), subsequently exposing us to aesthetic experiences that are both stimulating and memorable (Eisner, 2003).

Despite these stances on the place of the arts within our lives, the word *turbulent* can be used to characterize the history of direct arts instruction and arts-integrated instruction. Over the years, arts education and arts integration have experienced evolving ideologies regarding their purpose and value in education systems. Its history is rife with the inconsistent delivery of quality arts-related curricula and programs for learners and is mired by clashes between dichotomous camps of supporters (i.e., arts subjects versus non-arts subjects; direct arts instruction versus arts-integrated instruction).

Since the advent of the formal schooling system in North America, societal views

on the place of the arts within the education system have fluctuated according to the changing dominant needs, demands, and perceptions of society. At its height of popularity, direct instruction in the visual arts was considered one of the most important offerings of the public education system (Smith, 1996). In recent years, however, school administrators faced with budget cuts have been limited in their ability to allocate the funds necessary to procure the expertise of specialized arts teachers and/or the necessary classroom materials to support their learners' quality learning experiences in the arts.

In the late nineteenth century, instruction in drawing was first incorporated in education curricula. This era in the history of arts education (1860–1900) is known as *art as vocation* (Clark, 2010). When the *Massachusetts Free Instruction in Drawing Act of 1870* was passed, it became one of the first acts of its kind to ensure that students developed their mechanical drawing skills, so as to prepare them for citizenship in an industrial society (Smith, 1996). Other states soon followed Massachusetts's lead, each focused on developing the mechanical illustration skills of their students (e.g., understanding golden ratio, delineating geometrical forms). In Ontario, there was a similar focus inspired by the United Kingdom's *South Kensington System*, which was a syllabus for teaching art that grew in popularity following the success of London's Great Exhibition in 1851 (Clark, 2010). In 1865, The Bishop Strachan School opened its doors in Toronto, which was a private boarding school for girls that provided them with an education in religion, academics, and the arts, including instrumental and vocal music, drawing, and dance (The Bishop Strachan School, n.d.). Approaching the twentieth century, the Toronto Technical School began educating children, both girls and boys, with a focus on developing students' mechanical and architectural drawing skills (Clark, 2010; Sharman & Glassford, 2011).

As the twentieth century rolled in, a new era soon emerged (1900–1940) called *art as design* (Clark, 2010). At the beginning of this new era, the then Department of Education of Ontario renamed the term *drawing* to the term *art*. The focus was no longer on developing students' mechanical drawing skills but on developing their ornamental design skills (Blackwell, 1989). More particularly, there was a focus on exposing students to specific arts experiences, such as clay modeling and picture study (Blackwell, 1989).

Approaching the middle of the twentieth century, the era *art as expression* (1940–1980) came into favour (Clark, 2010). During this era, education in the visual arts was viewed as an essential component for fostering students’ self-expression and mental health. While scholars advocated for the value of an education in the visual arts as part of children’s well-rounded schooling experiences (Eisner, 1958; Lowenfeld, 1947, 1959), a novel educational philosophy began taking shape: interdisciplinary arts education (Dewey, 1934; Read, 1943; Winslow, 1939).

Early advocates of arts integration advised that integrating the arts could motivate students and provide them with enriched curricular learning experiences (Winslow, 1939). It was this thinking that inspired the inception of arts-integrated approaches to education, such as Reggio Emilia (Biermeier, 2015) and Waldorf (Barnes, 1980)—the latter of which flourished in Europe in the 1920s (Baer & Garrett, 2010) as means to engage, inspire, and empower learners (Uhrmacher, 1995). Early advocates of arts integration maintained, too, that arts integration could offer aesthetic and creative experiences that foster students’ sense of self and sense of community, as well as their feelings of self-actualization (Read, 1943). Some others argued that the arts could provide students with aesthetic experiences that fostered their imagination and critical thinking skills (Broudy, 1968). Indeed, later research findings have suggested a connection between the two (Bamford, 2009; Carroll, 2003; Schwartz, 2000). Others, still, espoused that students’ schooling should reflect their lived experiences, so as to allow them to engage with authentic learning opportunities (Dewey, 1934). They reasoned that, if children naturally enjoy engaging in artistic pursuits, integrating the arts with other subject areas could assist them to see the relevance of the curriculum in their lives. Similarly, scholars of late have maintained that, in order to foster students’ meaningful learning, the arts must have an interdisciplinary presence in their schooling (Efland, 2002; Fowler, 1996).

Although valued as a means to foster learners’ self-expression and mental health, visual arts education during the era of art as expression was not immune to ideological debates on its place in education curricula. When the Russian satellite Sputnik was launched in 1957, the value of arts education was questioned (Gullatt, 2007). In response to the satellite’s launch, the U.S. began grooming its students for careers in the sciences,

so that they could compete on the proverbial world stage of technological advancements and innovations (Aprill, 2011). Since the 1980s, this ideological shift on the value of arts education has given way to the era in which we find ourselves currently: *art as discipline* (Clark, 2010).

In the art as discipline era, “the arts were pressured to prove that they were disciplines of essential value” (Clark, 2010, p. 15). One of the first visual arts education scholars to heed this challenge was Barkan (1962, 1966). His dedication to the cause and his research and ideas—along with that of several of his contemporaries (see Broudy; 1972; Eisner, 1967; Smith, 1974)—helped to form the gold standard approach to arts education that would later be known as discipline-based art education (DBAE).

In the early 1980s, the DBAE was adopted by the Getty Center for Education in the Arts (1983), whose mission was to improve the status and quality of arts education in U.S. schools (Greer, 1992; Loughlin & Anderson, 2015). The DBAE approach transformed visual arts into a discipline in its own right by providing a model for systematically learning about the visual arts. Four content areas comprised the pillars of this approach: aesthetics, art criticism, art history, and art production (Duke, 1988; Greer, 1984). Soon after the Getty Center’s acceptance of the DBAE approach, it gained the support of other arts organizations, such as the National Art Educators Association (Loughlin & Anderson, 2015), and was widely implemented in visual arts curricula across the U.S. and Canada. Although DBAE was designed initially to address disciplined education in the visual arts, it was adapted over the years to create disciplined educational approaches in other areas of the arts, such as the dramatic and musical arts (Schwartz, 1996).

Then, in 1983 came the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (Gardner et al., 1983), which reported on the state of the U.S. education system (Sleeter & Stillman, 2009). The authors of the report concluded that the U.S. education system was ineffective in supporting students’ achievement in academic subject areas and that the entire system required revamping (Berends, 2004). Following its publication, the standards-based education movement was ushered in, which further marginalized the place of arts education within the wider academic-based education agenda. It soon became clear that direct arts instruction was at risk of being eliminated altogether from school curricula so

as to increase instructional time for building upon students' skills in language, mathematics, and science. It is around this time that some educators revisited the idea of arts-integrated instruction as a partial solution to the growing absence of direct arts instruction in learners' schooling experiences and to learners' growing disengagement with their learning (Efland, 1992). They also began turning to arts integration as a means to offer their learners more meaningful learning opportunities.

As DBAE began making its presence in arts education curricula and classrooms in the early 1980s, a group of language arts teachers in British Columbia began looking for more authentic avenues through which to engage themselves and their students in teaching and learning about language (Grauer, 2005). Their answer came in the form of arts integration. As an educator during this period of time in British Columbia, Grauer (2005) noted that "one prominent innovation was the idea that there might be similarities in the way that writing and art were taught (Grauer, 1984)" (p. 113). Their reasoning was that "if writing is thinking expressed in words, than [*sic*] art is thinking expressed in images" (p. 113). This thought led to an appreciation that both the artistic and writing processes are complementary to each other and, when given opportunities to understand and represent information through visual and verbal means, learners can become more engaged with their language learning and can experience enhanced expression.

Being an elusive construct (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988), various typologies of creative processes have been proposed (see Christensen, 2013; Davis Publications, n.d.; Gilkey, 2008; Moore, 2015; Taylor, 2014). Regardless, along with Grauer (1984) some have similarly contended that the creative process involved in artmaking—such as getting inspiration, letting ideas percolate, preparing materials, engaging in product creation, and reflecting on product results (Moore, 2015)—resembles the creative process that individuals in various other disciplines undertake to produce original work within their fields (Christensen, 2013; Csikszentmihalyi, 2013; Davis Publications, n.d.; Gilkey, 2008). Various research literature at that time seemed, too, to support advocates' contentions that art and writing have complementary creative processes. For example, the act of talking while drawing has been found to play a transitional role in children's writing (Dyson, 1986), and children's understanding of a system of drawing symbols has been found to help them to develop an initial symbol system for writing (Dyson, 1982).

Later study findings have, also, spoken to the effectiveness of drawing as a pre-writing strategy to help support elementary learners' written expression (Andrzejczak, Trainin, & Poldberg, 2005; Olshanksy 2007; Trainin, Andrzejczak, & Poldberg, 2006), as well as their creation of imaginative stories, complex sentences, and rich character development (Randle, 2010).

Even with these ideological shifts, many arts education proponents expressed their concerns with implementing arts-integrated instruction in lieu of direct arts instruction (Eisner, 1972, 1998, 1999; Smith, 1996). They argued that, when integrated with other subject areas, students are neglected the opportunity to engage meaningfully and fully in the arts for the unique benefits that they can provide. Another point of contention expressed by arts education proponents was that, when teachers integrate the arts, they are used in peripheral and superficial ways to support learners' gains in other subject areas, consequently running the risk of becoming "handmaidens to ends that are not distinctively artistic" (Eisner, 1999, p. 158).

To address these concerns, the now-defunct Consortium of National Arts Education Associations (1992) issued a statement on its position on the matter. In its *Joint Statement on Integration of the Arts with Other Disciplines and with Each Other*, the Consortium categorically stated that there was no substitute for students' high-quality direct arts instruction; however, it recognized the value of well-designed and well-taught arts-integrated instruction as a complement to direct arts instruction. This position statement was later adopted by various arts associations, such as the American Alliance for Theatre and Education, the National Association for Music Education, and the National Dance Association (Burnaford, Brown, Doherty, & McLaughlin, 2007). It was also espoused by various arts education scholars (Irwin, 2005; Irwin & Reynolds, 1995). Although the debate continues to this day, the Consortium's position helped to abate some of the concerns regarding arts integration (see Brewer, 2002; Hanley, 2003).

In the mid-1990s, arts advocates in the U.S. became hopeful when federal legislation began to formally recognize the arts for their academic value. In 1994, for the first time in the history of arts education, the legislation of the *Goals 2000: Education America Act* established the arts as academic subject areas (Loughlin & Anderson, 2015). In 2001, arts education in the U.S. experienced another milestone: The *No Child Left*

*Behind* (NCLB) act came into effect and it considered the arts as core subject areas in education curricula (Bradley, 2016). Under the NCLB act, each state was required to set annual benchmarks in reading, writing, and mathematics until the target year of 2014 and to assess their schools' and districts' attainment of them through a measure of adequate yearly progress (AYP; Bradley, 2016). The act also tied federal funding to schools' performance based on AYP measures (Beveridge, 2010).

Even though the NCLB act initially appeared to boost the place of the arts in education curricula, its emphasis on high-stakes testing had strained school climates in such a way that, in many cases, the arts were marginalized (along with other “non-priority” subject areas, such as Physical Education and Social Studies), in order to increase instructional time in language arts and mathematics (Chapman, 2004; Farkas Duffett Research Group, 2012; Gullatt, 2007; Oreck, 2006). By the end of 2015, the NCLB act was superseded by the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA), which is currently in effect. Like its predecessor, the ESSA appears to value the arts as core subjects; unlike its predecessor, however, it places a greater emphasis on their role in learners' well-rounded education and offers increased funding opportunities for arts education-related curricula, programs, and professional development to be realized at the school level.

In Canada, we see a parallel but different story. Each province and territory has the jurisdiction to set its own regulations by which its school districts must abide (Volante & Jaafar, 2008). Within Ontario in particular, several policy changes between 1990 and 2003 influenced the quality of arts education in schools. In 1993, the report, *For the Love of Learning*, was published, which reviewed Ontario's education system and led to future policy implementations such as a standards-based core curriculum and the creation of the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO). To this day, the EQAO is responsible for reporting on student achievement in literacy (i.e., reading, writing) and numeracy (i.e., mathematics) through standardized assessments administered to Grade 3, Grade 6, Grade 9, and Grade 10 students. Paralleling the effects of NCLB south of the border, the EQAO's standardized assessments played a role in focusing the efforts of Ontarian educators and administrators on supporting their students' literacy and numeracy development, but not without sacrificing, in many cases, the delivery of quality arts-related curricula and programs.



Although many opponents' positions on the matter can be described as perpetuating the *either/or* dichotomy between direct arts instruction and arts-integrated instruction, the positions of other scholars and advocates of arts education reflect a *both/and* approach; that is, they believe that *both* direct arts instruction *and* arts-integrated instruction can co-exist and be complementary to each other's aims (Aprill, 2010; Bamford, 2009; Carroll, 2003). They have maintained that both types of instruction share ideological similarities and provide the potential to support diverse students with their educational goals (Aprill, 2010). My own stance on this topic is akin to this latter view. I acknowledge that the ideal is for learners to engage in disciplined instruction in the arts. I also acknowledge that some educators have used (and continue to use) the arts in superficial ways to foster their learners' gains primarily in non-arts subject areas. Ultimately, however, I believe that any opportunity for learners to engage in the arts is an opportunity for them to nurture their ingenuity and ignite their interest in other creative pursuits within or outside of their public schooling experiences (Chemi, 2014). I recognize, however, that this view is not popularly held among other arts education scholars (see Davis, 2008).

### **2.2.2 Conceptual Framework: Bresler's Typology of Arts Integration**

Arguably, the place of direct arts instruction and arts-integrated instruction is not as threatened today as it has been in the past. The level and quality, however, of arts-related education has varied, both in Canada (Andrews, 2004; Stathopoulos, 2010) and the U.S. (Baker, Jr., 2012; Mishook & Kornhaber, 2006; National Task Force on the Arts in Education, 2009; von Zastrow & Janc, 2004). As it pertains to arts integration, the varying qualities of instruction is highlighted prominently when we consider the different typologies of arts integration that exist (see Bresler, 1995; Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 2002; Cornett, 2007; Davis, 1999; Fogarty, 1991; Uhrmacher & Moroye, 2007). For my inquiry, Bresler's (1995) typology served as the conceptual framework that assisted me with exploring my final research puzzle. I have chosen this typology because it provides a clear, all-encompassing characterization of the various styles of arts-integrated instruction. Informed by the years she spent as an arts education researcher, Bresler (1995) devised a typology to describe and detail the purposes of each style of arts integration, each of which has "its own set of goals, contents, pedagogies,

and roles within the school” (p. 33). According to Bresler, the four styles of arts integration are (a) *affective integration*, (b) *co-equal integration*, (c) *social integration*, and (d) *subservient integration*.

Educators may decide to expose their learners to the affective style of arts integration when they want to change their learners’ mood and/or foster their creativity (Bresler, 1995). This style of arts integration is most prevalent from Kindergarten to Grade 2 classrooms (Bresler, 1995). An example of using the affective style of arts integration for the purpose of changing learners’ mood would be to play background music while they are engaged with an unrelated activity or to ask learners to dance around the classroom so that they can loosen up before writing in their journals. An example of using arts integration to foster learners’ creativity might involve asking them to draw their thoughts on a particular topic without providing them with an outline of any pre-specified criteria or providing them with constructive criticisms about their resulting products. Educators’ purposes for implementing these types of arts-integrated tasks might be to provide their learners with opportunities to be self-expressive and/or to foster and showcase their individuality (Bresler, 1995).

In the co-equal style of arts integration, the curricular goals from the selected arts area and the selected subject area are equally addressed (Bresler, 1995). Although it is the least practiced by educators—as it requires them to be well-versed in both the chosen arts area and the subject area—it is the most researched due to being the most esteemed style of arts integration (Bresler, 1995). The co-equal style of arts integration involves engaging learners with the arts through the tenets of DBAE and guiding their observations, perceptions, and interpretations through higher order question-asking (Bresler, 1995). The co-equal style of arts integration is the only type that the Consortium approved of in its position statement, as described previously, and it is the only type of arts integration that arts education advocates have argued is the most effective in supporting learners (Eisner, 1999). In order to achieve its successful implementation, educators do not require advanced arts materials; pencils, white paper, and markers can suffice—all of which are readily available in many classrooms.

In the social style of arts integration, the arts are used as a means through which to engage school and/or community members in ways that are entertaining and/or

celebratory (Bresler, 1995). The social style of arts integration does not necessarily involve instruction or assessment in the chosen arts area, but it can allow participants and audiences to pay particular attention to the aesthetics, content, and/or style of the given arts area. An example of the social style of arts integration is including a musical performance during a school assembly.

The subservient style of arts integration involves the arts being superficially integrated with other subject areas (Bresler, 1995). Such tasks might include gluing together construction paper in a particular pre-specified manner or singing along to the lyrics of a song. Given that these types of activities have, for the most part, unalterable goals, the subservient style of arts integration offers little in the way of fostering learners' creativity, aesthetic awareness, and artistic skills. Educators who use this style of arts integration often do so in order to save time (i.e., by not having to teach the arts on their own) or to support the self-esteem of learners who require a different mode through which to engage with their learning in non-arts subject areas (Bresler, 1995). It is this style of arts integration that advocates and scholars of arts education, such as Eisner (1999), have warned can lead to arts education being justified solely by the outcomes it promotes in other subject areas, rather than by the unique outcomes that engaging in the arts can promote in relation to learners' cognitive, emotional, and social development (Eisner, 1998).

Researchers conducting studies involving arts-integrated instruction do not always explicitly state which style of arts integration they are exploring. Even so, the style can be deduced when using any one of the arts integration typologies that exist, such as Bresler's (1995). For instance, in a study involving 119 students in Grade 3, students in the treatment group were exposed to a drawing activity prior to their writing exercise (Norris, Mokhtari, & Reichard, 1998). The researchers found that the written work of the students in the treatment group included more words, sentences, and ideas than those of the control group. Using Bresler's (1995) typology, we can infer that in this study the affective style of arts integration was explored, as the arts in this study were used as a means to foster students' creativity. Having provided the contextual background pertaining to the history of the direct arts instruction and arts-integrated instruction, I shift my focus to the research literature informing our understanding of these areas of study.

### 2.2.3 Research Literature on Direct Arts Instruction and Arts-Integrated Instruction

I begin by situating my inquiry within the arts curriculum and inclusive education documents published by the Ontario Ministry of Education—Ontario being the province within which my inquiry unfolded. Various statements in the Grade 1 to 9 arts curriculum (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009b) makes it clear that the Ministry values and promotes instruction in the arts as an important element in students’ well-rounded educational experiences:

Education in the arts is essential to students’ intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth and well-being. Experiences in the arts—in dance, drama, music, and visual arts—play a valuable role in helping students to achieve their potential as learners and to participate fully in their community and in society as a whole. (p. 3)

Moreover, the Ministry’s elementary arts curriculum also communicates the value of interdisciplinary arts learning opportunities in providing students with alternative means of meaning-making in other subject areas, so as to foster their “sensory, cognitive, emotional, and motor capacities” (p. 4). The Ministry, however, issues a caveat which parallels that of the position statement published by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations (1992) on arts integration, as described earlier. In doing so, it effectively asserts its support of the co-equal style of arts integration: “teachers need to ensure that the *specific knowledge and skills for each subject are taught*” (p. 43; emphasis in original).

As an inclusive instructional approach, the Ministry appears to recognize the value of arts integration, as implied by one of its most recent documents on inclusive education (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2014). In it, a sample of work from a Grade 5 student is highlighted, wherein the art of songwriting was used to explore the social studies topic of ableism:

We’re all able. We’re all able.  
To think, to feel, to love.  
We’re all able.

In my mind, I have a dream.  
That we’re all playing on the same team.  
We all deserve, deserve a try.  
And this my friend, you can’t deny.

We should be loved for who we are.  
 ‘Cuz deep inside we’re all a star.  
 And we all have the ability.  
 To be the best that we can be.

I will pick you up.  
 When you fall down.  
 I will turn your frown.  
 Right upside down.

Chorus

So, help me live my destiny.  
 And help me find the best in me.  
 To show how great that I can be.  
 From east to west, from you to me.  
 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2014, p. 26–27)

Proponents of arts integration might argue that this student’s work exemplifies the types of authentic learning outcomes that may not be as easily manifested through more traditional avenues of assessment and evaluation, because “art-making requires students to take a more active role in their learning by generating idiosyncratic solutions to problems and taking ownership of their work” (Loughlin & Anderson, 2015, p. 15). The student’s personality is highlighted in the statement, “‘Cuz deep inside we’re all a star,” in a way that a standard essay might not have been able to. Moreover, these lyrics reveal the learner’s willingness and comfortableness to assert his or her inner wishes and thoughts on the topic. For example, this can be seen through the lines “So, help me live my destiny / And help me find the best in me.” Although unconventional, this example speaks to the potential of arts-integrated assessments and evaluations to afford learners the flexibility to explore themselves and connect meaningfully with their learning and the world around them.

This idea that arts integration can offer learners authentic meaning-making opportunities parallels the findings of another study involving students from three different high schools—one of which included students with developmental, mental, and physical exceptionalities (Rowse & Vietgen, 2017). The students were tasked with creating a photograph inspired by the photographer, Cindy Sherman, and accompanying it with an artist statement, which allowed them to “[extend] their stories and gave students a forum to further express why they chose particular figures to represent and

express themselves in some way” (Rowse & Vietgen, 2017, p. 94). Through their photographs, the researchers explored how, through participants’ chosen theme—such as alcoholism, racism, or their favourite media icon—students “performed their identities in photographs” (Rowse & Vietgen, 2017, p. 94). Among other findings, the researchers concluded that, through their arts-integrated work, learners expressed authentically to their viewer something about themselves, who they wanted to be, and/or “what their views were on the world around them” (Rowse & Vietgen, 2017, p. 106). This was especially the case for learners with mental, developmental, and physical exceptionalities. In this way, participants’ photographs empowered them to respond authentically and with agency to the world as they viewed it.

The findings of another study involving students in the lower elementary grades speak, too, to the authentic meaning-making opportunities that arts integration can offer younger learners. The researchers of the study explored the differences between the learning experiences of Grade 1 students ( $N = 14$ ) when using two mediating artefacts (Jakobson & Wickman, 2015). In a science lesson on the qualities of a leaf, the mediating artefacts were a magnifying glass and a visual arts activity, which involved creating a rubbing of a leaf using crayons. Jakobson and Wickman (2015) concluded that, as a mediating artefact for meaning-making, the visual arts-based activity allowed students to gain tactile information about their leaves, to become more emotionally and aesthetically invested in the learning activity, and to use their imaginations “to reconstruct and transform prior experiences when making meaning of new ones” (p. 339).

What does the literature reveal about learners’ arts education-related outcomes and experiences? Over the past few decades, researchers have carried out quantitative and qualitative explorations to assist with answering this question. Many of their findings have revealed a relationship between arts learning—be it through direct arts instruction or arts-integrated instruction—and benefits in various domains, such as cognitive (Catterall, 1998, 2009; DeMoss & Morris, 2005; Duma & Silverstein, 2014; Luftig, 2000; Snyder, Klos, & Grey-Hawkins, 2014), emotional (DeMoss & Morris, 2005; Snyder et al., 2014), and social (Catterall, 2009; DeMoss & Morris, 2005; Duma & Silverstein, 2014; Snyder et al., 2014). Arguably, some of the most important gains that arts-related learning experiences give rise to are learners’ general sense of self-concept (Leigh, 2015; Russell-

Bowie, 2013) and sense of agency (which, in SDT terms, parallels notions of autonomy) by transforming their self-perceptions, making them “aware of themselves as learners and productive citizens” (Burnaford et al., 2001, p. 18). In the interest of focusing my literature review on that which informs my inquiry, in the coming pages I explore research studies that have shed light on learners’ arts education-related outcomes as they pertain to their interest, engagement, and/or motivation.

In his article on what the education system can learn from the arts, Eisner (2004) offered his views on the place of direct arts instruction and its role in supporting students’ learning. Eisner (2004) argued that, through their engagement in the arts, students’ intrinsic motivation can be stimulated due to the “aesthetic satisfactions that the [art]work itself makes possible” (p. 9). Moreover, the arts can allow individuals to express meaning in ways that might not otherwise be expressible through spoken or written language. When words fail us, Eisner explained, we tend to turn to the arts to express and communicate our thoughts and feelings. As Eisner (2004) suggested, this is the case because the limits of spoken and written language are not defined by the limits of cognition; the arts can provide a mode of expression and communication that moves beyond the limits of what we can say or write, which can be useful for those who may have limited language-based communication skills (e.g., communication disorders, English Language Learners).

Eisner (2004) argued, too, that in our fast-paced, technologically-advanced world, the purpose of the education system should be to cultivate within students an ability to think like artists. Cultivating students’ artistic thinking involves engaging them with an education in the arts, which can lead to them developing “the ideas, the sensibilities, the skills, and the imagination to create work that is well proportioned, skillfully executed, and imaginative, regardless of the domain in which an individual works” (Eisner, 2004, p. 4). Engaging with the arts, Eisner maintained, is imperative because it can help educators foster within their students an attribute he termed as *qualitative intelligence*, which can help prepare them as adults to face the challenges of living in a 21st century world. Examples of qualitative intelligence skills that an education in the arts can foster include (a) “the ability to compose qualitative relationships that satisfy some purpose” (Eisner, 2004, p. 5); (b) adaptability through “flexible purposing” (p. 6), which is the

understanding that aims and objectives for a work can evolve depending on what an unfolding work “suggests” (Eisner, 2004, p. 6) to its creator; and (c) “form and content is most often inextricable. How something is said is part and parcel of what is said” (Eisner, 2004, p. 6). Eisner maintained that these types of skills can assist us with facing such 21st century challenges as making sense of contradictory societal messages, persisting in the face of uncertainty, and generating creative solutions that address societal problems.

Various research findings support Eisner’s (2004) arguments that an education in the arts may foster aptitudes that can lead to learners’ development of life skills, as well as support their skills in other domains. In a study involving five high school teachers from two schools, their students were exposed to over ten hours per week of quality instruction in the arts (Winner, Hetland, Veenema, Sheridan, & Palmer, 2006). Winner et al. (2006) explored 38 videotaped classes (each of which was two to three hours long) and, after analyzing the teaching moments, they developed eight *studio habits of mind* that a quality education in the visual arts can foster within high school students, all of which reflect the 21st century competencies endorsed by the Ontario Ministry of Education (2015). These include (a) *develop craft* (i.e., using and caring for the learning space, as well as the artistic provisions and practices); (b) *engage and persist* (i.e., embracing problems with focus and perseverance); (c) *envision* (i.e., cultivating spatial intelligence); (d) *express* (i.e., creating work that conveys ideas, feelings, and/or meanings); (e) *observe* (i.e., being acutely attentive of visual contexts); (f) *reflect* (i.e., working with others to develop ideas on one’s work, and judging one’s work and creative process, as well as others’ work); (g) *stretch and explore* (i.e., extending competencies beyond one’s comfort zone, and exploring and embracing mistakes as learning opportunities); and (h) *understand (arts) community* (i.e., interacting as an artist with professional artists in the field and across contexts; Winner et al., 2006).

The competencies outlined through Winner et al.’s (2006) eight studio habits of mind parallel those discerned from a review of the research literature on student outcomes that the arts can promote (Ruppert, 2006). The report, which was commissioned by the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies and the Arts Education Partnership, concluded that an education in the arts can cultivate (a) reading and language skills, (b) mathematics skills, (c) thinking skills, (d) social skills, (e) learning motivation,



and (f) positive school environments (Ruppert, 2006). Although quality of motivation was not addressed, of particular interest to me in relation to my inquiry was the finding that arts education can cultivate learners' motivation.

In another study on the relationship between years of in-school arts instruction and students' creative thinking abilities, Burton et al. (1999) found significant associations between the two. In their two-year study involving students in Grade 4, Grade 5, Grade 7, and Grade 8 ( $N = 2,046$ ) from 28 schools, Burton et al. concluded that, in comparison with students in the low-arts group, students in the high-arts group (regardless of SES background) demonstrated higher gains in written expression, imaginative and creative problem-solving, and flexibility in novel situations. Many of the skills that students in this study gained not only mirror those of Eisner's (2004) qualitative intelligence skills, but also appear to reflect essential 21st century competencies promoted by the Ontario Ministry of Education (2015), implying that experiences in the arts can help achieve the Ministry's goal of preparing Ontarian learners within a complex and ever-changing world "to become personally successful, economically productive, and actively engaged citizens" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2015, p. 3). Students in the high-arts group were, also, more likely to have a good rapport with their teachers and to feel supported by their peers (Burton et al., 1999). Interestingly, these findings relate to autonomy, competence, and relatedness—the three basic psychological needs that, according to self-determination theory (SDT), play a role in fostering quality of motivation—effectively suggesting that the arts may play a role in supporting learners' self-determined motivation.

With these and other such findings, we can appreciate the increasing popularity of schools with arts-integrated curricula, such as those that adhere to the principles of Waldorf education (Reece, 2007). We can, also, appreciate why educators and administrators of non-arts-integrated schools that are underperforming (i.e., according to the standards set by the NCLB act) have turned to arts integration programs in their efforts to boost not only their learners' achievement scores in reading, writing, and mathematics, but also to foster their learning interest, motivation, and engagement. Many such programs have focused on providing learners with quality arts-integrated learning experiences while also providing educators with any necessary professional development

opportunities—a move that has been found to facilitate their successful delivery of quality arts-integrated instruction for learners (Russell & Zembylas, 2007).

Several researchers have explored the effects of arts integration programs, both within the U.S. (Cunnington, Kantrowitz, Harnett, & Hill-Ries, 2014; Duma & Silverstein, 2014; Snyder et al., 2014) and within Canada (Smithrim & Upitis, 2005). In one study, the researchers examined the impact of the Changing Education Through the Arts (CETA) program, which is a whole school reform model (Duma & Silverstein, 2014). Duma and Silverstein (2014) explored three longitudinal studies involving the CETA program, undertaken between 1999 and 2009. The researchers categorized student outcomes according to engagement, cognitive/social skills, and academic achievement (Duma & Silverstein, 2014). As it pertained to students' engagement, the program helped students make cross-curricular connections with their learning (Duma & Silverstein, 2014). Moreover, teachers and administrators both noted that their students were more willing to take learning risks and to illustrate their understanding through multiple modalities (Duma & Silverstein, 2014). They also noted an increase in their students' attention, engagement, and learning motivation, "even and especially [for] their unfocused and frustrated learners" (Duma & Silverstein, 2014, p. 10). Moreover, with regards to students' cognitive/social skills, teachers noticed that their critical thinking and problem solving skills were more developed after the program's implementation.

Researchers of another study reported similar findings after examining the influence of an arts-integrated program that was implemented as a whole-school reform measure to improve school climate and students' low academic achievement, attendance, and behaviour (Snyder et al., 2014). In comparison to a control school, their examination of the data collected over three school years revealed gains in all areas that were examined (Snyder et al., 2014). Snyder et al. (2014) noted, too, that as a result of the program, the school experienced a 3% growth in average attendance and a 28% decrease in student suspensions. Furthermore, teachers, staff, students, and parents perceived an overall improvement in the quality of their school's climate, which was one of the main purposes of the program's implementation (Snyder et al., 2014). The latter two findings, in particular, are suggestive of students' increased motivation to engage positively with their learning and schooling environment.

The findings from Snyder et al.'s (2014) study parallel those of an earlier study that explored another arts-integration program called Chicago Arts Partners in Education (CAPE; DeMoss & Morris, 2005). The researchers of this study found that CAPE programming fostered students' increased engagement with their learning; this was more particularly the case for students identified by their teachers as lower-achievers (DeMoss & Morris, 2005). Their findings, too, suggested the influence of arts integration on the learning climate that students are exposed; the arts provided students with "more positive and meaningful connections with academic work, connections that may have ancillary effects on long-term learning motivation" (DeMoss & Morris, 2005, p. 22). The conclusions of this study speak once more to the impact of arts integration on fostering learners' motivation.

In a Canadian longitudinal study, Smithrim and Upitis (2005) explored the literacy and numeracy outcomes for Canadian elementary students involved in an arts integration program called Learning Through the Arts (LTTA). Their study included over 4,000 students involved in LTTA programming and over 2,500 students in the control group, as well as administrators, teachers, and parents from each participating school. Their findings revealed that arts integration supported students' learning engagement and motivation and reached students who were not reachable through other means of instruction (Smithrim & Upitis, 2005). For example, a student who was electively mute spoke for the first time that school year during his involvement in a dramatic arts-integrated LTTA lesson on the topic of traditions. Administrators, teachers, and parents reported that engaging with the arts supported their students' cognitive, physical, emotional, and social well-being (Smithrim & Upitis, 2005)—which, according to SDT-informed studies, are benefits that can result from feeling a sense of intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1991; Guay, Ratelle, & Chanal, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2000a). These findings suggest the potential of arts-integrated instruction to facilitate UDL within the classroom by offering multiple means through which learners can attain information, engage with their learning, and demonstrate their understanding.

Perhaps it is these and other related findings that have prompted the push to transition from STEM (i.e., Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) to STEAM (i.e., Arts added to STEM). Considered an approach to arts integration, the

transdisciplinary nature of a STEAM curriculum has been heralded as a real-world approach to promote creative problem solving (Wynn & Harris, 2012) and address social issues (Liao, 2016). In an era where the focus of education systems is on cultivating learners' reading, writing, and mathematics skills, which has disengaged many learners (Ryan & Deci, 2000a) and disenfranchised those considered at-risk, the evolution from STEM to STEAM has been welcomed as a means to support diverse learners' development of STEM-related skills, while also fostering their learning motivation and innovative thinking (Honey, Pearson, & Schweingruber, 2014; United States Representative Suzanne Bonamici, 2013). Scholars have advised, however, that effective inclusion of the Arts in STEM curricula involves a collaborative partnership between STEM educators and their arts educator colleagues (Bequette & Bequette, 2012).

Thus far, the literature pertaining to direct arts instruction and arts-integrated instruction has revealed promising findings. These findings speak to the ways in which arts-related educational experiences can support various learner-centred outcomes that not only parallel 21st century competencies, such as creativity, positive social skills, and effective self-expression skills, but also suggest that arts integration can foster learners' engagement, interest, and motivation. Even so, the research literature available on the matter does not speak to learners' quality of motivation or the extent to which their motivation is self-determined (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The research literature does, however, provide a convincing case as to why inclusive educators have turned to arts integration to meet the educational needs of their diverse learners. In the following section, I focus particularly on the research literature pertaining to arts integration as an instructional approach to support learners with exceptionalities, be they within inclusive or special education classroom settings. Although the research in this area is limited (Mason et al., 2008), the studies that do exist provide a glimpse into the potential benefits of arts integration to achieve the aims of effective inclusion.

#### **2.2.4 Research Literature on Arts Integration and Learners With Exceptionalities**

In recent years, education scholars have argued that the arts are naturally inclusive and equitable for all students (Henderson & Lasley, 2014). That is because they can provide learners with varying abilities and interests the opportunity to individually and/or collaboratively engage with their physical and social environments (Cornett, 2006;

Robinson, 2013). They can also provide learners with the opportunity to foster their cultural awareness and empathy for their peers, as well as their critical thinking skills about cultural assumptions (Graham, 2009). With a multiplicity of media, inspirations, and styles at individuals' disposal, the arts welcome and embrace diversity and, in so doing, can help individuals appreciate different perspectives and embrace and celebrate the uniqueness of others (TEDx Talks, 2014).

Consider for a moment what the process of constructing an understanding of reality, or *meaning-making*, generally involves. The meaning-making process is a complex one that evolves throughout a person's life (Kegan, 1982, 1994), and, for this reason, I do not intend to trivialize it; however, if we were to describe it generally, we might say that it involves, first, a gathering of information through the various senses (McArdle, 2012; Wright, 2012). If we consider that the arts engage multiple senses (Sousa & Pilecki, 2013), then it becomes reasonable to assert, as some scholars have suggested, that when learners are not given opportunities to learn about the arts and express their learning in the arts, they are fundamentally denied equitable educational opportunities (Eisner, 2002a). Certainly with this understanding, learners' access to arts-integrated instruction can serve as a means towards the goals of equitable and inclusive education (Henderson & Lasley, 2014)—which is the same conclusion that researchers of a study came to when exploring the impact of a schoolwide arts integration program (North Carolina A+ Schools, 2001).

The notion that the arts are naturally inclusive has not been lost on special education teachers. Before its application as an inclusive instructional approach in regular classrooms, arts integration could be found supporting learners in special education classrooms (Loughlin & Anderson, 2015). With the goal of facilitating inclusive and supportive arts-integrated experiences for their diverse learners, several teaching resources have been produced for educators of learners with exceptionalities (see Gerber & Guay, 2006; Naested, 2002; Smith, 2001) and of learners without exceptionalities (see Burnaford et al., 2001; Gelineau, 2014; Naested, 2002; Sousa & Pilecki, 2013).

Learners with exceptionalities can thrive when educational experiences are individualized to their learning profiles, and the flexibility afforded by the arts provides educators with opportunities to facilitate individualized learning experiences for this

population of learners (Loughlin & Anderson, 2015). When integrated into the curriculum, the arts can empower learners to take ownership of their challenges and explore ways to overcome them (Smith, 2001). These positions suggest that, as an instructional approach, arts integration may help to assist educators in their efforts to achieve the ideals of educational inclusion within their inclusive classrooms.

Recognizing the empowering outcomes that arts experiences can engender, the National Committee–Arts for the Handicapped was founded in 1974 with the mission to “provide arts and education opportunities for people with disabilities and increase access to the arts for all” (VSA, 2017, para. 2). Later known as Very Special Arts and, now, VSA, the organization’s principles call for inclusive arts education opportunities for individuals with exceptionalities:

- Every young person with a disability deserves access to high quality arts learning experiences.
- All artists in schools and art educators should be prepared to include students with disabilities in their instruction.
- All children, youth, and adults with disabilities should have complete access to cultural facilities and activities.
- All individuals with disabilities who aspire to careers in the arts should have the opportunity to develop appropriate skills. (VSA, 2017, para. 6)

It is these sentiments that parallel those of arts-based school reforms that several school districts in the U.S. have been turning to in recent years in their efforts to positively transform their low-achieving schools and raise their learners’ levels of achievement.

In a study on one such reform, participating teachers received professional development on implementing arts integration in their classrooms through the Arts in Education (AIE) program (Lackey & Huxhold, 2016). The teachers, then, integrated an arts area into a unit of study. In her interview, one teacher described being delighted by the changes she observed in one of her low-achieving students who, as she described, would complete his in-class work and homework only 20% of the time (Lackey & Huxhold, 2016). The opportunity to engage in a visual arts-integrated project that involved drawing, however, allowed him to excel and to confidently show off his work to his teacher and peers (Lackey & Huxhold, 2016). His teacher noted that, of all the students in the class, his work was the strongest and that “for the rest of the unit, he was doing work that other kids weren’t even close to doing at that point. And I think that’s all

because of this AIE” (Lackey & Huxhold, 2016, p. 218).

Similarly, in another study initiated by the VSA, researchers examined teachers’ perceptions on the impact of quality arts-integrated instruction on the academic, cognitive, and social skills of their students with exceptionalities (Mason et al., 2008). Over the course of two years, 34 focus groups and interviews were conducted across 16 states (Mason et al., 2008). The teachers in the study reported that arts integration supported their students’ engagement and provided them with opportunities to explore the curriculum in more depth (Mason et al., 2008). Mason et al. concluded that arts integration allowed students with exceptionalities to explore and discover their voice (i.e., using appropriate ways to express their feelings), have choice (i.e., through medium use and message to be conveyed), and to access the curriculum. These findings are paralleled by those of another study in which the influence of Waldorf education on at-risk students was found to facilitate not only their access to curricula, but also their self-efficacy, engagement, and feelings of ownership over their work (Reece, 2007).

In an evaluation of prior research, 44 studies on arts integration were explored to gain an understanding of the approach’s impact on disadvantaged students (i.e., students with exceptionalities, students from low SES backgrounds, and English Language Learners; Robinson, 2013). Robinson (2013) found that visual arts integration had potentially positive effects on students’ writing, mathematics, and reading achievement, as well as on their empathic behaviours. Pertaining to the general impact of arts integration (i.e., dance, music, drama, visual arts, and multi-arts), Robinson concluded that, in addition to academic outcomes, there were potentially positive effects on various other student outcomes, including expressive and receptive language skills, social skills, risk-taking skills, perseverance, and motivation. Moreover, arts integration helped to facilitate the implementation of DI strategies, learning environments that were caring and inclusive, and schoolwide organizational changes (Robinson, 2013). As an inclusive instructional approach, arts integration afforded educators the opportunity to realize the three principles of UDL (Robinson, 2013); that is, it provided students with multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression. Robinson suggested, however, that one additional methodologically-sound study on arts integration could potentially provide the conclusive evidence pertaining to arts integration as an evidence-based practice that

can support the learning of disadvantaged students, advising researchers of future studies to employ mixed methods approaches to assist them with garnering rich descriptions of participants' experiences by which to contextualize quantitative data. Heeding the call for studies that afford more rich descriptions of participants' experiences, my narrative inquiry was designed to garner learners' lived experiences with arts integration within their regular classroom environments and explore them for what they reveal about their quality of motivation within those contexts.

### **2.2.5 Reservations About Arts Integration**

Although the literature presented here suggests that arts-related education might help to support diverse learners to gain various 21st century skills, critics have levelled several arguments against both direct arts instruction and arts-integrated instruction. Some scholars have argued that studies involving learners' arts-integrated outcomes are anecdotal, value-laden, and/or correlational at best (Winner & Cooper, 2000). They have also maintained that it is difficult to establish causation between arts learning and learners' schooling outcomes because "the arts . . . teach experiences and outcomes that are inherently difficult to measure and quantify" (Winner & Cooper, 2000, p. 67). Other researchers have noted that, in many studies, "many of the effects of arts education identified . . . were not necessarily intended as primary outcomes but were a secondary by-product of the educational practices at work in the classroom" (Harland et al., 2000, p. 17). Even so, probable explanations have been offered to counter these criticisms, such as the measurability of some artistic outcomes:

When it comes to evaluating learning outcomes . . . the arts teach measurable skills, [but] they also teach experiences and outcomes that are inherently difficult to measure and quantify. When we engage in the arts, we are likely to experience states of joy, appreciation, engagement, and flow. These are important positive experiences that enrich our lives. But they are not easily assessed by standard measures. (Winner & Cooper, 2000, p. 67)

If this is the case, we can conclude that, in comparison to quantitative methodologies, qualitative research designs may provide a better means through which to explore learners' experiences with arts integration. Indeed, this was one of the main rationales behind my decision to qualitatively explore learners' quality of motivation when learning through the arts.



### 2.3 Chapter Summary and Concluding Thoughts

Since the start of the standards-based education movement in the early 1980s (Sleeter & Stillman, 2009), education systems have become focused on STEM curricula and on improving learners' achievement in reading, writing, and mathematics. This ideological shift has come about at the expense of learners' exposure to quality programming in the arts. Despite its turbulent history and periods of uncertainty, arts education has endured, due in part to the advocacy efforts of various proponents who have argued that direct arts instruction (Eisner, 1958, 2003; Lowenfeld, 1947) and arts-integrated instruction (Dewey, 1934; Efland, 2002; Fowler, 1996; Read, 1943) can foster learners' well-rounded education—the type of education that recent advocates have suggested can facilitate learners' ability to succeed in their personal and professional lives (Pink, 2006).

With the shift in recent years towards inclusive education, arts-related education is regaining its foothold as a solution to engage disengaged learners and to provide them with authentic, sensory-engaging learning experiences. Increasingly, this pedagogy is being recognized as complementary to the aims of UDL and as a means to achieve the ideal of inclusive education. Quality experiences in the arts—often described as flexible, uninhibited, and welcoming of diversity—can support learners' physical, academic, and social-emotional inclusion within the inclusive classroom. They can allow learners to make sense of their world (Wright, 2012), support their written and verbal self-expression (Andrzejczak et al., 2005), nurture their self-concept (Leigh, 2015; Russell-Bowie, 2013), and facilitate their positive social-emotional skills (Ruppert, 2006). They can also foster important aptitudes to prepare them for 21st century living, such as perseverance in the face of challenges, creative problem-solving, and effective social communication skills (Winner et al., 2006).

Although learners with exceptionalities and their peers without exceptionalities are the beneficiaries of inclusive teaching pedagogies, their voices are rarely garnered by education researchers (Cole & Knowles, 2000; Gordon, 2010). More particularly, limited in the inclusive education research literature is the voice of diverse learners pertaining to the quality of their motivation when learning through the arts within inclusive classrooms. These limitations in the research literature—along with my personal and

professional experiences with the arts and arts integration—have fostered my interest in undertaking this inquiry wherein I questioned learners' quality of motivation in arts-integrated, regular classroom environments.

In the next chapter, I describe SDT, which is the theory that allowed me to conceptualize learning motivation in my inquiry. I explore, too, the education research literature informed by SDT, and I examine what this literature reveals about learners' feelings of autonomy, competence, and relatedness within the classroom (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Deci, Vallerand, & Pelletier, 1991). In so doing, I intend to lay the foundation upon which to relay my inquiry's methodology, which is the focus of the chapter thereafter.

## Chapter 3

### 3 Theoretical Framework

*From birth onward, humans, in their healthiest states, are active, inquisitive, curious, and playful creatures, displaying a ubiquitous readiness to learn and explore, and they do not require extraneous incentives to do so. (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, p. 56)*

Educational climates driven by policies, limited budgets, and standardized tests can come at the expense of designing learning experiences that incorporate learners' diverse interests, talents, and cognitive needs (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Educators under these conditions oftentimes seek to find any means through which to motivate their learners to achieve pre-specified learning goals—means that serve as extrinsic learning motivators that are not conducive to fostering learners' creative thinking, meaningful learning, and interest in life-long learning (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, 2017). As the above quote suggests, however, the ideal classroom environment may involve activating learners' innate propensity for learning through hands-on, exploratory experiences. The research literature reviewed in the previous chapter appears to suggest that arts-related educational experiences can play a role in providing learners such classroom environments (Burton et al., 1999; Mason et al., 2008).

Although many researchers who have explored arts integration as an instructional approach have concluded that they motivate learners, they have not differentiated between learners' *intrinsic* and *extrinsic motivation*. It is important to distinguish between these two qualities of motivation, because intrinsically-motivated learners—that is, those whose actions are driven by internally-derived rewards (Garn & Jolly, 2014)—outperform and achieve more positive schooling outcomes than their extrinsically-motivated peers (i.e., those whose actions are driven by externally-derived rewards or motives; Deci et al., 1999; Froiland & Worrell, 2016; Grolnick & Ryan, 1987; Patall et al., 2008; Ryan & Connell, 1989; Ryan & Deci, 2002). Given that many inclusive educators have turned to arts-integrated instruction to overcome the challenges associated with engaging their diverse learners, it is important for researchers to garner learners' first-hand accounts of their experiences when learning through the arts, so as to explore in what ways this approach can support their quality of motivation. Accordingly, through my qualitative inquiry I wish to explore learners' stories of their experiences when

learning through the arts in their regular classrooms for what they reveal about their quality of motivation, as conceptualized by self-determination theory (SDT). Several motivation theories exist, however, so before I detail the nature of SDT, next I outline inquirers' interest in studying motivation and my decision to select SDT as the theoretical framework informing my inquiry.

### **3.1 The Study of Motivation**

The catalyst of all human action—including learning and behaviour—is human motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Although many different definitions of this phenomenon exist, motivation can be defined generally as a set of interrelated beliefs and emotions that influence and direct behaviours and actions (Wentzel, 1999). With this definition, motivation is understood to foster engagement. Even so, various scholars have argued that engagement can foster motivation (Dunleavy & Milton, 2009), which illustrates that with all that we know about human motivation it remains an elusive construct (Locke & Braver, 2010).

Its abstract nature has led inquirers to explore human motivation through various approaches. More particularly, to examine this phenomenon researchers have done so through many different means (e.g., quantitative and/or qualitative methods), domains (e.g., psychology, neuroscience, education), foci (e.g., macro- versus micro-levels, the content of motivation versus the process of motivation), and perspectives (e.g., cognitive neuroscientific, social, personality; Clegg, Kornberger, & Pitsis, 2011; Locke & Braver, 2010; Murphy & Alexander, 2000). As a result of these different approaches, various theories of motivation exist (Roberts, 2001), including expectancy-valence theory (Vroom, 1964), goal orientation theory (Ames, 1987), hierarchy of needs theory (Maslow, 1943), and self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1977).

Motivation theories help to connect the observable (such as a person's actions) with the unobservable (such as a person's state of mind); however, doing so is not always an easy task. This is because one's state of mind—which involves perceiving, interpreting, and understanding external reality—can differ between individuals, as can their motivations, experiences, and actions. Take for example someone who is deathly afraid of spiders. If this person were to notice a spider during a grocery store visit, the individual may behave in (what others might perceive to be) an erratic manner as

compared with another person at the grocery store who perceives the same spider but is unafraid of it. In this example, there are two individuals, each with a markedly different state of mind during their respective visit to the grocery store, resulting in their differing (re)actions to the same incident. Understanding a person's state of mind, then, becomes an important element in contextualizing a person's motivations, experiences, and actions—and while these can vary from person to person, constructivist inquirers appreciate the value of each individual's lived reality. They understand that garnering the lived realities of their participants is an important element in pursuing an inclusive understanding of any given topic area.

The history of motivation research reveals a shift from a more mechanistic conceptualization of motivation from the 1930s to the 1960s—that humans are like machines “without conscious awareness or volition and controlled by environmental forces” (Graham & Weiner, 1996, p. 65)—to a more dynamic conceptualization of motivation in the 1980s and 1990s—that cognition plays a role in motivation and is influenced by individual differences, as well as social and environmental factors (Graham & Weiner, 1996; Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Mechanistic conceptualizations of human motivation understand it to be a biologically-determined phenomenon wherein behaviours are a reflection of the need for self-preservation and survival, such as to avoid danger, hunger, and thirst (Reynolds & Fletcher-Janzen, 2004). In contrast, dynamic conceptualizations of human motivation view it as a social phenomenon wherein behaviours reflect the need for achievement and affiliation (Reynolds & Fletcher-Janzen, 2004). This more modern conceptualization has ushered in more constructivist understandings of the nature of human motivation and how to explore it. Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) is one such theory with a constructivist view of motivation, which is the theoretical framework that I chose to inform my inquiry.

My search for a theoretical framework involved finding a theory of motivation that revealed something about the nature and quality of learners' motivation, so that it could help me differentiate between learners' differing qualities of motivation within the classroom (Vansteenkiste et al., 2006). Various theories met this qualification, such as flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993), framing theory (Lindenberg, 2001), behaviour-primacy theory (Woodworth, 1958), and self-determination theory (SDT; Deci

& Ryan, 1985). Of these theories, I chose SDT to guide me in my inquiry because, as a constructivist inquirer, it allowed me to take into account the *level* and *orientation* of my participants' motivation—that is, the intensity and type of motivation, respectively—and to acknowledge that the level and orientation of motivation can differ from person to person and context to context (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Moreover, SDT is the only theory of motivation that differentiates between least to most self-determined types of extrinsic motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005), which helped to facilitate a comprehensive exploration of the quality of motivation of the participants involved in my inquiry. In the next section, I elucidate SDT in more detail.

### **3.2 A Brief Introduction to Self-Determination Theory**

Described as a theory of human motivation that aligns with positive psychology (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004), SDT is one of the most widely-used theories of motivation in education research (Guay et al., 2008). This theory is based on the premise that humans are innately interested in connecting with social groups and engaging in interesting, novel, and/or challenging activities (Deci & Ryan, 2000). It also postulates that humans enjoy exploring their environments, constructing knowledge, and exercising and extending their capacities (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). As a theory, SDT focusses “on the social-contextual conditions that facilitate versus forestall the natural processes of self-motivation and healthy psychological development” (Ryan & Deci, 2000b, p. 68) and, as such, aligns with constructivist notions of lived experience—that human motivation is a culturally- and socially-influenced construct. Researchers informed by SDT understand that the factors that extrinsically or intrinsically motivate one person might not motivate another in the same way (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Tharp, 1989). Within the classroom, this is certainly also the case, which effectively highlights the challenges faced by inclusive educators in fostering the motivation of their diverse learners.

In a time where many motivation psychologists have understood human motivation to be a function of cognitive-based, goal-directed behaviours, SDT maintains that, in order to gain an understanding of individuals' goal-directed behaviours, psychological development, and emotional well-being, researchers must “[address] the needs that give goals their psychological potency and that influence which regulatory processes direct people's goal pursuits” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 228). Accordingly, SDT

identifies three basic psychological needs that influence an individual's quality of motivation, each of which shed light on “the *what* (i.e., content) and *why* (i.e., process) of goal pursuits” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 228; emphasis in original): autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In education, autonomy can relate to learners' feelings of cognitive freedom, competence can involve learners' feelings of academic self-efficacy, and relatedness can refer to learners' feelings of connectedness with and being meaningfully-related to their teachers and peers (Baeten et al., 2013; Deci & Ryan, 2014).

Although SDT acknowledges that motivation is a culturally- and socially-influenced construct that can differ between individuals, the research literature suggests that the psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are universal. That is, these needs are common to and are deemed important by individuals across cultures and genders (Chirkov, Ryan, Kim, & Kaplan, 2003; Chirkov, Ryan, & Willness, 2005; Sheldon, Elliot, Kim, & Kasser, 2001). Feelings of autonomy, in particular, have been linked to the well-being of culturally-diverse individuals (Chirkov et al., 2003). Furthermore, as it pertains to students with exceptionalities, SDT-informed studies have found that their increased feelings of self-determination can lead to economic independence and work opportunities beyond high school (Wehmeyer & Palmer, 2003). Moreover, explorations involving adolescents with exceptionalities and their need for relatedness have revealed that they value opportunities to gain and maintain friendships (Swain & French, 2000), which is a need that can influence learners' social development and emotional well-being (Siperstein, Leffert, & Wenz-Gross, 1997).

### **3.2.1 Qualities of Motivation on the SDT Continuum**

Self-determination theory (SDT) calls attention to six qualities of motivation that involve “[behavioural] and experiential correlates and the conditions that are likely to promote [each]” (Ryan & Deci, 2000b, p. 69). Each quality type is located on a continuum and is differentiated by the degree to which (a) behaviour is self-determined or originates from the self, (b) behaviour is self-regulated, and (c) behaviour is intentional and internalized or emanating from the self (Vansteenkiste, Niemiec, & Soenens, 2010)—also referred to as *perceived locus of causality* (PLOC; Heider, 1958). On the far-left hand side of the continuum there is *amotivation* and on the far right-hand side of the continuum there is *intrinsic motivation* (Ryan & Deci, 2000a; see Figure 1). Amotivation

represents the least self-determined type of motivation, where human behaviour is neither internally nor externally incited (Garn & Jolly, 2014). Amotivation involves a lack of will or intent to act and, according to SDT, results from limited feelings of autonomy, competence, or relatedness (e.g., harbouring little value or low self-competence for an activity; Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Intrinsic motivation involves taking action due to the inherent satisfaction in doing so and is characterized as highly autonomous (Ryan & Deci, 2000a).

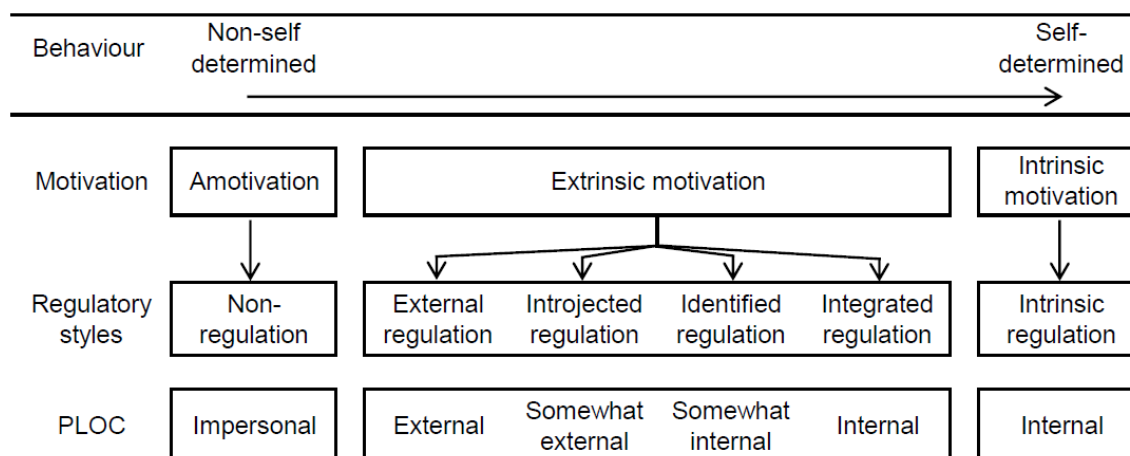


Figure 1. The self-determination theory (SDT) continuum. This figure is taken from an adapted version (Kleih & Kübler, 2013) of that provided by Ryan and Deci (2000a). The continuum illustrates six qualities of motivation ranging from amotivation to intrinsic motivation. PLOC = perceived locus of control.

Although intrinsic regulation is the ideal, not all human behaviour is self-determined and intrinsically motivated, as there may be other influencing factors that can motivate human behaviour. Taking this into account, SDT delineates four extrinsic qualities of motivation which are located in the middle of the continuum (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Extrinsic motivation generally results in “[behaviour] where the reason for doing it is something other than an interest in the activity itself” (Deci & Ryan, 1985, p. 35). Ranging from least to most self-determined, the four qualities of extrinsic motivation are *external regulation*, *introjected regulation*, *identified regulation*, and *integrated regulation* (Deci & Ryan, 1985). External regulation involves acting on an external demand or reward; it is this quality of motivation that operant theorists, such as Skinner (1953), have been most interested in exploring (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Introjected regulation can be characterized as “a relatively controlled form of regulation in which behaviors are performed to avoid guilt or anxiety or to attain ego enhancements such as



pride” (Ryan & Deci, 2000b, p. 72). Motivation characterized as identified regulation results in actions that are consciously valued (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Integrated regulation involves actions that “have been evaluated and brought into congruence with . . . other values and needs” (Ryan & Deci, 2000b, p. 73).

Two caveats, however, should be noted about the continuum. First, it should not be taken as a developmental continuum; individuals do not need to progress through each stage of internalization, but, instead, they “can initially adopt a new behavioral regulation at any point along this continuum depending upon prior experiences and situational factors (Ryan, 1995)” (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, pp. 62–63). Second, although the motivation research literature has painted quite a dichotomous picture between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, SDT acknowledges the ideal of intrinsic regulation but also identifies two qualities of extrinsic motivation that are more self-determined and lead to more positive outcomes than the others: identified regulation (the least self-determined of the two) and integrated regulation, both of which “represent active, agentic states” (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, p. 55). Being able to identify and foster more self-determined types of external motivation is particularly important within the workplace and certainly within the classroom, because of the expectation—be it as adults in the workforce or as learners in the classroom—to engage in work that, at times, may not be deemed intrinsically motivating (Ryan & Deci, 2000a).

Take for example two high school learners working on answering the same math problems for homework. For one learner whose motivation for the task can be described as identified regulation—that is, task engagement is catalyzed by “external reward internalized as valuable” (Garn & Jolly, 2014, p. 8)—the learner’s reasoning for engaging with the task might be, *I want to work on these math problems because I want to get good grades and go to university*. For the other learner with an integrated regulation type of motivation—that is, task engagement is catalyzed by “external reward internalized into self-systems” (Garn & Jolly, 2014, p. 8)—the learner’s reasoning for engaging with the task might be, *I want to work on these math problems because I am studious and being a good student is important to me*. To an observer, while both learners might appear equally interested in the same task, each has a different catalyzing interest in engaging with it. One might, therefore, conclude that the learner with a more self-determined type

of motivation, such as identified regulation, might get more out of their learning than the learner with a less self-determined type of motivation, such as integrated regulation. Educators, then, who are able to identify and foster within their learners a more self-determined quality of motivation may observe more meaningful learning outcomes from their learners.

### **3.2.2 Mini-Theories of SDT**

As a clinical theory explaining changes in human behaviour and motivation, SDT traverses three main branches of psychology: developmental, personality, and social (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Over the years, six mini-theories have derived from the macro theory of SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2017). These are (a) *cognitive evaluation theory*, (b) *organismic integration theory*, (c) *causality orientations theory*, (d) *basic psychological needs theory*, (e) *goal contents theory*, and (f) *relationships motivation theory* (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Each of these mini-theories addresses and informs motivational aspects of SDT, as well as “how each type of motivation is developed and sustained, or forestalled and undermined” (Ryan & Deci, 2000b, p. 69). I explain each mini-theory briefly here to help facilitate a comprehensive understanding of SDT.

Cognitive evaluation theory (CET) was the first SDT mini-theory to be developed (Vansteenkiste et al., 2010), and it presupposes that the needs of self-determination and competence underlie intrinsic motivation (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 2001). This mini-theory elucidates the relationship between these two needs and intrinsic motivation: the degree to which external experiences, such as rewards and evaluations, influence intrinsic motivation is dependent on the degree to which these experiences influence perceptions of self-determination and competence (Deci et al., 2001). According to CET, experiences that decrease or increase one’s perceived self-determination may lead to a PLOC that is more external or internal, respectively (Deci et al., 2001), subsequently impacting one’s quality of motivation. Moreover, experiences that decrease feelings of competence have parallel effects of influencing intrinsic motivation negatively (Deci et al., 2001), and experiences that foster feelings of competence can positively influence intrinsic motivation. This mini-theory specifies, too, the social and environmental factors that are responsible for the variability in intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Such factors include the influence of rewards, evaluations, competitions, deadlines, externally-

imposed goals, and learning climates (Deci et al., 2001). As it pertains to rewards, there are two types: *controlling*, and *informational* (Deci et al., 2001). Informational rewards can nurture one's self-determined PLOC and, consequently, intrinsic motivation; controlling rewards, however, can foster one's external PLOC, which can negatively impact intrinsic motivation (Deci et al., 2001).

Organismic integration theory (OIT) sheds light on the various qualities of external motivation and “the contextual factors that either promote or hinder internalization and integration of the regulation for these [behaviours]” (Ryan & Deci, 2000b, p. 72). Although extrinsic motivation leads to instrumental behaviours—that is, behaviours with goals external to the behaviours themselves—OIT stipulates that there are different types of instrumentality (Self-Determination Theory, 2017). Accordingly, OIT identifies four qualities of extrinsic motivation that are situated in the middle of the SDT continuum. From least to most *internalized* (that is, emanating from within), they are external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). This continuum, however, does not suggest that as extrinsically-regulated motivations become more internalized “they are transformed into intrinsic motivation” (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, p. 62), but rather that autonomy and relatedness influence the extent to which one's extrinsic motivation is internalized (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Moreover, the notion of internalization is important to note because, throughout a person's lifetime, their social values and practices are continually being internalized (Ryan & Deci, 2000a).

Causality Orientations Theory (COT) is concerned with describing individuals' tendencies to orient themselves towards particular settings and to regulate their behaviours in different ways (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Essentially, COT outlines “individual-difference concepts” (p. 20), which refer to individuals' differing developmental outcomes resulting from interactions with their social environments (Ryan & Deci, 2017). From most to least autonomous, COT outlines three types of “individual-difference concepts”: *autonomy orientation*, *controlled orientation*, and *amotivation* (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The autonomy orientation parallels autonomous motivation and indicates that individuals have a natural tendency to behave in ways that are oriented towards their interests, values, and interpersonal supports, as well as individuals' capacity

“to act with autonomy even when the environment contains salient controlling elements” (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 20). The control orientation, which parallels controlled motivation, results when individuals’ behaviours are regulated by rewards and social controls (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Individuals with this orientation can experience environments as controlling, even if these same environments provide them with opportunities to be autonomous (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The impersonal orientation parallels amotivation and refers to contexts wherein individuals lack PLOC (that is, the perception of being in control of outcomes and levels of competence; Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT) details the role of the three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in influencing individual psychological health and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Across cultures and contexts, when these three psychological needs are supported, BPNT indicates that health and wellness—as well as human vitality (Martela, DeHaan, & Ryan, 2016)—are promoted; when unsupported, health and wellness is compromised (Ryan & Deci, 2017). In recent years, researchers have used this theory to explore the relationship between satisfaction of basic needs and well-being among varying groups of individuals and within the same individual (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Goal Contents Theory (GCT) is concerned with the relationship between individuals’ goals and their attainment of wellness and the satisfaction of their basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Goals are developed or embraced when individuals believe that valued outcomes will result from them, be they directly or indirectly (Ryan & Deci, 2017). According to SDT, however, valued outcomes can either be autonomous or controlled and can result in variously-fulfilled basic needs (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Goals can be described as intrinsic aspirations or extrinsic aspirations (Kasser & Ryan, 1996), and the GCT proposes that the connection between these aspirations and individuals’ well-being is largely mediated by the degree to which the aspirations fulfill individuals’ basic needs (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Aspirations (or goals) that are extrinsically motivated are those that are not satisfying in and of themselves but that lead to individuals’ valued outcomes (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Such externally-motivated goals can involve the attainment of wealth, power, and

physical attractiveness (Ryan & Deci, 2017). These types of goals have been negatively associated with individuals' attainment of self-actualization and feelings of wellness (Kasser & Ryan, 1993). Goals that are intrinsically motivated are those that are rewarding in their own right and are more fulfilling of individuals' basic needs (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Such goals can include those oriented towards community, developing close relationships, and fostering self-growth (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Goals of this type have been negatively associated with individuals' emotional and mental health and positively associated with global measures of social functioning and productivity (Kasser & Ryan, 1993).

Relationships Motivation Theory (RMT) is the most recent mini-theory to be developed from SDT, which reflects research findings that have found that individuals' quality of social relationships depends on the extent to which they feel that their autonomy is respected in these relationships and that they are unconditionally accepted (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Not all relationships, however, are made equal and satisfy individuals' needs for relatedness. Deeply fulfilling, high-quality relationships are characterized by those within which individuals experience autonomy; conversely, relationships in which individuals feel controlled, objectified, and conditionally-accepted undermine their feelings of autonomy and relatedness and can result in poor-quality relationships (Deci & Ryan, 2014). This mini-theory brings to light the concept that positive or negative feelings of relatedness can either facilitate or undermine individuals' efforts, respectively, to internalize social values and practices (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Over the past many years, SDT-informed inquiries have shaped these six mini-theories and, taken together, they "constitute the formal propositions of self-determination theory" (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 22). Accordingly, in Chapter 6 these mini-theories informed my extended understandings of the accounts shared by the participants in my inquiry pertaining to their quality of motivation when learning through the arts. Having explored SDT in more detail, in the next section, I focus particularly on the education-related research informed by SDT and, more particularly, that which pertains to the elementary school context.

### **3.3 Education Research Informed by SDT**

Many education inquirers interested in exploring learners' motivation have been

informed by the tenets of SDT, at least since the early 1980s (see Deci, Schwartz, Sheinman, & Ryan, 1981). Within the context of education research, SDT has been validated as a coherent theoretical framework (Vansteenkiste, Sierens, Soenens, Luyckx, & Lens, 2009). Various researchers' findings have revealed that, generally, when students' basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fostered, so, too, are their academic and cognitive engagement, as well as their meaningful learning experiences (Grolnick, Ryan, & Deci, 1991; Miserandino, 1996). Moreover, autonomous behaviours have been found to positively correlate with students' school enjoyment and positive coping strategies (Ryan & Connell, 1989).

When considering that the grade-level topics that learners are exposed to are prescribed through top-down curricula and are not necessarily "inherently interesting or enjoyable" (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, p. 55), it is understood that educators sometimes revert to "external controls . . . with the well-intended belief that such contingencies promote students' learning" (Niemi & Ryan, 2009, p. 134). This may be due to the external pressures faced by educators or their beliefs that external motivators work well to activate their learners' motivation for subject areas or topics that they may not otherwise be interested in (Niemi & Ryan, 2009). The research literature, however, is clear that learners harbour the natural tendency for self-growth and for assimilating into their social contexts (Niemi & Ryan, 2009); this self-motivated inclination to learn is evident when observing children as they "play, explore, and engage in activities for the inherent fun, challenge, and excitement of doing so" (p. 135).

Although the research literature presented in the previous chapter on arts-related education and its related learning outcomes appears to suggest that the arts can provide the types of classroom experiences that foster learners' intrinsic motivation, one research study has suggested that visual arts experiences in and of themselves do not necessarily foster learners' intrinsic motivation; rather, it is *how* learners are presented the learning experience that makes the motivational difference (King, 1983). In King's study, 208 sixth-grade students' visual arts learning experiences were compared between a teacher-choice and student-choice condition. In each condition, the researchers evaluated students' achievement in visual arts (by rating products and scoring tests) and learning attitude (by administering two researcher-developed and validated questionnaires). The

researcher concluded that students in the student-choice condition exhibited a higher sense of agency (which, in SDT terms, parallels notions of autonomy), which positively affected their achievement and attitudes towards visual arts.

King's (1983) study makes clear that educators who succeed in taking advantage of children's propensity to learn through a more autonomous-supporting pedagogy can nurture their learners' quality learning experiences. This is evidenced, too, in more recent studies across various levels of schooling (see Hardre & Reeve, 2003; Reeve, 2002; Reeve, Jang, Carrell, Jeon, & Barch, 2004). As it pertains to the elementary grades, researchers exploring the relationship between teacher-supported student autonomy and their students' intrinsic motivation have concluded that, in comparison with students taught by controlling teachers, students with autonomy-supportive teachers experienced increased intrinsic motivation to learn, perceived level of competence, and sense of self-worth (Deci et al., 1981). In another study on the influence of autonomy-supportive versus controlling limits on elementary students' behaviour, the researchers found that students with controlling limits experienced less intrinsic motivation towards their learning, as well as less creative output, as evidenced through their painted work samples (Koestner, Ryan, Bernieri, & Holt, 1984). These findings were confirmed by a more recent study involving high-school students (Greene, Miller, Crowson, Duke, & Akey, 2004), as well as other older studies that found that autonomy-supportive learning environments fostered students' learning interest, curiosity (Ryan & Grolnick, 1986), and conceptual learning (Grolnick & Ryan, 1987).

Taken together, the motivation research literature can be seen as perpetuating a dichotomy between desirable motivation (such as that which derives internally) versus undesirable motivation (such as that which derives externally). Although the SDT-related research literature presented thus far suggests that fostering learners' intrinsic motivation is the ideal in classroom learning, it is important to note that SDT acknowledges that more self-determined qualities of extrinsic motivation can and do produce more positive outcomes in comparison with less self-determined qualities of extrinsic motivation. This acknowledgement is important because, at times, these more self-determined qualities of extrinsic motivation may serve well to engage learners in areas and tasks that may not be intrinsically motivating to them. Bearing this in mind, "a central question concerns how

to motivate students to value and self-regulate such activities, and without external pressure, to carry them out on their own” (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, p. 60). Several studies have explored this question, revealing some interesting conclusions.

In one Canadian study, researchers explored elementary students’ well-being and academic performance in relation to two qualities of motivation: identified regulation (which is a more self-determined quality of extrinsic motivation) and intrinsic motivation (Burton, Lydon, D’Alessandro, & Koestner, 2006). The researchers did so while controlling the confounding effects of one motivation type on the other. They found that intrinsic motivation predicted students’ psychological well-being, independent of academic performance. The researchers noted that identified regulation not only predicted students’ academic performance but, also, created a contingent relationship between students’ psychological well-being and their academic performance. They concluded that reframing extrinsically-motivated goals in terms of intrinsic pursuits (such as being fun, enjoyable, or interesting) may allow students to acquire the type of general well-being associated with setting and striving for intrinsically-motivated goals. The researchers’ conclusions parallel those of other studies involving university and college students (Sheldon, Kasser, Smith, & Share, 2002; Vansteenkiste, Simons, Lens, Sheldon, & Deci, 2004), demonstrating the universality of this strategy, regardless of a learner’s age. These findings also demonstrate that a learner’s frame of mind plays a large role in facilitating positive and fulfilling learning experiences. In the next section, I explore how the learning environment can influence learners’ frame of mind and, consequently, their motivation to learn.

### **3.3.1 Learning Environment and Motivation**

The connection between learners’ classroom environment and their motivation has been demonstrated by various inquiries, many of which are unrelated to SDT but shed light on the connection between learners’ perceptions of their classroom settings and their engagement in those contexts. In one study, when asked what makes school a great place to learn, students revealed that they liked being given choices, enjoyed engaging in relevant and fun learning tasks, and appreciated opportunities to discuss their personal meanings and values (McCombs, 1995). Through the lens of SDT, these findings reflect the learners’ desire to fulfill their basic psychological needs for autonomy (i.e., choice-



making opportunities), competence (i.e., choice-making opportunities; relevant, fun learning tasks that engage performance abilities), and relatedness (i.e., opportunities to share with others their personal learning connections, which Hutman et al. [2012] have identified as one of 13 potential behavioural indicators in exploring relatedness as a basic psychological need). More recent studies have similarly concluded that students appreciate opportunities to engage with creative tasks (Vos, van der Meijden, & Denessen, 2011), group discussions that expose them to varying point of views (Hadjioannou, 2007), and self-regulated activities (Pedersen, 2003). These findings suggest that learners enjoy learning in hands-on, interactive, multi-sensory environments—which are the types of learning environments that arts-related education can provide.

In another study, researchers tested a predictive causal model that explained “the impact of students’ perceptions of classroom structures . . . on their self-efficacy, perceptions of instrumentality of class work to attaining future goals, and their achievement goals” (Greene et al., 2004, p. 463). To test the model, a total of 220 high school students from three English classrooms in a suburban school completed a series of questionnaires over the course of three months. The researchers concluded that the perceptions students held of classroom tasks, as well as of their adaptive motivation—that is, their perceived self-efficacy, mastery goals, and instrumentality—influenced their perceptions of the instrumentality of and engagement with their learning (Greene et al., 2004).

Inquiries informed by SDT have, too, revealed the productive types of learning environments that foster learners’ intrinsic motivation. According to SDT, learners’ intrinsic motivation can be activated when their schooling experiences foster their need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). As discussed in the previous section, autonomy-supportive learning environments provide one such means through which to activate learners’ intrinsic motivation. These environments can be characterized as ones wherein learners do not feel controlled through an abundance of classroom rules and structures and are provided with exploratory tasks that provide them with opportunities to make and justify their choices (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, 2009). Through competence-supportive learning environments, learners’ intrinsic motivation can

also be nurtured. These types of learning environments are characterized by such things as challenging tasks, timely feedback, and classroom communities in which learners feel that their opinions are valued. Relatedness-supportive learning environments can, also, support learners' intrinsic motivation as these environments encourage them to respect and care for each other as a classroom community (Ryan & Deci, 2000a).

Learning environments that nurture learners' autonomy, competence, and relatedness can provide them with various behavioural, cognitive, and emotional benefits. Providing learners with a choice of learning mode (which can foster their autonomy and competence) has been found to be a useful strategy to foster elementary students' quality of motivation, cognitive engagement, and sense of exploration (Garn & Jolly, 2014), as well as college-aged students' engagement and conceptual understanding (Jang, Reeve, & Halusic, 2016). Furthermore, when learners' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fostered within their learning environments, they can experience several behavioural benefits, including prolonged effort and task persistence (Patall et al., 2008; Vansteenkiste, Simons, Lens, Soenens, & Matos, 2005). The types of cognitive benefits that learners can gain include their increased academic performance and use of higher-level thinking strategies to process new information (Vansteenkiste et al., 2004; Vansteenkiste et al., 2005). Learners' emotional benefits include increased self-esteem (Deci & Ryan, 1995) and emotional well-being (Boekaerts, 1993; Véronneau, Koestner, & Abela, 2005).

Although many educators have succeeded in using external means by which to motivate their learners to behave or perform in certain ways (such as through detentions, grades, edible rewards), externally-motivated learners lack long-term perseverance (Deci et al., 1999), have a limited understanding of conceptual material (Grolnick & Ryan, 1987), perform poorly on academic measures (Guay et al., 2008), and develop negative coping strategies when facing obstacles, including blaming and problem denial (Ryan & Connell, 1989). In contrast, intrinsically-motivated learners exhibit positive feelings towards their learning (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2002), increased effort, and improved task performance (Patall et al., 2008). Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that learners' intrinsic motivation can foster their increased engagement, interest, and satisfaction in learning (Vansteenkiste et al., 2006).

### 3.3.2 Qualitative Explorations of Learners' Motivation

The literature presented thus far makes clear that fostering learners' intrinsic motivation in the classroom can lead to various positive outcomes; however, much of the literature has been quantitative in nature, as are the majority of studies informed by SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). In recent years, SDT researchers have begun exploring human motivation through qualitative means. This transition has facilitated more in-depth explorations of the complex, individualistic, and culturally- and socially-mediated nature of motivation. Although SDT-informed qualitative studies within the field of education are few and far between, it is worth exploring a selection of them here, as they can help to contextualize this area of study towards which I hope that the meanings gleaned from my inquiry can contribute.

The majority of SDT-informed qualitative studies have involved adults and have examined such things as the influence of an exercise intervention on adult workers (Podlog & Dionigi, 2009) as well as the efficacy of professional development programs on early childhood educators (Wagner & French, 2010), elementary/secondary school educators (Aelterman et al., 2013; Van Eekelen, Vermunt, & Boshuizen, 2006), and college faculty members (Bouwma-Gearhart, 2012). Although SDT-informed qualitative studies involving learners' motivation are scarce, those that do exist reveal some interesting insights on the extent and importance of learners' feelings of autonomy, competence, and/or relatedness when learning inside and outside of their classroom.

The influence of autonomy-supportive learning environments on learners' quality of motivation is made clear when considering the findings of a qualitative study in which researchers analyzed the narrative accounts of 44 ethnically-diverse youth aged between 14 and 21 years from 10 different extra-curricular programs who experienced positive changes in their quality of motivation during program participation (Dawes & Larson, 2011). The researchers concluded that 38 youth reported experiencing positive changes due to their transformed perceptions of the personal relevance of the program. Although many students participated initially in the program due to less self-determined reasons, such as parent encouragement or to be with friends—both of which, while fostering relatedness, offer externally-derived rewards that are separate from the perceived gains of the program itself—over the course of the program their reasons for participating evolved

to ones that were more self-determined, such as to gain knowledge or to develop desirable skills. Their findings echo those of an earlier study that highlighted the influence of reframing learning goals in autonomy-supportive ways on students' motivation to engage in uninteresting activities (Reeve, Jang, Hardre, & Omura, 2002).

Our understanding of what relatedness might look like among adolescent males within the high school classroom is deepened through the findings of a Canadian study involving six students aged 16 to 17 years (Hutman et al., 2012). Through their analysis of 10 videotaped researcher-facilitated sessions, they developed 13 behavioural indicators of relatedness. These included employing humor; inviting others to contribute or participate in class work; self-initiating closer proximity; expressing belonging; defining boundaries; referencing shared experiences; making physical contact; commenting on the group atmosphere; mirroring; sharing personal information; offering positive feedback; assisting others; and showing empathy. The researchers concluded that these behavioural indicators bring to light not only adolescent male students' need for relatedness, but also the complex nature of attending to these needs.

Explorations of learners' motivation have not only involved low-achieving learners, but also those described as high-achieving. In a study involving eight high-achieving middle school students, the researchers used SDT's three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, to explore the students' cognitive disengagement (Bourgeois & Boberg, 2016). Accordingly, Bourgeois and Boberg (2016) found nine thematic categories that influenced their cognitive engagement, leading them to conclude that, in order to foster within students the feeling that learning is a "virtuous activity" (p. 15)—rather than an activity that required compensation via contingent rewards—controlling praise should be limited in favour of informational praise, effort should be praised over ability, and schools should avoid using incentive programs to motivate their students.

Researchers of another study were interested in exploring the learning motivation of 15 high ability youths participating in a week-long, all-day summer learning camp for gifted students (Garn & Jolly, 2014). The researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with participants and, in their independent and collaborative analysis of the transcripts, two general themes emerged: "(a) *The Fun Factor of Learning* and (b) *The*

*Rewards and Pressure of Good Grades*” (p. 14; emphasis in original). For the first theme, participants deemed learning to be fun when it was personalized to their interests (which effectively fostered their intrinsic regulation) or their future career goals (which effectively fostered their identified regulation) and when they were empowered with choosing their learning mode or task. Regarding the second theme that emerged, the majority of participants relayed that their motivation to achieve good grades stemmed from external rewards (e.g., monetary, verbal, ego-related) or consequences (e.g., parent disapproval, removal of privileges, restricting access to extra-curricular activities), which revealed participants’ external or introjected regulation towards achieving good grades. Although the small number of participants in each the aforementioned studies makes their findings ungeneralizable, they provide a sense of the richness of information that can be afforded when qualitatively exploring learners’ motivation through SDT.

While SDT has enjoyed wide acceptance and application in education research (Guay et al., 2008), I acknowledge that no theory is without its criticism (Miles, 2012). Two that have been brought forth against SDT in recent years are that (a) the theory presupposes that all individuals (regardless of background) have underlying inclinations towards attaining physical health and emotional well-being and (b) the three psychological needs (namely, autonomy, competence, and relatedness) are limited in scope, because they do not include other psychological needs that have been identified in the research literature, such as the need for self-esteem or sense of security (Miles, 2012). Even with these criticisms, SDT remains a theory of motivation that has been verified across many different disciplines and contexts, both within the field of education and in other domains (Ryan & Deci, 2002).

### **3.4 Chapter Summary and Concluding Thoughts**

I chose SDT as the theoretical framework to guide my inquiry because I was in search of a theory of motivation that would allow me to differentiate between my participants’ varied qualities of motivation within the classroom (Vansteenkiste et al., 2006). Furthermore, as a theory of motivation, SDT allowed me to differentiate between the level (i.e., intensity) and orientation (i.e., type) of the motivation of the participants involved in my inquiry. Lastly, SDT differentiates between the least to most self-determined type of extrinsic motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005), which allowed me to

explore participants' quality of motivation in a more comprehensive way.

The research literature on motivation has revealed four main areas where further inquiries may be of benefit. First, limited inquiries are available pertaining to learners' motivation in particular learning contexts—such as arts integration within regular classroom environments, which is the focus of my inquiry (see Evans, 2015, for a discussion on the lack of SDT-informed studies in music education). Second, the SDT-informed research literature is dominated by quantitative inquiries and there is a scarce selection of qualitative ones. Qualitative inquiries informed by SDT can play a large role in shedding a more descriptive light on the ways in which different types of learning environments are experienced by learners through their feelings of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Boekaerts, 2001). Third, inquirers who have explored arts integration and who have concluded that this approach plays a role in fostering learners' motivation have rarely spoken to the quality of learners' resulting motivation (i.e., intrinsic versus extrinsic). Distinguishing between these two types of motivation is important because intrinsically-motivated learners experience more positive schooling outcomes than their extrinsically-motivated peers (Patall et al., 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2002). Fourth, little is understood about the role that the style of arts integration plays in influencing the quality of learners' motivation. Considering that educators use a variety of arts-integrated approaches to motivate their diverse learners within their classrooms (Bresler, 1995), it may prove useful to explore the influence of these differing approaches to arts integration on learners' quality of motivation.

Accordingly, the meanings that were gleaned from my inquiry can add to our understanding of these areas that are lacking in the research literature. More specifically, through narrative inquiry, I explored the accounts of ten grade 6, 7, and 8 learners from two classrooms within an elementary school for what they revealed about their quality of motivation when learning through the arts. Having laid the groundwork for the theoretical framework guiding the collection and exploration of the field texts involved in my inquiry, I move on to Chapter 4, wherein I outline the method and methodology through which my inquiry unfolded.

## Chapter 4

### 4 Methodology

*Stories express a kind of knowledge that uniquely describes human experience in which actions and happenings contribute positively and negatively to attaining goals and fulfilling purposes.* (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 8)

If education is a form of experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) and life experiences are “filled with narrative fragments, enacted in storied moments of time and space” (p. 18), then we might say that learners live storied lives in their school environments, or *landscapes* (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). We might, also, say that learners’ storied lives in their school and/or classroom landscapes can reveal much about their lived realities. Although it was my own storied life with direct arts instruction and arts-integrated instruction that intrigued me to venture into this area of study, it was my interest in the motivation-related lived realities of learners’ in those very same landscapes that catalyzed my inquiry journey.

The quote at the start of this chapter suggests that stories have the power to convey human experience in all its complexities and intricacies, which is a position noted by other inquirers (see Lyons, 2002). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) have similarly noted that if we, as inquirers, use narrative forms to make sense of our experiences, then it would follow that using narrative methods to explore participants’ experiences is an appropriate step to take. Among other reasons, it was this stance that convinced me that narrative inquiry—as “a form of narrative experience” (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. 19)—was the appropriate methodological framework through which I could explore the four research puzzles guiding my inquiry: (a) What stories do learners tell about their motivation when learning through the arts in their inclusive classrooms? (b) What do learners’ stories reveal about their quality of motivation when learning through the arts in their inclusive classrooms? (c) In what ways do the stories of learners with exceptionalities and their peers without exceptionalities differ from or relate to each other? and (d) In what ways do learners’ stories differ from or relate to each other when considering the style of arts integration that they are exposed to?

As there exists no widely agreed-upon method of engaging in narrative inquiry (Kim, 2016) my inquiry’s methodological design, as presented in this chapter, is one that can be described as pragmatic (Squire et al., 2014). That is, for my inquiry design and

analysis I drew upon various “theories, methodologies, data and modes of analysis that [were] not unique to any one approach” (Squire et al., 2014, p. 10). Accordingly, several field texts were collected while in each inquiry field—which narrative inquirers consider as the “ongoing relational inquiry space” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 45)—and were explored thereafter.

Before delving further into this chapter, I would like to note three things that shaped my inquiry design. First, as a constructivist inquirer I am acutely aware of the inescapable underlying role that my identity and values play in influencing my philosophical stances and my interest in particular inquiry approaches (Cortazzi & Jin, 2009). Qualitative inquirers, however, do not view these influences as a limitation to their work but, rather, acknowledge and use them meaningfully to delve deeper into their inquiries. With this in mind, I acknowledge the values that I hold pertaining to inclusive education (that is, that all learners should be given equitable, quality opportunities in education) and arts integration (that learners’ education in the arts is an essential element of their well-rounded education) have shaped my decisions on which research puzzles I explored in my inquiry, which theoretical framework I used to inform my inquiry, and which methodological framework I chose to help shape my inquiry design.

Second, although the criteria to ascertain a qualitative inquiry’s trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) have varied from scholar to scholar (Freeman, deMarrais, Preissle, Rouston, & St. Pierre, 2007), they have generally included confirmability (e.g., confirmability audits, reflexive journals, triangulation), credibility (e.g., member checking, persistent observations, prolonged engagement), dependability (e.g., audit trails), and transferability (e.g., purposeful sampling, rich descriptions of context; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I add that narrative inquirers are particularly mindful of three other quality indicators of good narratives: authenticity, adequacy, and plausibility (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). My commitment towards achieving these quality indicators allowed me not only to practice “disciplined thought” (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 485), but also *phronesis* (Kim, 2016), which involves making ethical judgments “through the enactment of caring reflexivity throughout the [inquiry] process” (p. 106). Accordingly, while in each inquiry field, I used a reflexive journal to strengthen the trustworthiness of the meanings gleaned from my inquiry.



Third, no inquiry is complete without acknowledging the unequal power relations that can exist in society, such as those within familial or organizational structures.

Although I was unable to explore these areas in a deep and critical way, I recognize that unequal power relations can and do pervade relationships, such as those of the parent-child, educator-learner, and inquirer-participant. Cognizant of these power differentials, I aimed to design and undertake my inquiry in such a way as to facilitate participants' role as valued and active contributors towards my understanding of their lived experiences. I was mindful, too, of developing an inquiry design that would mitigate, to the extent possible, participants' feelings of being restricted in the quality of their contributions.

#### **4.1 A Brief Introduction to Narrative Inquiry**

Defined as the study of individual experiences as stories (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006), the term *narrative inquiry* was first used by educators-turned-inquirers Connelly and Clandinin (1990). Narrative inquiry, however, “has a long intellectual history both in and out of education” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2). Some claim that the origins of narrative inquiry stem from the 1920s when there was a focus on “Russian formalist linguistic approaches to stories” (Squire et al., 2014, p. 14) and, later, being influenced by poststructuralist and postmodernist movements, was used to analyze conversations and discourses (Squire et al., 2014). Presently, as a mode of inquiry, narrative aligns “with social constructionist arguments on the constitution of narratives, in which language, signs, cultural codes and the discursive positioning of tellers and audiences are viewed as in interplay” (Squire et al., 2014, p. 28). This view of narrative inquiry aligns with my constructivist understanding of the nature of knowledge (i.e., epistemological framework) that I held while engaged with my inquiry.

Following its first use by Connelly and Clandinin (1990), the field of narrative inquiry has grown exponentially, and, as a methodology, it has been used by inquirers in various other domains of study (such as nursing [Barton, 2006] and anthropology [Byrne & O'Mahony, 2012]). Absent from the narrative inquiry research literature, however, are explorations of learners' quality of motivation when exposed to direct arts instruction or arts-integrated instruction. It is this latter area of study towards which I intend for my inquiry understandings to contribute.

For narrative inquirers there are two considerations to note when using a narrative

inquiry methodology. First, the word *narrative* is both a phenomenon and a methodology (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998). To avoid confusion, the phenomenon is termed *story*, while the methodology is termed *narrative* (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994). Second, cultural influences may play a role in the way that individuals conceptualize their narratives. Individuals from one community might organize their narratives in a different way than those from another (Matusov & Hayes, 2000). This, too, appears to be the case in academic texts (Kaplan, 1966) and the way that children from African-American and European heritages structure and organize their oral stories; children from the former group tend to tell episodic stories while children from the latter group tend to tell more topic-centred stories (Michaels & Cazden, 1986). Keeping these distinctions in mind was important for me as I garnered and explored the field texts for my inquiry.

It has been said that narrative inquiry is a relational methodology (Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin, Murphy, Huber, & Orr, 2010), wherein narrative inquirers acknowledge that individuals are “embodiments of lived stories” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 43) and that they “lead storied lives individually and socially” (Kim, 2016, p. 18). They also appreciate that individuals are in constant relation with each other, across contexts and time (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The embodied accounts of the participants in my inquiry provided a context- and temporal-specific understanding of their individual motivation-related experiences with arts integration within their regular classroom landscape—a viewpoint that is lacking in the predominantly-quantitative motivation-related research literature (see Bauer, McAdams, & Sakaeda, 2005).

As a relational methodology, narrative inquiry involves “people in relation studying with people in relation” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 189). This relational aspect of narrative inquiry obliges inquirers “to see that [they], too, are under study in the inquiry” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 82). The decision to include my personal and professional experiences with arts integration in Chapter 1 facilitated not only my understanding of the role that I played within my inquiry, but also my entry point into it (Clandinin, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Also referred to as *narrative beginnings* (Clandinin, 2013), or *narratives of experience* (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), using my personal and profession experiences as my entry point into the phenomenon of learners’ quality of motivation allowed me to acknowledge them as influential in shaping the research

puzzles guiding my inquiry. My narrative beginnings, also, allowed me to justify my inquiry, “personally, practically, and socially” (Clandinin, 2013, pp. 43–44). Clandinin (2013) noted, however, that inquirers’ beginning narratives “do not necessarily become, in their entirety, part of the final, public research texts” (p. 83); the parts that inquirers share with their readers can be those that may facilitate their comprehension of their inquiry’s research puzzles, explorations of the field texts gathered, and interpretations of the final inquiry texts presented (Clandinin, 2013). It is for this latter purpose that I decided to share my narrative beginnings. Moreover, as a methodology that requires inquirers to practice ongoing reflexivity, I was able to inquire into my experiences through engaging in reflexive journaling while in each inquiry field (Clandinin, 2013). This ongoing reflexivity assisted me with relaying, or restorying (Kim, 2016), participants’ experiences authentically, which in itself involved “a reflexive relationship between living a life story, telling a life story, retelling a life story, and reliving a life story” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 71).

#### **4.2 Eight Key Design Elements of Narrative Inquiry Research Designs**

As is the case with many other methodologies, narrative inquiry is guided by various principles, several of which are outlined in the eight key design elements of narrative inquiry research designs (Clandinin et al., 2007). These principles are the means by which narrative inquirers’ efforts are judged (Clandinin et al., 2007). Accordingly, these elements have guided me in the design of my inquiry and in the exploration of the field texts gathered. As such, I detail each one here and address it within the context of my inquiry.

The first element involves justifying the importance of the inquiry in terms of personal, practical, and social reasons. In Chapter 1, I shared that my personal and professional experiences with direct arts instruction and arts-integrated instruction first catalyzed my interest in this area of inquiry; however, it is while considering the ever-increasing reality of inclusive classrooms and the challenges that educators face in fostering the motivation of their diverse learners that I wondered about learners’ motivation-related experiences when learning through the arts within their regular classroom landscapes. The second element involves identifying the phenomenon of the inquiry which, within the context of my inquiry, is that of learners’ quality of motivation.

The third element involves describing the methods used in the inquiry and being aware of what is “happening within that life space” (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 481). Accordingly, in the sections that follow, I delineate the steps that I took to not only locate each of the two inquiry fields and the participants in them, but also to gather the field texts and explore them. Moreover, I do so with an appreciation of the contextual aspects of the life space (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006) within which participants’ experiences unfolded. The fourth element involves positioning the inquiry in relation to other research about the same phenomenon, whether or not they are guided by complementary epistemological or ontological beliefs, while the fifth element involves stating the uniqueness of the inquiry. These two elements were the goal of my review of the literature in Chapter 2, wherein I identified the areas towards which I wished for my inquiry understandings to contribute, one of which included providing a qualitative understanding of learners’ quality of motivation when learning through the arts—an area of study that, currently, has remained uncharted.

The sixth element involves imagining the presence of participants when undertaking the ethically-challenging task of retelling their stories—that is, of deciding which stories to tell and which not to tell and which words to use and which not to use. The seventh element involves considering “the process of representation as well as the kinds of research texts intended” (Clandinin et al., 2007, p. 31). Ely (2007) echoed that there are many different ways through which participants’ lived experiences can be conveyed and, as such, narrative inquirers must be cognizant that, through their final inquiry texts, they present a version of reality and not a reflection of it. To address these sixth and seventh elements, for each research puzzle I composed several *interim inquiry texts*, which are texts created after field texts and before final inquiry texts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). For each interim inquiry text, I ensured to include as much of participants’ own words from their *textualized oral accounts* (Van Maanen, 1988), which are written texts (or transcripts) composed from participants’ oral accounts (Polkinghorne, 1995) that were shared with me during their individual interview and member-checking session. When working on co-composing the final inquiry texts, as presented in the next chapter, I did so using both field texts and interim inquiry texts.

I acknowledge that, in the final inquiry texts, some may argue that I became “the

narrator of the story” (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 19), because it is my voice that relayed the lived experiences of participants. My aim, however, was to co-compose final inquiry texts that relayed participants’ lived experiences authentically using the words that they expressed, as garnered from their textualized oral accounts. This is because, as a narrative inquirer, I value the voices of my participants; I view them as belonging to my participants and not to me (Squire et al., 2014). Through their willingness to share their voices, they granted me “unrivalled access to . . . [their] lived experience” (pp. 75–76)—a privilege that I did not take lightly.

As it pertains to the trustworthiness of participants’ accounts, some might argue that the version of reality conveyed by participants may not be accurate (Squire et al., 2014). Narrative inquirers, however, acknowledge that

[a]ny two people observing the same phenomenon will offer different accounts of their experiences. One will emphasize one aspect, while the other might focus on something entirely different. . . . [E]ven with the best of intentions, people will only ever be able to see what is within the boundaries of that which they are able and willing to take in. Those boundaries are porous, forever shifting not only between people, but within the same person. . . . [T]he closest a researcher can come to uncovering truth is to take full account of the positioning not only of others, but of themselves as well. In this way, knowledge is acknowledged as constructed, and as necessarily incomplete. (Squire et al., 2014, p. 109)

Certainly with this understanding, we can appreciate, as narrative inquirers do, that “how a life is imagined has value simply because it depends on the memory and creative storytelling of the individual” (Squire et al., 2014, p. 76). Moreover, narrative inquirers understand that their participants’ accounts can be shaped by their selective recollection of lived experiences and that participants’ accounts of event meanings are “produced from the present perspective” (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 20)—the interpretations of which may evolve over time (Polkinghorne, 1995). Narrative inquirers, therefore, deem it important to gain insights from participants pertaining to the ways in which they interpret and construct meaning from their lived experiences and contextualize them as such (Lyons, 2002). The eighth and final element involves describing the processes of analysis and interpretation. Accordingly, in the coming pages of this chapter I detail the processes that I undertook to explore and find meaning in the accounts shared by the participants in my inquiry.

### **4.3 Locating the Inquiry Fields and Inquiry Participants**

Following research ethics approval from my institution (see Appendix B) and two large school boards in Southwestern Ontario, I undertook the task of locating the inquiry fields and participants therein. This experience proved quite the endeavour, and, at times, I felt *tensions* (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) between my lived institutional narratives (e.g., time-to-completion) and the school narratives that I appreciated administrators and educators were living (e.g., curricular obligations limiting the willingness of educators to become involved in my inquiry). At my inquiry's onset, I hoped that it would include a selection of learners from at least one of the two arts-integrated schools that I contacted. This did not happen, however, due perhaps to the time of school year that I invited them to become involved (i.e., I gathered the field texts from the first inquiry field at the end of one school year and from the second inquiry field at the beginning of the next).

For the purpose of concealing the identities of the participants involved in my inquiry, I note that, throughout the process of gathering the field texts and exploring them, I used identification (ID) codes for the school and educators involved, as well as pseudonyms for the participants. I kept a list linking ID codes and pseudonyms with the identities of the school, educators, and participants in a secure place, separate from my inquiry files. As it pertains to participants' pseudonyms, the first step for me in telling participants' stories involved asking them to select their own alias by which their experiences would be identified as their own. Consequently, several participants chose unconventional pseudonyms that, perhaps, reflected (but certainly did not give away) their true identities.

#### **4.3.1 Selection of Classroom Inquiry Fields**

To locate potential regular classroom inquiry fields involving Grade 6, Grade 7, and/or Grade 8 students, I progressed through a four-stage recruitment strategy. First, I tried recruiting educators as a member of the arts integration association, Canadian Society for Education through Art (CSEA). With written permission, I posted a recruitment message on CSEA's Facebook page (see Appendix C). Second, I e-mailed an administrator of the Learning Through the Arts (LTTA) program, but I did not receive a response. Third, I connected with a board member of The Ontario Art Education Association and requested that he share my inquiry invitation with any teacher colleagues

within the two school boards from which I received ethics approval who he thought might be interested in being involved in my inquiry. Shortly thereafter, one individual who taught in one of the two school boards contacted me via e-mail; although she expressed an initial interest in becoming involved in my inquiry, she was unavailable to do so at the time that I was ready to enter the inquiry field, and she expressed that she was unable to participate in my inquiry at the start of the following school year.

Fourth, I contacted several educators with whom I had a professional relationship and was aware that they practiced arts integration within their classroom; I invited them to become involved in my inquiry and asked them to identify other educators who they were aware of engaged with arts integration within their classrooms. Through this last stage of my recruitment strategy, I was able to locate the first of the two educators who, as an occasional teacher on contract at her school at that time, consented to being involved in my inquiry; the second of the two educators was a permanent teacher colleague of the first educator who was teaching at the same school and became interested in participating in my inquiry during the start of the following school year. Each educator consented to their participation after I provided them via e-mail (and, then, hard copy) the letter of information and consent form (see Appendix D), as well as the contact information form (see Appendix E), and invited them to ask me any questions that they had, either over the phone or via e-mail.

Prior to entering each classroom inquiry field, I contacted via phone the school administrators of the school in which the first educator was located to introduce myself and my inquiry. I, also, e-mailed them the letter of information and consent form (see Appendix F), as well as the contact information form (see Appendix G). Upon garnering their consent to enter the first educator's, Mrs. Faith's, Grade 7/8 classroom in the Spring term of one school year, I garnered the school administrators' consent another time via e-mail prior to entering the second educator's, Mrs. Hope's, Grade 5/6 classroom in the Fall term of the following school year.

The school that the participants of my inquiry attended was a mid-sized K to 8 school located in an area of the city that can be described as socially and culturally diverse. I chose to include participants in my inquiry from elementary schools rather than middle schools because, in Ontario, curricula in the latter type of schools are typically

delivered on a rotary schedule by various subject-specific educators with whom learners spend a limited amount of time in any given day. It is for this reason that I became interested in recruiting participants from K to 8 elementary schools; they spend more time with their core teachers and it is their core teachers who would be responsible for exposing them to arts integration in non-arts subject areas.

Furthermore, I was interested in including participants in my inquiry who were exposed to arts integration for at least two or more lessons or periods per week. Both Mrs. Hope's and Mrs. Faith's classrooms fit this requirement, and each teacher indicated during the recruitment stage of my inquiry that she planned to deliver a Visual Arts-integrated unit in Language Arts. Moreover, I was interested in inviting learners from Grade 6, Grade 7, and/or Grade 8 instead of their younger peers because, in comparison with younger elementary learners, they are found to be more articulate and open with sharing their stories (Nolen, 2007), and they can express themselves verbally with greater ease (Krauss & Glucksberg, 1969).

#### **4.3.2 Selection of Participants**

Once each classroom inquiry field was identified, the classroom teacher was asked to distribute a package to her learners. Each package contained a (a) letter of information about my inquiry and consent form (see Appendix H); (b) letter of information and assent form for participants (see Appendix I); (c) demographic questionnaire for parents to complete (see Appendix J); (d) contact information form (see Appendix K); and (e) photographic release form (see Appendix L). In total, 10 participants from Mrs. Hope's and Mrs. Faith's classrooms were involved in my inquiry. See Table 1 for a list of all participants, accompanied by their grade level, the school term during which they participated in my inquiry, and whether or not they were on an IEP (as identified in the demographic questionnaire that parents were asked to complete during the recruitment phase of my inquiry; see Appendix J).



Table 1  
*Participant Information*

Participant <sup>a</sup> (M/F)	Grade (Teacher)	School Term <sup>b</sup>	IEP?
Crystal Starlight (F)	6 (Mrs. Hope)	Fall 2016	Y
Sacrena Rully (F)	6 (Mrs. Hope)	Fall 2016	N
Soccer Star (M)	6 (Mrs. Hope)	Fall 2016	N
Sprinkles Candy (F)	6 (Mrs. Hope)	Fall 2016	N
John Gerson (M)	7 (Mrs. Faith)	Spring 2016	N
Josh Enderman (M)	7 (Mrs. Faith)	Spring 2016	Y
Makeya Bradford (F)	7 (Mrs. Faith)	Spring 2016	N
Jessica-Marie Chance (F)	8 (Mrs. Faith)	Spring 2016	N
Michael Phillips (M)	8 (Mrs. Faith)	Spring 2016	N
Sequoia Banks (F)	8 (Mrs. Faith)	Spring 2016	N

*Note.* IEP = Individual Education Plan.

<sup>a</sup>All names are pseudonyms chosen by participants. <sup>b</sup>School term denotes term in which participant was involved in my inquiry.

Upon returning their assent and consent forms to their classroom teacher, they were provided to me, which allowed me to commence my inquiry by inviting participants to complete a 17-item questionnaire (see Appendix M). Due to the complexity of motivation as a phenomenon, I knew that it would be challenging for me to identify each participant's quality of motivation based on my observations alone, which is why I invited participants to complete the questionnaire based on self-determination theory (SDT). The 17-item questionnaire that participants were invited to complete is known as the Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A; Ryan & Deci, 2015), which was originally developed for upper elementary and middle school learners and has a moderate to high level of internal consistency with alpha coefficients ranging from 0.62 to 0.82 (Ryan & Connell, 1989). The same questionnaire was later adapted for learners with LD (Deci, Hodges, Pierson, & Tomassone, 1992). It is this latter version of the questionnaire that I used in my inquiry, so as to offer all participants (irrespective of ability) the same questionnaire to complete.

I adapted the questions on the SRQ-A (Ryan & Deci, 2015) to reflect arts integration as the topic of focus. The questionnaire consists of four subscales, ranging from least to most autonomous in accordance with the SDT continuum: external

regulation (five items), introjected regulation (six items), identified regulation (three items), and intrinsic regulation (three items). Two subscales from the SDT continuum are not designed to be included in the questionnaire: non-regulation and integrated regulation (due to purpose incompatibility and population incompatibility, respectively).

Subscale scores are calculated based on the average of response scores, and those scores are combined to yield a Relative Autonomy Index (RAI) using the following weighted formula:  $RAI = 2(\text{intrinsic regulation score}) + \text{identified regulation score} - \text{introjected regulation score} - 2(\text{external regulation score})$ . The RAI score provides an overall measure of “the extent to which a child is self-determined with respect to his or her schoolwork” (Ryan & Connell, 1989, pp. 458–459); the higher the RAI score, the more self-regulated that learner’s motivation can be described to be. In the case of my inquiry, calculating the RAI provided me with an indication of each participant’s quality of motivation when learning through the arts.

Participants’ RAI score provided an interesting indication of the varying quality of motivation that they generally held in relation to arts integration (see Table 2). Interestingly, the results of the questionnaire revealed that eight of the ten participants from both classrooms exhibited a more self-determined quality of motivation when learning through the arts (namely, identified regulation, intrinsic regulation), while two participants exhibited a less self-determined quality of motivation when learning through the arts (namely, external regulation, introjected regulation). As can be observed in Table 2, each participant had varied scores across the four qualities of motivation. It is interesting to note that even though a participant’s predominant quality of motivation for arts integration may have been identified as intrinsic regulation (e.g., Soccer Star), that participant’s overall RAI measure may have been lower than another participant’s overall RAI measure (e.g., John Gerson) if the former participant scored equally high across the four qualities of motivation.

Table 2  
*Participants' 17-Item Questionnaire Results*

Participant, Grade (M/F)	Quality of Motivation When Learning Through the Arts <sup>a</sup>				RAI <sup>b</sup>
	External	Introjected	Identified	Intrinsic	
Crystal Starlight, 6 (F)	2.2	2.2	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>
Sacrena Rully, 6 (F)	2.0	2.0	<b>3.7</b>	3.3	4.3
Soccer Star, 6 (M)	3.4	3.5	3.7	<b>4.0</b>	1.4
Sprinkles Candy, 6 (F)	2.6	3.2	<b>3.3</b>	3.0	1.0
John Gerson, 7 (M)	1.8	1.8	3.3	<b>3.7</b>	5.2
Josh Enderman, 7 (M)	1.8	2.5	2.3	<b>2.7</b>	1.6
Makeya Bradford, 7 (F)	2.0	<b>2.5</b>	2.3	1.7	-0.8
Jessica-Marie Chance, 8 (F)	<b>2.8</b>	2.3	2.7	1.7	-1.9
Michael Philips, 8 (M)	3.0	3.0	2.7	<b>3.3</b>	0.3
Sequoia Banks, 8 (F)	2.8	2.8	3.0	<b>3.7</b>	1.9

*Note.* RAI = Relative Autonomy Index.

<sup>a</sup>As per the results from SRQ-A; scores rounded to the nearest tenth; highest scores bolded to indicate the participant's predominant quality of motivation. <sup>b</sup>The higher the RAI, the more self-regulated the participant's quality of motivation.

#### 4.4 Collection of Field Texts

As a constructivist, I appreciate that multiple interpretations of reality can and do exist. For this reason, the creation of an audit trail and the use of various techniques through which to gather field texts (known as triangulation) were necessary components of my inquiry design. Also referred to as *confirmability audit* or *inquiry audit*, the *audit trail* is rarely undertaken by researchers (Carcary, 2009). Even so, if inquirers desire to be self-reflexive in their inquiries, the audit trail is an important element to achieve this aim. In my inquiry, I created and maintained an audit trail through reflexive journaling and through the organization of my field texts and inquiry texts (both interim and final).

The audit trail—which scholars (Carcary, 2009) have traced back to the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985)—involves “maintaining and reporting . . . methodological and analytic decisions” (Rice & Ezzy, 2000, p. 36). By being forthcoming about their decision-making process, inquirers can inform and empower their “readers to trace through [the] researcher’s logic and determine whether the study’s findings may be relied upon as a platform for further enquiry” (Carcary, 2009, p. 11). As elucidated by Halpern (1983; as cited in Lincoln & Guba, 1985), the audit trail consists of (a) raw data (e.g.,

recordings, field texts); (b) notes from the data analysis process (e.g., theoretical notes, initial interpretations); (c) products from data reconstruction and synthesis (e.g., categories, findings); (d) process notes (e.g., notes on research design and rationale); (e) materials pertaining to dispositions and intentions (e.g., mood, motivation); and (f) information on instrument development (e.g., pilot instruments, surveys). My inquiry design includes several of these elements, such as raw data (see Appendix N for an excerpt of a textualized oral account), notes from the data analysis process (see Appendix O for an excerpt of an interim inquiry text), and products from data reconstruction and synthesis (see Appendix P for an excerpt of the narrative coding categories used).

Although the audit trail is of great importance to foster the transparency and trustworthiness of inquirers' explorations, Squire et al. (2014) noted that, in narrative research, the lines can be blurred when it comes to deciding what is and is not analyzed from the field texts that are gathered. As a partial solution to facilitate this process, Squire et al. (2014) suggested that "researchers need to be very attentive listeners in all phases of research and be careful not to cross these lines in ways that research participants do not know or want" (pp. 99–100). In the case of my inquiry, I tried my best to mitigate to the degree possible this blurring of lines by being forthcoming with participants and their parents at all stages of my inquiry about the purpose of my inquiry and by informing them in advance about the next steps of their involvement (such as bringing a representational item to the individual interview). In order to remain the attentive listener that Squire et al. (2014) advised, I took the opportunity during participants' member-checking session to share with them my preliminary understandings of their arts-integrated experiences, as relayed to me during their interview.

As it pertains to my decision on what field texts to include and not include, when initially exploring them in preparation for the member-checking session with each participant, I read through the field texts several times and listened to the audio-recorded interviews so as to allow me to become absorbed by participants' accounts. This resulted in the co-composition of the interim inquiry texts that were shared with participants during their member-checking session. After exiting the second inquiry field, I co-composed the final inquiry texts by using the interim inquiry texts (which included participants' additions and corrections), other field texts (such as observation notes,

reflexive journaling notes), and the narrative coding of participants' textualized oral accounts. In the coming pages, I illuminate further the process that I undertook to co-compose the final inquiry texts presented in the next chapter.

If it is that all research is value-laden (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), triangulation became a necessary means through which I could mitigate any of my intended or unintended biased interpretations (Mathison, 1988). The process of triangulation ensured, too, that my exploration and interpretation of the field texts corresponded to what was happening in each inquiry field (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). While various types of triangulation exist—such as data, investigator, methodological (Denzin, 1978; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Scott & Morrison, 2006), theoretical (Denzin, 1978), and analysis (Kimchi, Polivka, & Stevenson, 1991)—in my inquiry I employed *data triangulation* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), or triangulation of field texts, which involved collecting multiple types of field texts of the same phenomenon (that is, learners' quality of motivation).

To gain a well-rounded picture of participants' lived experiences, and thereby shed light upon the research puzzle and/or phenomenon being explored, it can be beneficial for narrative inquirers to engage in triangulation by exploring multiple field texts from places where they believe that “narratives can be found” (Squire et al., 2014, p. 100). In my inquiry, there were several places that I believed participants' narratives could be found to illuminate my understanding of their quality of motivation within their regular classroom landscape. First, I maintained a reflexive journal wherein I could note my thoughts and feelings while I was in the inquiry fields gathering field texts. Moreover, aside from the accounts that participants shared during their individual interview and member-checking session, I also gathered observation notes of my observations of participants' (a) arts-integrated classroom landscape (see Appendix Q); (b) actions during the lessons in which they were learning through the arts (see Appendix R); and (c) actions during their individual interview and member-checking session (see Appendix S). Additionally, participants' arts-integrated work was collected and shown to them during their interview and member-checking session, so as to provide them with the opportunity to relive their experiences when working on their products, assist them with talking about their work, and facilitate their recollection and accounts of any motivation-related actions that I observed them engaging in during my in-class observations.

As I move forward to describe each of the gathered field texts, I note, as Clandinin and Connelly (2000) have reminded us, that “all field texts are constructed representations of experiences” (p. 106). I delve more into this notion in the coming pages. I note, too, that the field texts collected during my inquiry involved in-class observations of participants’ actions when learning through the arts, an individual interview, and an individual member-checking session. See Appendix T for an overview of the field texts collection schedule for each inquiry field.

#### **4.4.1 Classroom Observations**

Observations provide inquirers an opportunity to gain insights into the settings and events of a particular environment, or *inquiry landscape* (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), as well as the actions of their participants in particular contexts (Scott & Morrison, 2006). The term *action* is preferred by interpretivists, such as narrative inquirers, when referring to participants’ activities, rather than the term *behaviour* (O’Donoghue, 2007). This is because they argue that the latter term is linked to the realm of positivism wherein events are understood to have causes and behaviours are considered to result from external influences (O’Donoghue, 2007). Human actions, interpretivists argue, “are preceded by intentions which arise out of the perspectives which individuals hold” (O’Donoghue, 2007, p. 29). This understanding aligns with my constructivist understandings and, for this reason, I use the term *action* when referring to an observed activity related to the participants involved in my inquiry.

When designing my inquiry, it was important for me to be in the presence of participants for as long as possible prior to inviting them to share their experiences with me during their individual interview. In doing so, I hoped to facilitate participants’ willingness to go beyond their *cover stories* (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Crites, 1971, as cited in Olson & Craig, 2005). Cover stories are ones that participants perceive as culturally-, ethically-, institutionally-, and/or socially-acceptable, such as the *good student* cover story (Clandinin, 2013). Another important consideration for any inquirer undertaking observations in naturalistic settings is that, by being present in their natural environments, they may be inadvertently altering the lived experiences of their participants. Known as the *Hawthorne effect* (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939) or *observer effect* (Papatheodorou, Luff, & Gill, 2013), the cause of this is understood to be

*reactivity*; that is, when individuals know that they are being observed, the way that they would have naturally acted can change (Haynes & Horn, 1982). Prior to the start of the in-class observation period, I tried to mitigate this effect to the extent possible by introducing myself to the learners in Mrs. Hope's and Mrs. Faith's classrooms and by taking the time to answer any questions that they had about me and my inquiry.

Once my inquiry had begun, for two school weeks leading up to participants' individual interview I conducted in-class observations during lessons in which participants were learning through the arts. I observed the Grade 7 and Grade 8 participants in Mrs. Faith's classroom for seven periods over the course of four school days, and I observed the Grade 6 participants in Mrs. Hope's classroom for six periods over the course of three school days. On the first day of observations, I took note of participants' arts-integrated classroom landscape (see Appendix Q), as well as each participant's actions related to his or her quality of motivation when learning through the arts (see Appendix Q). I noted instances where participants interacted with their physical and social environments in ways that suggested either a fostering or thwarting of their autonomy (e.g., making decisions), competence (e.g., being persistent), and relatedness (e.g., interacting with peers)—the three basic psychological needs that, according to SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985), play a role in influencing quality of motivation.

Being present in the classroom as an observer allowed me to foster participants' comfortableness in my presence—and, subsequently, their comfortableness being involved in the individual interview stage of my inquiry. Narrative inquirers use the terms *living*, *telling*, *retelling*, and *reliving* (Clandinin, 2013) to call attention to the contextual nature of lived and storied experiences. Observing participants in their regular classroom landscape allowed me to be a part of the living of participants' arts-integrated experiences, subsequently assisting me with contextualizing participants' telling (or retelling) of these experiences during their individual interview and member-checking session (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

#### **4.4.2 Individual Interview**

Although many education inquirers recommend using group interviews when conducting inquiries involving children (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Eder & Fingerson, 2002), considering the personal nature of the topic of my inquiry—and that

group interviews are not always suitable for garnering individuals' thoughts on sensitive matters (Eder & Fingerson, 2003)—I conducted an individual, semi-structured interview with participants (up to 30 minutes) to facilitate their willingness to share their genuine thoughts and feelings about their motivation when learning through the arts within their regular classroom landscape. Two additional drawbacks of group interviews led me to favour the individual interview in my inquiry. First, individuals (and more particularly children) can be highly influenced by the presence and thoughts of their peers, which may potentially diminish their willingness to share their true thoughts and feelings about a topic if they think that their peers may not hold similar opinions (Arksey & Knight, 1999). Second, in a group interview atmosphere, it is possible that one person might dominate the interview, subsequently limiting the chance for others to speak and share their thoughts (Cohen et al., 2011).

When conducting interviews with children, another consideration for inquirers involves how to foster quality responses to interview questions. Scholars have found that young children are able to offer accurate and reliable accounts of their experiences (Spencer & Flin, 1993) and that open-ended questions can foster more accurate, longer, and richer accounts from them (Bruck & Ceci, 1999; Peterson & Bell, 1996). I chose to ask participants open-ended questions during their interview because they can, also, provide young participants the opportunity to use the discourses that they are familiar with, effectively fostering the verisimilitude of their stories (Cohen et al., 2011; Tammivaara & Enright, 1986).

At the end of the two-week observation period, I invited participants to share their experiences during an audio-recorded, semi-structured interview, which took place either before or after school in a resource room near their regular classroom. I note that three participants invited their mother to attend the individual interview: Crystal (in Grade 6), John (in Grade 7), and Makeya (in Grade 7). John was the only participant of the three who had invited his mother to join him again for his individual member-checking session. For their interview, participants were asked to bring and share an item that represented to them what it felt like to learn through the arts. They were asked several prompts in relation to their chosen item and about their arts-integrated products (see Appendix U).

I began each interview with a short preamble during which I reminded each



participant, among other things, that I would be audio-recording the interview and taking notes. I, also, indicated that they could choose to skip a question that they did not feel comfortable answering. Several participants took the opportunity to skip questions, suggesting their comfortableness in the interview environment. The notes that I made pertained particularly to participants' bodily actions while sharing their accounts (e.g., gestures, body positioning, gaze), which is information that is sometimes overlooked by narrative researchers when focussed on their participants' verbal narratives (Squire et al., 2014). It is important, however, to take note of participants' bodily actions because the body "asserts itself, since it is central to lived experiences and cannot be narrated away. . . . [emphasizing] the constitutive power of narrative on bodily possibility, without letting go of the idea that physical realities can also condition and shape narrative" (Squire et al., 2014, p. 81).

One of the interview prompts involved inviting participants to "Tell me a story about what it was like to learn through the arts." Murray (2003) astutely noted, however, that while some participants may do well with such open-ended questions, some others may require more encouragement. In the case of my inquiry, the majority of participants asked for clarification pertaining to this prompt, which resulted in me asking a variation of it, so as to encourage them to share their accounts (such as asking them to tell me an interesting experience or something that happened while they were working on their assignment). Once participants shared their responses to the main prompts, I, also, asked them questions related to the motivation-related actions that I observed from them when learning through the arts, so as to provide them the opportunity to share a "storied answer" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 13) and contextualize my observations. As a result of the nature of the prompts, participants' responses contained, what Polkinghorne (1995) called, *diachronic data* which "describe when events occurred and the effect the events had on subsequent happenings" (p. 13).

The process of being interviewed can be stressful for some children. It is important, then, for inquirers to do what they can to create a positive, welcoming, and comfortable interview environment and to develop a positive rapport, so as to encourage young participants to share freely their thoughts and feelings. I tried to achieve this by selecting a familiar setting for their interview. I was, also, mindful not only of the content

(i.e., clear, understandable language) and type of interview questions that I asked (i.e., open- versus closed-ended), but also of how I asked the questions (e.g., in a calm, conversational tone). Moreover, I used elements of paralinguistic speech (Squire et al., 2014) and other reassuring words while participants shared their accounts (e.g., mmhmm, okay).

#### **4.4.3 Arts-Integrated Products**

Providing young participants with the opportunity to respond to their own work can facilitate their engagement during the interview process (Brooker, 2001), stimulate their memories (Harper, 2002), and facilitate their storytelling (Einarsdóttir, 2007). Prior to participants' individual interview, I asked their classroom teacher to provide me their arts-integrated products (most of which were works-in-progress). These were shown to participants during their interview, so as to help facilitate their responses to the interview prompts. Participants' arts-integrated work was returned either to them or to their classroom teacher following the completion of their interview. They were collected again prior to the start of participants' member-checking session (most of which, by this time, were completed or close to completion), which allowed participants to further reflect on their previous interview responses and elaborate on their experiences with working on them after their individual interview. To assist me with exploring and contextualizing the field texts after exiting each inquiry field, I took pictures of participants' arts-integrated products at the end of their individual interview and member-checking session (and I received consent from all parents to do so).

In some ways, participants' arts-integrated products served as a visual narrative (Squire et al., 2014) that chronicled their arts-integrated journeys within their regular classroom landscape. One question that arose over the course of participants' interview was to describe their arts-integrated products. I soon realized that this question was important in facilitating participants' telling and re-telling of their experiences when learning through the arts. Furthermore, as a visual narrative, participants' arts-integrated products were instrumental in not only fostering a reliving of their lived experiences with working on them, but also in facilitating their ability to verbalize those accounts with a sense of comfortableness.

#### 4.4.4 Representational Item

Participants were asked to bring to their interview an artefact, or *representational item* (Keats, 2009), which represented what it felt like to learn through the arts. Each representational item served as an icebreaker—further facilitating participants’ comfortableness in the interview setting—and also served as an *elicitation strategy* (Freeman & Mathison, 2009) wherein the object assisted with facilitating participants’ responses to the related interview prompts (see Appendix U). I took pictures of the artefact that participants shared (to which all parents consented), so as to facilitate my understanding of their responses after exiting the inquiry fields. Considering that multiple texts can allow inquirers to gain a “richer and more complex understanding of. . . . how [participants] are living through experiences” (Keats, 2009, p. 182), participants’ chosen representational item served as another form of visual text through which they could express their lived experiences with arts integration.

#### 4.4.5 Individual Member-Checking Session

Between one and three weeks following their individual interview (depending on the participants’ and/or parents’ availability), participants were invited to take part in an individual, audio-recorded member-checking session (up to 30 minutes) either before school or after school. This session (also referred to as a *follow-up session* in the materials distributed while in each inquiry field) took place in the same resource room as the individual interview. During these sessions, I shared with participants my preliminary understandings of their interview responses and provided them with the opportunity to modify their accounts and add to, correct, and/or verify my initial interpretations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In my exploration of the field texts, I took into account the modifications and clarifications that participants offered during their respective member-checking session, which assisted me with authentically re-storying participants’ accounts.

A caveat I kept in mind during the member-checking session, however, was that this process could potentially result in participants changing authentic information about their accounts to misleading information, due potentially to a shared myth or their interest in concealing the truth (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Moreover, as a constructivist inquirer I acknowledge that my interpretations of participants’ accounts may be influenced by my biases, identity, and positionality, which can make it impossible to create an

“unadulterated re-description of someone else’s reasons for their actions” (Scott & Morrison, 2006, p. 132). This reality highlighted for me the importance of offering my participants the chance to participate in a member-checking session, so as to gain an authentic understanding of their accounts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and facilitate their role as *co-constructors* (Bold, 2012), or *co-composers* (Clandinin, 2013), of the narratives about their lived experiences with arts integration.

#### **4.4.5.1 Interim Inquiry Texts**

Interim inquiry texts were co-composed from participants’ textualized oral accounts of their chosen representational item and of their motivation-related experiences with learning through the arts. These interim inquiry texts were co-composed while in each inquiry field, based on my preliminary understandings of participants’ interview responses, and were read to participants during their member-checking session, so as to provide them with the opportunity to modify their accounts and add to, correct, and/or verify my initial interpretations (see Appendix O for an excerpt of an interim inquiry text). During this process, many participants indicated a handful of corrections to my initial interpretations, added some new accounts about their experiences, and verified the remainder of my understandings. The process of moving from field texts to interim inquiry texts can be “marked with tension and uncertainty” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 47), so I wanted to provide participants the opportunity to share their feedback on my preliminary understandings. The feedback that I received from participants during their member-checking session helped to shape the final inquiry texts shared in the next chapter.

To create the interim texts, I engaged in the processes of *active listening* (McCormack, 2004) and *narrative coding* (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Engaging in active listening is important when composing interim inquiry texts, because it allows inquirers to become immersed in participants’ textualized oral accounts (McCormack, 2004). It involves asking “As a researcher, how am I positioned in relation to the participant? As a researcher, how am I positioned during this conversation? How am I responding emotionally and intellectually to this participant?” (McCormack, 2004, p. 223). The process of engaging in active listening, also, effectively allowed me to develop my inquiry’s audit trail.

Narrative coding (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) allows narrative inquirers to

explore field texts meaningfully through *narrative analysis* (Polkinghorne, 1995) and gain narrative meanings from participants' textualized oral accounts. This involves paying particular attention to the “names of characters that appear in the field texts, places where actions and events occurred, story lines that interweave and interconnect, gaps or silences that become apparent, tensions that emerge, and continuities and discontinuities that appear” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 131). Accordingly, when narratively coding participants' textualized oral accounts, I took these elements into consideration.

#### **4.4.6 Reflexive Journal**

Developing and maintaining a personal voice can be an important consideration for inquirers undertaking narrative explorations. Engaging in the process of reflexive journaling can help narrative inquirers to achieve this aim (Etherington, 2009). More particularly, reflexive journals can assist narrative inquirers with focusing

on [their] internal responses as researchers and . . . reflect on [their] roles; on the effect of the research on [their] personal and professional lives; on [their] relationships with participants; on [their] perception of the effect [they] may have on [participants'] lives; and [their] negative and/or positive feelings about what is happening during the research process. (Etherington, 2009, p. 86)

Scott and Morrison (2006) revealed that there are three types of reflexivity: personal, disciplinary, and epistemic. Each is influenced by various types of values that inquirers hold, including (a) personal (e.g., values pertaining to ethics, religion, politics); (b) procedural (e.g., values which refer to research processes, including objectivity and subjectivity); (c) collective (e.g., values that involve the influence that stakeholders have on research designs and study conclusions); (d) observational (e.g., values such as those that are “concept-dependent and concept-determined” [Scott & Morrison, 2006, p. 258] that contribute towards perceptions of reality); and (e) epistemic (e.g., values that inform an inquirer's ontological, epistemological, and methodological standpoints).

As a constructivist inquirer, practicing self-reflexivity in my inquiry was of paramount importance. If identities, biases, and positionalities can shape the ways in which individuals perceive and interpret their physical and social environments—as well as the processes that they undertake to construct knowledge and meaning from them—so, too, can these elements shape the way inquirers engage with their inquiries. To the extent

possible, this limitation was mitigated through the use of a reflexive journal (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), which can reveal to inquirers their “mind processes, philosophical position, and bases of decisions about the inquiry” (p. 108).

Noting my thoughts in a reflexive journal (which I kept and maintained in an electronic document) helped me bring to light any preconceived notions (e.g., stereotypes, values, beliefs) which could have potentially played a role in limiting my ability to be open to the meanings that emerged when exploring participants’ motivation-related experiences with arts integration (Crotty, 1998). It also helped to remind me of my positionality and the lenses through which I was engaging in my inquiry (Punch, 2009). After completing an entry, I would ask myself and note my responses to the following questions: *What influence do my values/beliefs have on my ability to authentically interpret the thoughts and feelings of the participants involved in my inquiry?* and *What hidden assumptions do I have constraining or distorting the way that I make sense of participants’ stories?* (Crotty, 1998).

#### **4.5 Exploration of Field Texts**

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) discussed the importance of negotiating “an exit from being in the field” (p. 129) and indicated that, once such an exit is negotiated, the inquirer’s relationship with participants “[shifts] from the intensity of living stories with participants to retelling stories through research texts” (p. 129). The exit that I negotiated from each inquiry field on the last day of my observations involved thanking the learners in Mrs. Hope’s and Mrs. Faith’s classrooms for their hospitality, as well as answering their questions about whether or not I would return. This exit allowed me to transition into the next phase of my inquiry, which involved inviting participants to attend an individual interview (and, then, a member-checking session) over the weeks that followed. In many cases, this meant that I saw the learners in each participating classroom momentarily during this transition period, be it while entering or exiting the school on the way to or having completed a participant’s interview or member-checking session.

Upon exiting each inquiry field, I began transcribing the recordings of participants’ *spoken texts* (Keats, 2009) which they shared with me during their interview and member-checking session. While exploring participants’ textualized oral accounts, I

noted in square brackets any non-verbal aspects of their speech, such as chuckling, yawning, and sighing (Squire et al., 2014). Once textualized, I read over participants' accounts to further immerse myself in their lived experiences. I, then, used the qualitative data analysis software, MAXQDA, to explore their accounts through the process of narrative coding (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

To develop the codes that I used primarily to narratively code participants' textualized oral accounts, I used SDT—and more particularly the four qualities of motivation and the three basic psychological needs—and various elements of narrative analysis (see Appendix P for an excerpt of the narrative coding categories used). As it pertained to SDT, I developed and used codes that identified instances in participants' experiences that revealed characteristics of their (a) quality of motivation (namely, external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and intrinsic regulation) and (b) feelings of autonomy (such as freedom [e.g., independence/dependence]), competence (such as feelings of self-efficacy [e.g., feel or act effective/ineffective]), and relatedness (such as compatibility with others [e.g., friendly/unfriendly]; Ryan & Deci, 2015). As it pertained to various elements of narrative analysis, the codes that I developed and used shed light on instances in which participants' experiences revealed (a) names, places, story lines, gaps or silences, tensions, and continuities or discontinuities (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) and (b) the three commonplaces of narrative inquiry, which involved place (such as participants' school, classroom, or home landscape), sociality (such as social or personal conditions), and temporality (such as future or past actions/goals; Clandinin et al., 2007). In the coming pages, I explicate further these areas that informed my development of the codes that I used to explore participants' textualized oral accounts through the four research puzzles guiding my inquiry.

I note first, however, with great dismay that an unfortunate incident occurred between exiting the first inquiry field and entering the second one. The hard drive containing my reflexive journaling notes, the audio recordings from the interview and member-checking session with each participant in Mrs. Faith's classroom, and the textualized oral accounts of those participants was irretrievably damaged. After several unsuccessful attempts to retrieve the data through professional services, I came to the disheartened realization that this information was forever lost. With that

said, I still had in my possession hardcopies of my observation notes, pictures of participants' arts-integrated work, and the interim inquiry texts that I co-composed and shared with participants during their member-checking session (which, although they were lacking in participants' textualized oral accounts, were largely approved by participants). With the guidance of my supervisor and committee members, I was given the opportunity to include these remaining field and interim inquiry texts in my exploration of each research puzzle. Although I never imagined for this to happen, this stressing experience taught me, as I prepared to enter the second inquiry field within Mrs. Hope's classroom, to back up all of my inquiry-related files.

#### **4.5.1 Narrative Analysis**

With a desire to attain new meanings and understandings (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) pertaining to learners' lived experiences with their quality of motivation when learning through the arts, I chose to engage with narrative analysis (as opposed to analysis of narratives) in my exploration of the field texts that were gathered (Polkinghorne, 1995). Narrative analysis involves gathering information about the elements, events, and happenings related to an individual's actions, allowing inquirers to explore their accounts holistically and with attention to the uniqueness of their experiences. The resulting narratives express narrative knowledge "on the particular and special characteristics of each action" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 11).

*A narrative mode of thinking* (Polkinghorne, 1995) calls upon narrative inquirers to attend to field texts with attention to two particular processes: *narrative configuration* and *emplotment* (Polkinghorne, 1995). Narrative configuration is "the process by which happenings are drawn together and integrated into a temporally organized whole" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 5). Emplotment involves restorying participants lived experiences in ways that highlight a thematic thread, or plot, and reveal happenings that unfold towards an outcome (Polkinghorne, 1995). Narrative analysis involves attending, too, to the individualistic and unique characteristics of human action within particular contexts.

Field texts gathered through narrative analysis, however, are not usually in storied formats. Moreover, due to the nature of my inquiry's four research puzzles, as well as the prompts that I asked of participants during their individual interview and member-



checking session, the resulting textualized oral accounts that I garnered from participants were *small stories* (as opposed to *big stories*, such as life histories; Squire et al., 2014) pertaining to their motivation-related experiences with arts integration. These small stories can be described as a series of events in the grand scheme of their lived experiences within their regular classroom. As such, participants' lived experiences were often relayed in fragmented ways and sometimes involved the inclusion of extraneous events and happenings (Polkinghorne, 1995). The fragmented nature of their accounts (Squire et al., 2014) necessitated that I undertook the process of narrative configuration, as mentioned earlier, which I accomplished through *narrative smoothing* (Spence, 1986). Narrative smoothing involves excluding field texts from the inquiry texts that are not contradictory to the plot, are not significant to it, and/or are not needed in retelling participants' textualized oral accounts (Polkinghorne, 1995).

The resulting co-composed accounts (be they interim or final inquiry texts) not only highlighted “the richness and the nuances of meaning in human affairs” (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 11), but also allowed for an exploration of the *grand narratives* (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2006), *counternarratives* (Nelson, 1995), *hidden narratives* (Rolling, 2010), and/or *metanarratives* (Stephens & McCallum, 1998) that underlay participants' experiences. Grand narratives involve “theories of the world that could be applied universally, regardless of particular circumstances” (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2006, p. 22). Counternarratives are described as stories “of resistance and insubordination” that “challenge and revise the paradigm stories of the ‘found communities’ in which they are embedded” (Nelson, 1995, p. 24). Hidden narratives are stories that are unseen but lay hidden, due perhaps to the participant's unawareness or unwillingness to bring them to light (Rolling, 2010). A metanarrative is “a global or totalizing cultural narrative schema which orders and explains knowledge and experience” (Stephens & McCallum, 1998, p. 6). The presence of these four types of narratives in participants' accounts is brought to the forefront in Chapter 6 wherein I extend my understanding of the meanings that were gleaned from the first research puzzle.

Through narrative analysis, inquirers can explore participants' textualized oral accounts with a focus on shedding light on the significance of participants' lived experiences (Polkinghorne, 1995). This can be accomplished by beginning from the point

of view of participants with the aim of understanding the meanings that participants hold of an event over time and in context (Bold, 2012; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In the case of my inquiry, I was interested in understanding participants' motivation-related experiences with arts integration (i.e., an event) throughout the course of the unit (i.e., over time) and within their in-school and out-of-school landscapes (i.e., in context).

When narrative inquirers explore participants' accounts, there is an ethical consideration that they need to consider, which involves being careful not to view their participants' stories as things to be analyzed and interpreted (Munro Hendry, 2007). Viewing their participants' stories as such may contribute inadvertently towards the unethical "objectification [of their participants] that qualitative researchers have critiqued" (Munro Hendry, 2007, p. 496). Instead, inquirers need to have faith in the accounts that their participants share, which "might mean not analyzing, not verifying, not seeking trustworthiness, but 'plugging into the experience of listening'" (Munro Hendry, 2007, p. 495).

Ultimately, narrative inquirers should attend to their participants' accounts trusting that meanings will be uncovered (Munro Hendry, 2007). Through interpretations of faith and suspicion (Kim, 2016), I aimed to heed this call by actively listening to, valuing, and having faith in the accounts with which each participant in my inquiry entrusted me, and, following that, exploring those accounts for any implicit meanings, so as to ensure that those were not overlooked. Polkinghorne (1988) advised, however, that meaning is not a tangible entity and, as such, individuals can only ever have indirect access to the personal meanings held by others. The personal meanings, he argued, that participants hold of their lived experiences are always only representations of those experiences. In this respect, participants' ability to transfer or communicate their experiences to listeners is limited, because "the verbal account gives only a small fraction of the information that . . . the narrator received through sign, sound and other senses" (Cook-Gumperz & Gumperz, 2007, p. 94). To complicate things further, as it pertains to the creation of their artwork, the personal meanings that children retrospectively communicate about them may differ from the meanings that they held while in the midst of creating them (Thomson & Hall, 2008). An inquirer's access, then, to the meanings that participants hold of their experiences depends on the extent to which participants

remember those meanings, engage in metacognitive reflection about them, and communicate them faithfully to others (Polkinghorne, 1988).

#### **4.5.2 Final Inquiry Texts**

To facilitate my co-composition of the final inquiry texts, I considered my self-reflexive feelings and thoughts (Squire et al., 2014) while in the field with participants (i.e., as revealed through my lived memories and through my reflexive journaling notes). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and others (Polkinghorne, 2005) have noted, however, that, in the end, it is the meanings and social significances that participants communicate about their lived experiences that shape inquiry texts from those gathered while in the inquiry field. As such, even though I considered my self-reflexive feelings and thoughts while co-composing the final inquiry texts, it was participants' textualized oral accounts that were the focus of them.

With an appreciation that narrative inquirers can configure the field and interim texts into a multitude of plots (Stake, 1988), I chose to configure them in such a way that would allow me to explore my inquiry's four research puzzles. When co-composing the final inquiry texts, I did so with a mindfulness of four elements that I developed into a narrative analysis strategy for my inquiry. Far from a step-by-step, linear process, the four elements of this strategy served as a guide to assist me with co-composing the final inquiry texts with the goal of addressing each research puzzle. Through this multifaceted strategy, I hoped to establish a trustworthiness (Loh, 2013) and verisimilitude (Cohen et al., 2011; Tammivaara & Enright, 1986) in restorying participants' accounts, so that they were told with authenticity and integrity (Bold, 2012).

This four-component strategy involved (a) exploring overlapping and divergent elements of participants' stories, as well as any tensions between stories that could potentially signal moments or events that required further attention so as to uncover a rationale for those tensions (Clandinin et al., 2010); (b) identifying instances in which participants expressed feelings of agency, defeat, or submission (Bold, 2012); (c) being mindful of the ways that participants described their arts-integrated products; and (d) exploring participants' stories through the *three-dimensional narrative inquiry space* (Clandinin et al., 2007). This latter component was achieved through the *three commonplaces of narrative inquiry* (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), which is elucidated

briefly in the next section. Additionally, while co-composing the final inquiry texts, I paid particular attention to the parts of participants' accounts that revealed something about their feelings of autonomy, competence, and relatedness—the three basic psychological needs that, according to SDT, influence an individual's quality of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

#### **4.5.3 Three Commonplaces of Narrative Inquiry**

While I explored participants' textualized oral accounts, I did so within the context of the three commonplaces of narrative inquiry: *place*, *sociality*, and *temporality*. These three commonplaces have been described as *thinking narratively* (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000)—one of the three qualities of narrative inquiry (the other two being *making meaning of experience in relationship* and *being in the midst of lives*). Place, sociality, and temporality are dimensional considerations (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006) that narrative inquirers use as a conceptual framework for their research (Clandinin et al., 2007). Narrative inquirers must not only consider and explore them simultaneously (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006), but must also be conscious of the ways that these elements shape their inquiries and the accounts that their participants share (Clandinin et al., 2007).

The dimension of place refers to “the specific concrete, physical and topological boundaries of place or sequence of places where the inquiry and events take place” (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 480). Narrative inquirers acknowledge that locations may change as their inquiries unfold and make note of these changes as they occur. When considering place, narrative inquirers must ask themselves, *What impact does each place have on the storied experiences of participants?* (Clandinin et al., 2007).

Sociality refers to an acute awareness that narrative inquirers are in an inquiry relationship within the context of their participants' lives (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). Sociality also refers to personal and social conditions that situate and contextualize the lived and storied experiences of narrative inquirers and their participants. Exploring the personal aspects of narratives calls upon inquirers to look inward; that is, to examine internal conditions (e.g., desires, hopes, and dispositions; Clandinin & Connelly, 2006). Exploring social aspects involves moving outward by examining the environment and people in it (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006).

The commonplace of temporality obliges narrative inquirers to consider how

temporal changes influence the topic of inquiry as it relates to both narrative inquirers and their participants (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). It involves going backward and forward in time, “looking not only to the event but to its past and to its future” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50). The experiences individuals have, the people they meet, and the places in which they find themselves are continually in the process of evolving. With this in mind, narrative inquirers must be mindful of the ways in which temporality influences their inquiries and their participants’ lived and storied experiences.

#### **4.6 Methodological Considerations**

Throughout this chapter, I touched upon several methodological considerations as I progressed from section to section, but I want to highlight three additional ones here. First, participants’ narratives might be different from their lived experiences. Sometimes these omissions or distortions are intentional, but many times they are unintentional (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Unintentional distortions of individuals’ experiential accounts might be due to issues related to memory (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Kim, 2016; Squire et al., 2014) or misinformation (e.g., perceptual distortions and selective perception, misconstruction of investigator’s question; Blimes, 1975). In my inquiry, I addressed this limitation by (a) inviting participants to their individual interview within one week of the last observation day, so as to minimize the time frame between participants’ experiences and their recounting of them and, thus, facilitate their memory of them and (b) providing participants the opportunity to modify their accounts and add to, correct, and/or verify my initial interpretations of their interview responses during their member-checking session (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The second methodological consideration for qualitative inquirers involves understanding that qualitative inquirers are the main instruments of their inquiries “throughout the planning, data gathering, analysis, and write-up [processes]” (Stake, 2010, p. 55). With respect to this consideration, I acknowledged that while the meanings that participants held pertaining to their lived experiences with arts integration may have been value-laden and shaped by various culturally- and socially-mediated factors, so, too, were the meanings that I held about my prior experiences with the arts and my observations of participants within their regular classroom landscape. In other words, inquirers “may see what they want to see, see what they are used to seeing and

understand their observations in ways that they are accustomed or predisposed towards” (Scott & Morrison, 2006, p. 168). Accordingly, reflexive journaling allowed me to be mindful of the various cultural, institutional, and social narratives that shaped my identity and, hence, my inquiry design (Clandinin et al., 2007). It also allowed me to bring to light the values and assumptions that I brought to my inquiry, which could have served to inhibit my ability to be open to the meanings that emerged from participants’ accounts.

The third methodological consideration for qualitative inquirers involves considering the extent to which their inquiries may unintentionally perpetuate the stereotyping and marginalization of the participants they seek to understand and empower (Squire et al., 2014). That is, in inquiries such as my own that include young participants, it is important to note that in garnering, interpreting, and editing their accounts about “their lives *as socially excluded subjects*” (Squire et al., 2014, p. 76; emphasis in original), researchers may inadvertently be contributing towards the marginalization and lack of power that their participants have voiced through their accounts. Researchers can mitigate these criticisms by considering and including them in their inquiry’s design (Squire et al., 2014). I aimed to accomplish this by contextualizing participants’ experiences through their textualized oral accounts.

#### **4.7 Chapter Summary and Concluding Thoughts**

My interest in exploring learners’ motivation-related experiences when learning through the arts within their regular classroom landscapes was catalyzed by my personal and professional experiences with direct arts instruction and arts-integrated instruction. As a constructivist researcher, I acknowledge that my own narrative beginnings (Clandinin, 2013) have been influential in shaping my inquiry justifications and the research puzzles that I have chosen to explore. As a constructivist, my primary interest in narrative inquiry as a methodology stemmed from my desire to use narrative—the same means by which we make sense of experiences and communicate them to others (Kemper, 1984; Mishler, 1986)—to gain a deeper understanding of this area of study.

There are several considerations that I addressed in my inquiry, as outlined in this chapter. These included deciding which stories to tell and not to tell (Clandinin et al., 2007), considering the place of an inquirer’s narrative beginnings and keeping biases in check through reflexive journaling (Clandinin, 2013), and maintaining the verisimilitude

and authenticity of participants' accounts (Cohen et al., 2011) when re-storying them (Kim, 2016). These considerations were an important part of my inquiry design, as it was my desire to explore participants' lived experiences through a methodology that provided them with the opportunity to authentically and comfortably share their stories.

While shaping my multifaceted inquiry design, I kept in mind the three quality indicators of good narratives: authenticity, adequacy, and plausibility (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I kept these indicators in mind, too, while I was in each inquiry field (and after exiting it), so as to foster a respectful inquirer-participant relationship with each learner involved in my inquiry. I wanted to create an inquiry climate wherein participants did not feel restricted or controlled in the quality of their contributions and felt valued as co-constructors in the restorying of their lived experiences with arts integration (Clandinin, 2013). I hope that these aims have been communicated clearly in this chapter as I move forward to the next, wherein I explore the meanings that I gleaned from the field texts that I gathered and the interim inquiry texts that were co-composed pertaining to the participants in Mrs. Hope's and Mrs. Faith's classrooms. In so doing, I seek to establish a *narrative understanding* (Polkinghorne, 2015) of participants' lived experiences with arts integration in relation to my inquiry's research puzzles.

## Chapter 5

### 5 Finding Meaning in the Field Texts and Interim Inquiry Texts

*Before I tried, uh, drawing the dolphin, but then after it wasn't, like, that good. And, then, after my friend kind of helped me, and I'm like, "I don't want you to draw the whole thing," but, then, she drew the whole thing. And, then, I'm like, "I don't wanna, like, copy your artwork." And, then, after I tried drawing it myself. I failed a lot of times, but, like, I kept on trying. And, then, I got this. [hand placed on current artwork] . . . And, then, my teacher, she said I have to make it, like, bigger and stuff. And, then, after that was annoying. . . her telling me this is too small and stuff. (Crystal Starlight)*

In this chapter, I share my understanding of the meanings that each of the ten participants involved in my inquiry held of their motivation-related experiences with arts integration within their regular classroom landscape. Inspired by Polkinghorne (1995), the title of this chapter speaks to the exploratory journey that I embarked upon to find meaning in the field texts that were collected and the interim inquiry texts that were co-composed. It was a journey of discovery and one that shaped my holistic understanding of participants' lived experiences with arts integration.

Recalling that my narrative inquiry is of the narrative analysis type (Polkinghorne, 1995), one of the focuses of my inquiry was to explore the uniqueness of each participant's lived experiences. In order to accomplish this, each participant's account was central to co-composing the final inquiry texts presented herein, so as to highlight participants' lived experiences with learning through the arts within their regular classroom landscape. Moreover, in re-storying participants' accounts, one consideration for narrative inquirers is deciding what is and is not analyzed (Squire et al., 2014) and what stories are and are not told (Clandinin et al., 2007). With the understanding that many meanings can be gleaned from an inquiry's field and interim inquiry texts, I addressed this consideration by focusing my exploration of participants' accounts on what they revealed about each of the four research puzzles guiding my inquiry. The final inquiry texts were co-composed after I engaged in several opportunities to (a) explore the interim inquiry texts (which included participants' additions and corrections revealed during their member-checking session); (b) read through my observation notes; (c) listen to participants' audio-recorded interview and member-checking session; (d) review the narrative coding of participants' textualized oral accounts; and (e) consider my reflexive



journaling notes written while in each inquiry field.

Furthermore, my four-component strategy, as outlined in section 4.6.3 of Chapter 4, served as a guide to assist me with co-composing the final inquiry texts. This involved (a) identifying overlapping and divergent elements of participants' stories; (b) noting instances in which participants expressed feelings of agency, defeat, or submission (Bold, 2012); (c) being mindful of the ways that participants described their arts-integrated products; and (d) exploring participants' stories through the three commonplaces of narrative inquiry (namely, place, sociality, and temporality; Clandinin et al., 2007). Through this strategy, I hoped to restory (Kim, 2016) participants' accounts with authenticity and integrity (Bold, 2012).

The resulting final inquiry texts were made possible by participants' willingness to share candidly their lived experiences with arts integration; the quote at the start of this chapter suggests as much. Their willingness and candidness is a privilege that I appreciated and did not take lightly. For this reason, when re-storying their accounts, I did so with a focus on authentically capturing participants' expressions of their experiences. To do so, when quoting participants' textualized oral accounts I was attentive "to the details of respondents' speech . . . [to preserve] some of the 'messiness' of everyday talk" (DeVault, 2007, p. 267). Accordingly, word fillers—or *back channel signals* (Cook-Gumperz & Gumperz, 2007)—such as 'umm' and 'like' have been included. Moreover, paralinguistic elements (Squire et al., 2014), such as laughs and gestures, have been indicated in italicized square brackets. These elements are important to note because the body is intimately involved in the narration of lived experiences (Squire et al., 2014).

I begin this chapter by describing participants' arts-integrated, regular classroom landscape. Then, I share participants' chosen representational item and the insights garnered from them that facilitated my exploration of their motivation-related experiences with arts integration. Lastly, I explore participants' accounts of learning through the arts within the context of each of my inquiry's four research puzzles. Further to the information about each participant presented in section 4.3.2 of Chapter 4, Figure 2 offers a visual representation of the ten participants involved in my inquiry.

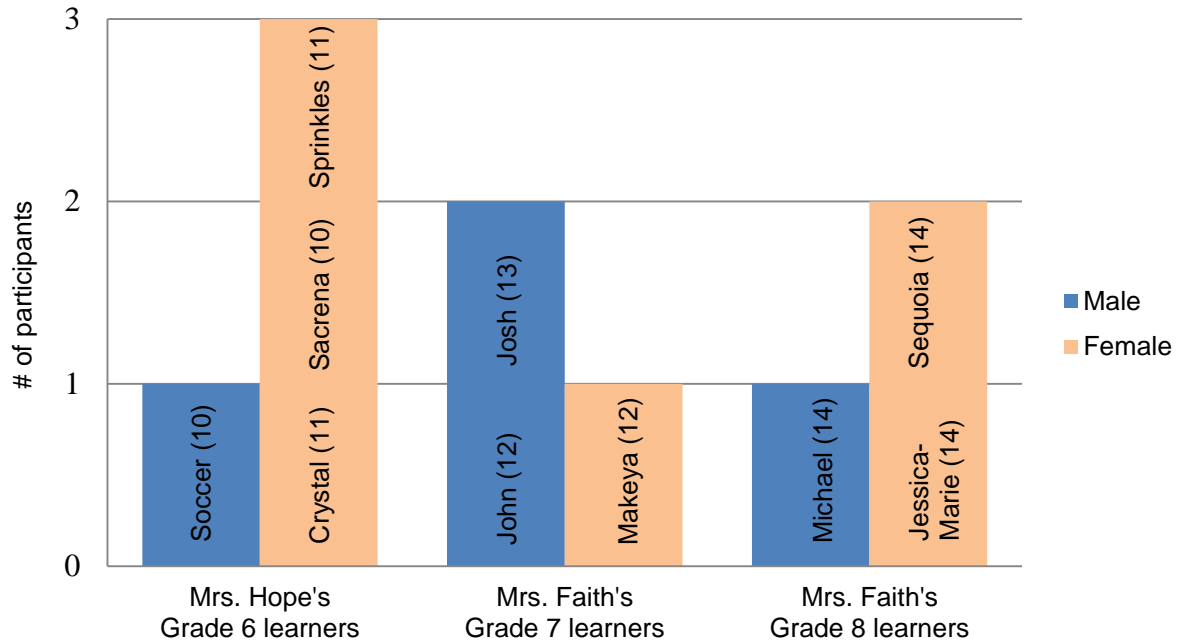


Figure 2. Participants' demographic information. Age of participants at the time of participation is included in brackets next to their name.

## 5.1 Participants' Arts-Integrated, Regular Classroom Landscape

To gain a sense of the arts-integrated, regular classroom landscape that learners were exposed to, I composed a narrative of the introductory lesson that unfolded during my first day of observations in Mrs. Hope's 5/6 classroom and Mrs. Faith's 7/8 classroom (see Appendix V and Appendix W, respectively). These narrative descriptions were based on my observation notes, lived memories, classroom photographs, and, in the case of Mrs. Hope's classroom narrative, my reflexive journaling notes. For this reason, the resulting narratives reflect my perspectives of the physical and social features that shaped participants' arts-integrated, regular classroom landscape, rather than participants' experiences in those contexts. I note, too, that participants in both classrooms were provided the opportunity to engage with an arts-integrated unit of study involving Visual Arts and Language Arts using the co-equal style of arts integration (Bresler, 1995).

### 5.1.1 Mrs. Hope's Regular Classroom Landscape and Flow of Arts-Integrated Lessons in Unit

In Mrs. Hope's classroom, learners were introduced to an arts-integrated assignment that involved creating an oil pastel artwork inspired by the artistic style of the First Nations artist Norval Morrisseau. In a later lesson, learners were asked to create an artist statement about their artwork, which is a written piece by an artist whose purpose is

to “[help] the audience access or understand [the artist’s] artistic work” (School of the Art Institute of Chicago, n.d., p. 1). My overall sense in Mrs. Hope’s classroom during the first day of observations was that learners were interested in viewing the artwork of Norval Morrisseau during the slideshow presentation and were attentive during the classroom discussion that ensued. Learners appeared interested, too, in engaging with the arts-integrated assignment that was introduced to them thereafter. Participants’ regular classroom landscape appeared to be one that included various instructional supports (e.g., Mrs. Hope modelling how to begin drafting artwork ideas), as well as emotional supports (e.g., Mrs. Hope checking-in with learners during the work period). By the end of the observation day, I sensed that learners felt supported to take creative risks on their arts-integrated assignment and felt comfortable to engage with the lesson on their own level of readiness. See Appendix V for a full narrative account of my first day of observations in Mrs. Hope’s classroom. Table 3 offers a description of each lesson focus during the observation period in Mrs. Hope’s classroom.

Table 3

*Description of Each Lesson Focus During Observation Period in Mrs. Hope’s Classroom*

Observation Day (Lesson Number)	Lesson Focus
Wednesday, October 12, 2016 (lesson 1)	lesson introduction (discussion on proper use of oil pastels, slideshow presentation of Norval Morrisseau’s artwork)
Wednesday, October 12, 2016 (lesson 2)	in-class work period (working on first artwork draft)
Friday, November 4, 2016 (lesson 3) <sup>a</sup>	in-class work period (working on first or second draft of artwork, planning colour scheme)
Friday, November 4, 2016 (lesson 4)	in-class work period (working on first or second draft of artwork, planning colour scheme)
Tuesday, November 15, 2016 (lesson 5)	lesson on artist statements (what they are, exemplars); notetaking in Language Arts notebook (definition, success criteria)
Tuesday, November 15, 2016 (lesson 6)	in-class work period (drafting ideas for artist statement)

*Note.* <sup>a</sup>Mrs. Hope was absent on this observation day, and a substitute teacher was present in her absence.

### **5.1.2 Mrs. Faith’s Regular Classroom Landscape and Flow of Arts-Integrated Lessons in Unit**

In Mrs. Faith’s classroom, learners were asked to recall the social justice themes

gleaned from a book that they had recently read called *I Am Malala* and to extend their understanding of notions of social justice by creating a mixed media newspaper collage based on a social justice topic or message of their choice. My overall sense of the field of inquiry in Mrs. Faith's classroom during my first day of observations was that participants found themselves in an energetic classroom landscape—one in which there was a buzz of interest in the unit that their teacher introduced to them, in the exemplars of various artists' social justice artworks that were shared and discussed, and in the opportunity to create their own social justice collages. My observations of their environment appeared, too, to be supportive of their academic, social, and emotional needs, which helped to contextualize my observations of participants' actions and lived experiences when learning through the arts in this and subsequent observation periods. See Appendix W for a full narrative account of my first day of observations in Mrs. Faith's classroom. Table 4 offers a description of each lesson focus during the observation period in Mrs. Faith's classroom.

Table 4

*Description of Each Lesson Focus During Observation Period in Mrs. Faith's Classroom*

Observation Day (Lesson Number)	Lesson Focus
Friday, May 13, 2016 (lesson 1)	lesson introduction (discussion on meaning of social justice, drawing symbol that represented social justice, slideshow presentation of examples of artists' social justice collages); brainstorming for social justice topic or message
Tuesday, May 17, 2016 (lesson 2)	recap of previous lesson; notetaking in Language Arts notebook (definition of social justice, elements of a collage, success criteria of mixed media newspaper collages); discussion on social justice topics or messages
Tuesday, May 17, 2016 (lesson 3) <sup>a</sup>	lesson on categorizing computer research and researching online; conducting online research on social justice topics or messages in library's computer lab
Thursday, May 19, 2016 (lesson 4)	in-class work period (cutting out newspaper clippings)
Thursday, May 19, 2016 (lesson 5)	in-class work period (cutting out newspaper clippings)
Wednesday, June 1, 2016 (lesson 6)	in-class work period (cutting out newspaper clippings, designing and putting together collage)
Wednesday, June 1, 2016 (lesson 7)	in-class work period (cutting out newspaper clippings, designing and putting together collage)

*Note.* <sup>a</sup>Josh was in his Home School Program (HSP) class during this lesson.

## 5.2 Participants' Chosen Representational Item

Prior to their individual interview, participants were invited to bring and share an item that represented to them what it felt like to learn through the arts. This item was meant to put them at ease during their interview and to serve as a visual text through which they could express their experiences with learning through the arts. Six participants brought in and shared an item (Crystal, John, Michael, Sacrena, Sprinkles, Soccer), while two others described what they had in mind, but were unable to locate their item in time for their interview (Josh, Makeya).

I felt tensions between my inquirer identity and teacher identity when, upon asking two other participants to share their item (Jessica-Marie, Sequoia), they neither brought one to share nor had one in mind to describe. In these two instances, my inquirer identity considered the implications of not asking the same interview questions of each participant; my teacher identity, however, was happy with moving forward with the interview without asking them those same questions. I compromised between my two identities and asked the two participants a variation of the question to provide them with the opportunity to share an item that could assist them with settling into their interview environment—even if their item was thought of in that moment. I asked them, “Fill in the blanks for me: Learning through the arts is like. . .” After taking a few moments to think about their response, Jessica-Marie and Sequoia shared their item: a winding rollercoaster and a handheld magnifying glass, respectively. In Table 5, I outline each participant's chosen representational item, listed alphabetically by first name and by grade level.

Table 5  
*Participants' Chosen Representational Item*

Participant, Grade (M/F)	Representational Item <sup>a</sup>
Crystal Starlight, 6 (F)	self-decorated jewelry box
Sacrena Rully, 6 (F)	Sacrena's Book of Drawings
Soccer Star, 6 (M)	book titled <i>The Hammer of Thor</i>
Sprinkles Candy, 6 (F)	musical recorder
John Gerson, 7 (M)	8" tablet
Josh Enderman, 7 (M)	favourite coloured-in drawing of Goku *
Makeya Bradford, 7 (F)	colour-changing pencil *
Jessica-Marie Chance, 8 (F)	winding rollercoaster *
Michael Philips, 8 (M)	charcoal drawing pencil
Sequoia Banks, 8 (F)	magnifying glass *

*Note.* <sup>a</sup>Items accompanied by an asterisk (\*) indicate those which were not brought to the interview but were described and talked about.

Hidden in participants' accounts of their representational item were several interesting insights about their in-school and out-of-school identities and storied plotlines. I share these here briefly so as to contextualize the meanings that I gleaned from participants' learning through the arts experiences. See Appendix X for a more detailed account of each item. In their accounts, some participants positioned themselves as a type of artist (Crystal, Sacrena, Sprinkles, Makeya, Michael), others shared something to do with the type of learner they were (Soccer, Jessica-Marie, Sequoia), and others, still, expressed themselves as a type of avid fan (John, Josh). As they described their item, several storied plotlines came to the forefront of participants' accounts: achieving success despite facing challenges (Sacrena, Sprinkles, Jessica-Marie), investigating the curiosities of the world around them (Sequoia), and delving into the depths of their imagination (Crystal, Soccer, John, Josh, Makeya, Michael). Table 6 outlines the insights garnered from each participant's account of his or her representational item—insights that helped to contextualize their arts integrated experiences within their regular classroom landscape.

Table 6  
*Insights From Participants' Chosen Representational Item*

Participant, Grade (M/F) (Representational Item)	Identity	Plotline	Insight Involving AI Product
Crystal Starlight, 6 (F) (self-decorated jewelry box)	creative designer	delving into the imagination	sought creative independence
Sacrena Rully, 6 (F) (Sacrena's Book of Drawings)	accomplished artist	achieving success despite challenges	assisted peers with drawings
Soccer Star, 6 (M) (book titled <i>The Hammer of Thor</i> )	science fiction reader; good student	delving into the imagination	chose subject matter inspired by sci-fi book series
Sprinkles Candy, 6 (F) (musical recorder)	diligent musician	achieving success despite challenges	adapted subject matter of artwork
John Gerson, 7 (M) (8" tablet)	avid gaming fan	delving into the imagination	chose topic inspired by gaming
Josh Enderman, 7 (M) (favourite coloured-in drawing of Goku)	avid anim� fan; technicolour dreamer	delving into the imagination	chose to add a lot of colour
Makeya Bradford, 7 (F) (colour-changing pencil)	imaginative artist	delving into the imagination	followed creative instincts
Jessica-Marie Chance, 8 (F) (winding rollercoaster)	adventure-seeker	achieving success despite challenges	felt excited without feeling apprehension
Michael Philips, 8 (M) (charcoal drawing pencil)	imaginative artist	delving into the imagination	lacked feelings of comfort & freedom in collage-making
Sequoia Banks, 8 (F) (magnifying glass)	inquisitive explorer	investigating the world's curiosities	experimented with different media

*Note.* AI = arts-integrated.

### 5.3 Exploring Each Research Puzzle

As I began exploring the field texts and interim inquiry texts to co-compose the final inquiry texts, my goal was for participants' textualized oral accounts (Van Maaen, 1988) to tell their stories. In doing so, however, Squire et al. (2014) reminded narrative inquirers that some participants' "stories are more fragmentary than others, particularly in their spoken versions, and might not 'count' as stories for all researchers, although increasingly, fragmented stories are . . . becoming part of the main materials of narrative research" (pp. 10–11). In my inquiry, this was the case with several participants sharing

unfragmented descriptions of their experiences with arts integration (Sacrena, Soccer in Mrs. Hope's classroom; John, Makeya, Jessica-Marie in Mrs. Faith's classroom). Several others, however, shared more fragmented accounts (Crystal, Sprinkles in Mrs. Hope's classroom; Josh, Michael, Sequoia in Mrs. Faith's classroom), which necessitated an increased level of narrative smoothing (Spence, 1986).

I note, too, that with the loss of my reflexive journaling notes and the textualized oral accounts of the six participants from Mrs. Faith's classroom who worked on their social justice collage, the co-compositions that I share here pertaining to these participants are ones that derived from my lived memories, classroom and interview observations, and the first set of interim inquiry texts that I co-composed based on my preliminary understandings of their interview responses (which I shared with participants at their member-checking session, so as to give them a chance to add to, correct, and/or verify them). I acknowledge, however, that my understandings of the remaining field and interim inquiry texts collected from Mrs. Faith's classroom are preliminary in comparison to the in depth understandings that I was able to glean from exploring the entirety of texts and materials collected from the participants in Mrs. Hope's classroom. With these caveats, I share the meanings that I gleaned from exploring the field texts that were collected and the inquiry texts that were co-composed in relation to each of my inquiry's four research puzzles.

### **5.3.1 Research Puzzle 1**

The first research puzzle guiding my inquiry was, *What stories do learners tell about their motivation when learning through the arts in their inclusive classrooms?* To explore this question, I looked at participants' accounts for what they revealed generally about their motivation when learning through arts within their regular classroom landscape. I did so within the context of self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985), which is the theoretical framework that I used to conceptualize my understanding of learners' motivation. With this in mind, my explorations revealed three themes that emerged pertaining to participants' feelings of autonomy, competence, and relatedness—the three basic psychological needs identified by SDT.

The first theme that came to light related to stories of autonomy: Participants sought to make a personal connection with their work, and, in so doing, their resulting



products were expressions of their in-school and/or out-of-school identities. The second theme involved stories of competence: Participants exhibited flexible thinking that allowed them to turn mistakes and challenges into opportunities to move their work into other directions. The third theme that arose pertained to stories of relatedness: Participants gave freely of their ideas, feedback, and assistance to peers and were, also, willing to accept the same offered by their teachers and peers.

### **5.3.1.1 Theme One: Stories of Autonomy—Arts Integration as Expressing Identities**

Upon exploring participants' accounts in conjunction with their arts-integrated products, their expressions of identity leapt to the forefront, which effectively transformed their work into identity texts—that is, products or performances that reflect something about their creator (Cummins, 2009). This section on participants' small stories (Squire et al., 2014) of autonomy is lengthy because it introduces participants' arts-integrated work as products of expressing their autonomy and sets the stage for the stories of competence and relatedness that follow, which are considerably shorter in length. In participants' accounts, several common elements of their experiences of autonomy came to light, such as a desire to express their cognitive freedom (e.g., independence) and to make decisions, as well as instances that fostered or thwarted their positive emotional state (e.g., calmness, happiness) and sense of individuality (Ryan & Deci, 2015).

In Mrs. Hope's classroom, Crystal's arts-integrated work hinted towards being an identity text as she described the importance of knowing that the work that went into it and its design were fully her own, largely uninfluenced by the help of others (see Figure 3). She wanted to feel as if the work that she produced was original and reflected her individuality, which she accomplished by limiting the extent of help that she received from her friends. As she explained,

Before I tried, uh, drawing the dolphin, but then after it wasn't, like, that good. And, then, after my friend kind of helped me, and I'm like "I don't want you to draw the whole thing," but then she drew the whole thing. And, then, I'm like "I don't wanna, like, copy your artwork." And, then, after I tried drawing it myself. I failed a lot of times, but, like, I kept on trying. (Crystal Starlight)

Although at first she garnered assistance from a friend, Crystal wanted to ensure that the help she received would not result in a design that she felt no longer reflected her efforts.

Crystal's dedication to creating an individualistic artwork motivated her to work harder to draw her dolphin so that her final work reflected her ideas and abilities. Ensuring that her work was not a copy of her friend's was important to Crystal, suggesting that she valued creating something that reflected her individuality and cognitive freedom.



Figure 3. Crystal's Norval Morriseau-inspired artwork.

Crystal's artist statement, which revealed her artwork's message that "everyone's beautiful" (Crystal Starlight), highlighted further the extent to which her arts-integrated work reflected her identity:

Everyone can be who they want to be. Everyone [*sic*] is different people have different race some people have spots some people have stripes some people are slow in speed limit and some people have stripes but one thing that is common is everyone is unique

She explained further that her artwork and artist statement expressed the message that "[people] should be their selves. . . . And people shouldn't make fun of them for, like, who they are" (Crystal Starlight). Her choice of message is poignant particularly when contextualized alongside her account of an encounter with a group of her peers, which I observed during one of the observation days. The encounter took place during an in-class work period in which a substitute teacher was present in Mrs. Hope's absence. Some of her female classmates were laughing at something they were looking at on the classroom laptop screen. As Crystal explained, they "were pointing at me, like, saying, 'That's her'" (Crystal Starlight). As she walked over to see what they were looking at, she was surprised to see that "it was a monkey" (Crystal Starlight). This experience was indicative of the types of peer interactions that she sometimes faced within her classroom and playground landscapes, which made her "kind of used to it" (Crystal Starlight). With this experience in mind, her artwork's message appeared to be an indirect response to her

classmates who, it appeared, did not always accept her for who she was. The freedom to choose a message that she connected with based on her personal schooling experiences allowed her arts-integrated products to serve as identity texts that reflected her beliefs about the importance of accepting the diversity and uniqueness of others.

Sacrena spoke about how her fondness for her chosen subject matter came to be. As she explained, “once, when [my family and I] were, like, on this, like, ferry, I saw a bunch of dolphins. Like, they were, like, swimming like that, and then I was like, ‘I love dolphins’” (Sacrena Rully). Given the freedom to select any animal as the subject matter for her artwork, she chose her favourite one (see Figure 4). With her subject matter in place, the message that she wanted to communicate through her work was one that resonated within her. Recalling a book about dolphins that she read as a young child, she explained:

I wanted to do [this topic] because . . . when I was little, I read this book about dolphins. . . . [the book] told me about, like, how fishermen, they catch them and, then . . . there were, like, endangered species of dolphins. . . . I always used to remember [this issue]. . . . So, then, I would always, like, write about dolphins, because I love them. . . Mrs. Hope said we needed. . . . a motive behind what we were doing. So, then, I just decided to do that. (Sacrena Rully)

In her account, Sacrena recalled how her passion for dolphins came to be and, in so doing, revealed her interest in communicating how unsafe fishing practices threatened the existence of certain dolphin species.



Figure 4. Sacrena’s Norval Morrisseau-inspired artwork.

Through her artist statement, Sacrena’s message was elucidated more fully:

My art peice [*sic*] shows the dangers a dolphin faces. I feel very passionate about the safety of dolphins (especially endangered ones.) My art piece can help show people what kind of danger fishermen put dolphins (and other sea animals) in

when they fish. I used dark oil pastels everywhere except in the dolphin. I used dark colours to represent a negative feeling since all the fishing made that area scary and sad. The dolphin had light colours because it shows its curiosity to everything. The dolphin also doesn't feel sad because it doesn't know the danger of touching a fishing hook.

With her personal interest in bringing increased awareness to this cause, she decided to create an artwork that reflected her concerns. In so doing, her artwork served as an identity text through which she expressed herself as a dolphin-lover who was compelled to do her part to help save endangered dolphins.

In Soccer's account, he explained how he came up with the idea to incorporate three different animals into his artwork (see Figure 5). Inspired by the science-fiction series *Magnus Chase and The Gods of Asgard*—the same series to which the book that he shared as his representational item belonged—he emphasized that the three animals came from different books within the series:

The only reason I chose these three animals, because they were in the book. . . . They weren't joined. They were in separate books. So, the eagle and the dolphin were in the first book. The beaver was in the second book. (Soccer Star)

As he explained his idea to combine the three animals from two different books in the series, Soccer's sense of cognitive freedom and decision-making was highlighted. To name his animal creation, he explained that the "student teacher said, like, . . . if particular things go to one group, it's called a hybrid. So I call this Hybrid Jack" (Soccer Star). As Soccer later explained, *Hybrid* referred to his mixture of three animals and *Jack* referred to the name of the sword pictured on the front cover of the book that he shared as his representational item.



Figure 5. Soccer's Norval Morrisseau-inspired artwork.

Soccer's artist statement revealed, further, the symbolism behind the three

animals that he chose to combine into one hybrid animal:

This art piece represents land, water, and air using animals. Each of these 3 animals represents one third of my work. The dolphin represents water and how it moves underwater. The beaver represents land, and how it moves around. The eagle represents air, and how it moves. This art means the different capabilities that each animal has like to swim underwater, to run on land, and to soar through the sky. It means how they escape from predators, try catching their food, and more.

Through his artist statement, Soccer's identity was established as the mastermind behind his Hybrid Jack. Speaking about his thoughts on his artistic creation and artist statement, Soccer's identity was showcased further as the creator of something original. His identity as a helpful classmate was also established as he explained that his happiness with his original creation fostered within him a desire to help others with their creations:

I wrote really good things to [my artist statement]. . . . In my opinion . . . I was the first one to create this kind of art, when I was doing it. So I kept on working. That's why sometimes . . . I was, like, happy . . . to help other people. Because sometimes Mrs. Hope is occupied doing something else. (Soccer Star)

Sprinkles began her account of working on her artwork by sharing, "I felt excited. . . . Because I really, really, really like art. I draw a lot. Yup" (Sprinkles Candy). She continued by speaking mostly about her choice of animals in her work, which she named 'Animainia' (see Figure 6). In her description of her artwork, she referred to two groups of animals. In the first, there was the fish in the centre and the group that was trying to live harmoniously with it and with others. In the second, there were the other animals that were the fish's predators: "Usually, like, birds are trying to attack fish, dogs trying to, like—everything's mostly trying to eat [the fish] . . . except for. . . [the] butterfly, jellyfish, and turtle. . . . Like the fish wants to become friends with everyone" (Sprinkles Candy). Her story of friendship among the groups of animals paralleled her bubbly nature and pleasant demeanor that I observed within her regular classroom landscape.



Figure 6. Sprinkles's Norval Morrisseau-inspired artwork. Photograph has been altered to conceal the participant's real name.

Sprinkles spoke, too, about helping Crystal who came to class late during the first observation period, “cause she didn’t have anything on her page, and so, she was asking if, umm, she could see my drawing, so I showed it to her. And she got, like, inspiration” (Sprinkles Candy). Helping Crystal made her “happy, ‘cause she usually doesn’t do her work, often. . . [and] because I just, like showing people my artwork” (Sprinkles Candy). Her account of being friendly and helpful to Crystal was reminiscent of the characteristics of the fish that she described in her artwork—that of wanting to be friends with everyone—which, perhaps, represented a trait that she valued in others. Her artist statement elucidated this connection further:

Hello! I’m [Sprinkles] and this is my art piece Animainia. It has 8 animals in it. They are a bear, turtle, fish, bird, dolphin, butterfly, jellyfish and wolf. I decided to add bright, vibrant [*sic*] colours to my piece to make it stand out. My idea for this piece was to make a [*sic*] art piece that tells a story about how animals are connected in a way, like in the picture, all the animals are connected by fish because the fish wants to be friends with its enimes [*sic*] and nonenimes [*sic*].

In Mrs. Faith’s classroom, although John and his classmates had the cognitive freedom and decision-making power to choose a social justice topic or message to communicate through their collage, knowing what topic he would choose and having to research one caused John to feel bored during the decision-making process (see Figure 7). Once he settled on his topic, he felt better and more interested in working on his collage to communicate his message. Although the opportunity to choose a topic may have kindled within other participants an excitement for the assignment, John’s excitement did not ignite until he had a topic that he felt connected to and that he could work with.





Figure 7. John's social justice collage.

Early on during one of the first work periods, John described looking at his friend's work to get inspiration for his topic. After doing so, he thought about one of his favourite online games, *Call of Duty*, which led him to choose the topic of war and its negative impact on the world and the people in it. He explained that he felt bad at first for taking his friend's idea but, then, felt good afterwards because he ended up creating his own collage design that did not look anything like his friend's. This exemplified the importance for John to ensure that his artwork did not resemble that of his friend's and that it was a reflection of his individuality.

Josh spoke about how he liked art, drawing, and colouring. When it came to his social justice collage assignment, however, he explained that he was unaware that he was supposed to be working on it alongside the rest of his peers within his regular classroom. Once he realized that Mrs. Faith expected him, too, to engage in the assignment, he began working on his collage (see Figure 8). For his topic, he selected that of the suicide crisis within First Nations communities. Josh spoke, too, about the several colour-related and aesthetic-related decisions that he made during the creation of his collage. Many of these decisions appeared to reflect his identity as a technicolour dreamer—an identity that came through when describing his chosen representational item.



Figure 8. Josh's social justice collage.

Josh's individuality appeared to be fostered through the choices he made in the design of his collage. He described how he wanted to add a lot of colour to his collage, which he did through the use of colourful feathers and by painting his background blue—his favourite colour. He thought that adding colour would add a lot of interest and would make his collage more “noticeable” (Josh Enderman) and stand out to others. He explained, too, that he chose to use gold sparkles in the background, because they showed up better on his work than green sparkles. He purposely slanted the placement of his main visual image and words, rather than place them horizontally—or, as he termed it, “basic” (Josh Enderman). Doing so allowed Josh to feel confident that he was increasing the dramatic elements and the visual interest in his collage.

Makeya's account of creating her collage revealed instances of exploring her imagination, which paralleled the storied plotline that came to the forefront when she spoke about her representational item. In describing her collage, Makeya appeared particularly satisfied with the symbolism involved in it (see Figure 9). In this way, Makeya's resulting product reflected the identity that she carved out for herself through her representational item—that of an imaginative artist. As she explained, her theme involved the negative impact of bullying, and several parts helped to relay her message: the faces on each corner represented those of bullies, the words coming out of their mouths were the hurtful things they said, the ‘Ocean of Tears’ along the bottom represented the accumulation of tears from bullying victims, and the dangling figure in the bottom left-hand corner was of a victim crying in a bathroom stall and feeling small and insignificant in comparison to her bullies, who were depicted much larger.





Figure 9. Makeya's social justice collage.

Makeya's sense of individuality was highlighted in particular as she described that, upon jointly collecting newspaper clippings with her seatmate (with whom she worked closely throughout the creation of her collage), they went through them together to decide upon the topic that each would choose. Of major importance to them in their decision was to ensure that each chose a different topic. Upon choosing their topic, they supported each other throughout their collage's creation, such as offering ideas on how to creatively communicate aspects of their chosen social justice message.

Jessica-Marie described being excited to work on the arts-integrated assignment because she recalled how much she liked making collages (see Figure 10). Her excitement was notable considering that she periodically felt nervous before embarking on an assignment—which she revealed about herself when sharing her representational item. After seeing an image of a woman throwing up during her online research in the library, Jessica-Marie decided to choose anorexia as the topic for her collage.

Elaborating on the message of her collage, Jessica-Marie described how the media constantly dictated what a “pretty” girl should look like and anyone outside of that beauty-related “norm” was considered not pretty enough—thus, suggesting to girls outside of the norm to undergo modifications so as to attain it. She decided to include a woman on the bottom right-hand corner of her collage (who, by all measures, was beautiful) questioning her body image, as depicted by the bubble of words and images above her head. Furthermore, Jessica-Marie explained that the big red lips represented the idealistic lips that female celebrities “like Kylie Jenner” (Jessica-Marie Chance) flaunted and that many young women coveted to attain.



that, in the end, his collage's topic involved “‘medical,’ ‘live,’ ‘growth,’ ‘power,’ ‘victory,’ ‘life,’ ‘city,’ ‘racism’” (Michael Philips), which were all words found in his collage. He explained further that “it’s, like, all people. It’s like humans doing that type of stuff” (Michael Philips).

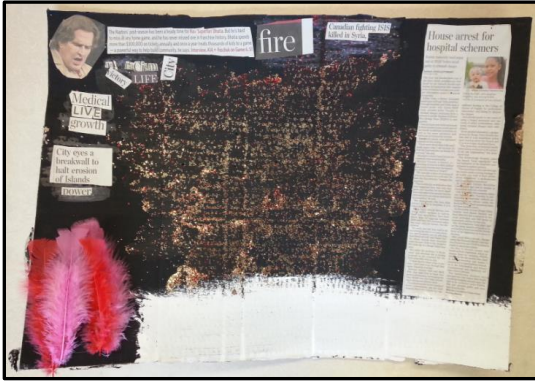


Figure 11. Michael's social justice collage.

Painting the background of his collage was something Michael enjoyed doing. What hindered his creative collage-making process, however, was that he kept losing the words and letters that he cut out. This meant that, periodically, he found himself searching for more newspaper clippings. This experience upset and frustrated him and, on several occasions, made him feel like giving up on his collage. At one point as he neared its completion, his frustration drove him to poke holes through his collage board using a pencil—a look that, as he later confessed, he ended up liking. He explained that, had the clippings been readily available to him, he could have focussed on being more creative with developing his collage topic and message, rather than spending time looking for and cutting out possible words or letters to include in his collage, only to lose them later on.

While creating his artwork, Michael relayed one particular peer-related incident that upset him, which appeared to take away the opportunity for him to express his cognitive freedom. The incident involved a few of his friends sprinkling glitter on his collage without his permission. After noticing them doing so, he let them continue, but he soon realized that they sprinkled far more glitter on his work than he wanted them to. As a result of these experiences, Michael felt disappointed with his final collage, perhaps because it did not reflect his individuality and his sense of identity as an imaginative artist—an identity that came through while sharing his chosen representational item.

In her account, Sequoia spoke about various experiences that were involved in the

creation of her social justice collage (see Figure 12). She felt particularly satisfied with being given the cognitive freedom to explore various social justice topics or messages during the online research period in the library and felt excited by the element of discovery involved in the research process. The inspiration for one of her collage topics, however, came during the first in-class work period during which learners were tasked with collecting newspaper clippings. At that point, she was still undecided about her topic and had not found any newspaper clippings that she wanted to use in her collage. This prompted her to search discretely on her cell phone for ideas on Grade 8 graduation dresses, and, while doing so, she overheard her classmates talking about Black Lives Matter, which inspired her to select that as one of her social justice topics. Unable to settle on one topic, however, she chose, also, to communicate a message about the missing women crisis among First Nations communities (as depicted through the picture that she included along the top left-hand side of the fist).



Figure 12. Sequoia's social justice collage.

As Sequoia explained, her collage was filled with symbolism. The word 'victory' placed over the wrist of the clenched fist and the broken chains next to it represented breaking away from slavery. The red colour around the fist and chains represented the bloodshed of those who were enslaved and struggled for their freedom. For the 'SJ' symbol located near the top of her collage, she explained that she "painted this as a

symbol for social justice. . . . When we were in the library and we were searching up symbols, I found this [‘SJ’ symbol], so I put that” (Sequoia Banks).

While creating her collage, she enjoyed the opportunity to explore various media through which to express her topic and message, which appeared to reflect her identity as an inquisitive explorer, as garnered through her representational item. At first, she thought about creating a papier mâché fist and made a liquid mixture out of school glue and wrapped her hand with masking tape. During the observation period, I noted that she worked with great focus to create the figure using her hand as the form. By the end of the period, however, she realized that her idea would not work because, as she explained during her interview, she did not create the proper glue mixture. She settled, instead, on drawing a clenched fist using her hand as the model. At first, she was nervous about drawing the fist because, having been accepted to an arts high school the following fall term, she wanted to do a good job on it so that she could feel prepared for the artistic rigor that awaited her there. Through the creation of her collage, Sequoia felt free to be herself and, in this way, her work reflected her identity, not only as an inquisitive explorer, but as a creative perfectionist.

Participants’ accounts of working on their arts-integrated products and descriptions of them revealed their work to be reflections of who they were. Particularly notable was the ways in which participants’ arts-integrated products provided them with the space through which to showcase their beliefs, interests, and/or values. In this way, viewing their products in conjunction with their descriptions of them, as well as the identities that they shaped for themselves through their representational item, provided me with the opportunity to access another world that, perhaps, may have been inaccessible to me otherwise.

### **5.3.1.2 Theme Two: Stories of Competence—Arts Integration as Fostering Flexible Thinking**

Many participants’ stories of competence revealed a sense of fearlessness as they explored different avenues in the creation of their products. Their stories, also, revealed a willingness to embrace mistakes and challenges as opportunities to move their arts-integrated creations into unanticipated directions. As participants’ stories of competence unfolded, several common elements of their experiences came to light, such as the extent

to which their feelings of achievement (e.g., successfulness, persistence), capability, self-efficacy (e.g., effectiveness), and learning engagement were fostered or thwarted (Ryan & Deci, 2015).

In Mrs. Hope's classroom, Crystal explained that when she was originally planning her Norval Morriseau-inspired artwork, she wanted to draw an owl. After drawing it on her first draft, Mrs. Hope (and, then, her friend) mentioned that it needed to be drawn larger, prompting Crystal to attempt to make those changes to her drawing. As she explained, however, her attempts were unsuccessful, motivating her to decide to draw something else instead:

When [the owl drawing] was small, it, it looked pretty. And, then, after Mrs. Hope told me to make it bigger. And, then, after it was still small and, then, she told me to make it bigger again. And after my friend told me to make it bigger. And, then, after it looked horrible. . . . But then, like, when you left [at the end of the observation day], like, I had to draw it more, and I'm like, "okay, I should draw something else." (Crystal Starlight)

Although her sense of achievement was undermined when her attempts to draw her owl bigger did not succeed, her learning engagement and sense of capability drove her to adapt to her situation and capabilities and decide to "draw something else."

While describing the animals she chose to include in her work, Crystal explained her decision to include the butterfly, which revealed her sense of artistic capability and achievement. As she explained:

Like, there was, like, empty space right there, and I didn't like it. And, then, after, when I was doing my artist statement, I'm like, "I should add something." And, then, after, I heard the butterfly can mean that 'you can believe in yourself.' (Crystal Starlight)

Adding the butterfly was something she did not originally intend to do, but, being flexible with the outcome of her artwork, she realized that doing so complemented her topic and message. Through her decision to add a butterfly to strengthen her design, her sense of achievement with her artwork appeared to be fostered.

Sacrena's account of her lived experiences with working on her artwork drafts brought to light the extent to which her sense of self-efficacy, capability, achievement, and learning engagement were fostered. During one in-class work period, Sacrena looked at one of her drafts and exclaimed, "Oh, it's so bad." In her interview, she explained that she was talking about the dolphin in her artwork:

My tail, it was, like, super pointy. And, like, going super in. . . . And, then, I kept erasing it, and kept trying again. . . . The only thing that I didn't like was my tail. And, like, the fin thing that they have. . . . I fixed it afterwards, and, then, we did our different drafts, too. So I was, like, "Maybe my next draft, I can do it better." So, then, I just, you know, like, kind of left it there. (Sacrena Rully)

Her persistence with trying to draw the tail and fin of the dolphin revealed her learning engagement with the task of creating her artwork. The draft-making process appeared, too, to support her feelings of self-efficacy and capability, as she recognized that she could "do it better" in a subsequent draft.

In her account, Sacrena spoke about the transformation that her dolphin underwent over time. As she described this transformation, it appeared that the experience fostered her feelings of achievement and capability:

The first [dolphin drawing] I did was way different than [my final] one. [*chuckled*] And, then, umm, it, it was, like, the dolphin looked way different. . . . There was no turtle, and, then, there was just, like, a dolphin . . . in the middle. And, then, after that, I kept changing it and, then, I found out that, like, it looks pretty nice now. (Sacrena Rully)

In her account, Sacrena emphasized how her first drawing differed from her final one, showcasing her willingness to allow the transformation to happen, so as to see where it would lead her. When prompted further to explain how the design of her dolphin changed, she explained that it was an unexpected but welcomed occurrence while drawing her third draft: "It was kind of an accident, 'cause I was drawing the dolphin, and, then, I just made the head, like, really big, and, then, I just realized that I could've make that work and that it looked nicer" (Sacrena Rully). While initially she considered erasing her "accident," she decided to play around with the way it looked: "I kept looking at it and, then, . . . I drew an eye to see . . . how it would look like that. And, then, uh, . . . I drew, like, the whole body. And, then, I saw that it worked" (Sacrena Rully).

Accidentally drawing her dolphin head bigger allowed her to view her drawing in a different light. In a display of her flexible thinking, Sacrena embraced the change, incorporated it into her draft, and concluded that her final design "looks pretty nice now."

Soccer spoke about his feelings when initially embarking on the task of thinking up ideas for his artwork. He described feeling confident in his ability to create his artwork:

I felt like, "I can do this." Like, I could . . . do same thing as [Norval Morrisseau].

And, like, experiment in my classroom, like, . . . I could . . . do the same, ‘cause I’m not that artist person– I’m, like, . . . a half of an artistic person. ‘Cause I’m not, like, that into art, but now I’m getting, like, three-fourth, four-fourth out of, umm, art, ‘cause of . . . Norval Morrisseau’s, umm, arts. (Soccer Star)

Although Soccer did not feel confident in his ability to be an “artist person” prior to beginning in the assignment, he described feeling as though his artistic skills grew and developed as a result of engaging with creating his arts-integrated work. This experience highlighted a transformation in Soccer’s sense of self-efficacy and capability as he progressed towards his arts-integrated products’ completion.

When exploring the colour scheme for his final artwork, he described feeling the need to change his original plan. His willingness to change ideas highlighted his learning engagement, as well as his sense of self-efficacy with his artistic sensibilities. Explaining how his plan evolved, he indicated that:

The week before I finished my art, I actually switched up my plan . . . ‘cause I thought it’ll look better. So, . . . I was gonna use blue, green, and, . . . like, light brown, because the sky and the rust, you know how the eagle, it’s . . . like in the safari, I guess? . . . It’s all yellow and, or brown a little bit. So, I changed the green to blue because . . . a dolphin is one of the top, too. . . . I used the green, actually, which I never knew I will. ‘Cause . . . I drew the trees, so different colours. (Soccer Star)

Soccer’s description of the process he went through to decide upon the colour scheme for his work revealed that he trusted his aesthetic sensibilities, which prompted him to think of another colour combination that would “look better” for his artwork.

Sprinkles explained how she originally intended to draw her favourite animal but that her lack of confidence to draw it in the style of Norval Morrisseau led her to change her mind: “I really wanted to draw [a cat]– but I didn’t know how. So I, like, I thought it may as well be something” (Sprinkles Candy). Although her sense of self-efficacy in drawing a cat was thwarted in this experience, her flexibility to think of drawing another animal in its place suggested that she felt comfortable in her capability to adapt to her circumstances. Sprinkles decided to draw a bear instead of a cat, because, to her, they were related in a way: “Like, cats, . . . they can be, like, very dangerous sometimes. And bears are dangerous” (Sprinkles Candy).

The lived experiences shared by the participants in Mrs. Faith’s classroom conveyed similar stories of embracing mistakes and being flexible with the outcome of



their social justice collage. John spoke about starting off with a few ideas on how to put his collage together to communicate his topic about war's negative impact. As he was putting it together, his ideas creatively evolved and, through this exploratory process, he felt "better and better" (John Gerson) knowing that his resulting collage would earn him a good grade. For example, as he progressed with creating his collage, he thought about including swatches of fabrics in camouflage colours to represent soldiers' uniforms, as well as small, red pieces of loose fabric to represent human bloodshed during war. Although John did not know how to draw a gun, when he thought of including one in his collage, his learning engagement and sense of capability led him to search for a gun image online using the classroom computer and trace its outline from the computer screen. With this rough sketch in hand, John returned to his desk to refine his gun drawing, effectively fostering his self-efficacy and sense of achievement for his final collage.

Josh spoke about how, for the background of his collage on the suicide crisis in First Nations communities, he chose to colour it blue, because it was his favourite colour. He clarified, however, that initially he hoped to find a darker shade of blue, but after not being able to locate one, he chose to use a lighter shade of blue instead. Although it appeared that Josh did not consider mixing colours to achieve his desired colour, his willingness to be flexible with his chosen background colour suggested his sense of learning engagement and flexibility with creating his collage.

In Makeya's account, she spoke about how, originally, she had placed a bully's face in one of the corners, who was depicted hurling words at a victim. As she progressed with her collage, she realized that it appeared unbalanced; her flexible thinking prompted her to add a second face in the opposite corner, so as to achieve an aesthetic balance for her final product. Doing so suggested her learning engagement and sense of capability in achieving an end result that she was satisfied with.

During the first few in-class observation periods in which Mrs. Faith introduced the assignment, Jessica-Marie's learning engagement compelled her to participate in the classroom discussions that took place. In the first observation period, Jessica-Marie answered questions regarding the techniques used in the collages that Mrs. Faith showed as exemplars (e.g., "textures" and "different patterns and designs to make it look like a

sky”). At the start of another period wherein Mrs. Faith led a classroom discussion on the success criteria for their collage products, Jessica-Marie offered “won’t have colour as much” as a possible criterion. Although Mrs. Faith indicated that this was not a good success criterion, Jessica-Marie’s willingness to offer her thoughts to the question posed suggested her sense of self-efficacy and learning engagement in the lesson. Jessica-Marie’s flexible thinking was highlighted when choosing her social justice topic. While conducting online research in the library, Jessica-Marie thought about choosing ‘terrorism’ as her topic; however, as she progressed with her online research, she came across an image of a woman throwing up, which inspired her, instead, to select the topic of anorexia.

Similar to Jessica-Marie, Michael exhibited his learning engagement by participating in the classroom discussions that unfolded during the first few periods in which Mrs. Faith introduced the assignment. Asked what social justice means, Michael answered, “everyone should be the same; no racism.” During the creation of his work, I observed Michael asking several questions, including if he could use “pictures, words, and letters” to communicate his chosen social justice topic or message. When putting together his collage, however, two occasions frustrated him—although they did not stop him from continuing to work on his collage. First, when he continually lost his newspaper clippings, he decided to use the materials and resources that were available to him to complete his collage. Second, when his friends sprinkled more glitter than he wanted on his collage, he let it be and worked around this unexpected occurrence. Even though Michael’s end product did not turn out the way that he wanted it to, his flexible thinking allowed him to go with the flow as these adverse situations presented themselves, to adapt to those situations, and to move beyond them so that he could continue working towards completing his arts-integrated product.

Although Sequoia trusted in her self-efficacy and in her ability to do well on the assignment, her acceptance into an arts high school appeared to make her hyperaware of the need to work harder on her collage to reflect her artistic aptitude. When considering how to creatively express one of her topic, Sequoia experimented with trying to create a three-dimensional clenched fist out of papier mâché. After some time, however, she realized that her idea would not work. Her learning engagement and flexible thinking

compelled her, instead, to draw a clenched fist—first in her sketchbook to practice drawing it properly and, then, on her final collage board, which she painted.

The narratives in this section revealed that engaging in their arts-integrated assignment facilitated participants' flexible thinking pertaining to the outcomes of their products, highlighting the transformations that their products underwent over time and contexts. Their accounts revealed opportunities wherein they engaged in re-thinking, re-doing, and re-drafting original thoughts and ideas, resulting in a morphing of their initial artistic intentions as they progressed towards their work's completion. In the end, many participants described being pleased with their resulting products—and a few described being pleasantly surprised—despite having not planned for them at the start to turn out the way that they did.

### **5.3.1.3 Theme Three: Stories of Relatedness—Arts Integration as Facilitating Classroom Relationships**

In their stories of relatedness, most participants spoke about giving freely of their ideas, feedback, and assistance to peers. Many exhibited a willingness to accept the ideas, feedback, and assistance offered by their teachers and peers—but only to the point that others' contributions would not compromise the extent to which they felt that their resulting work was their own. Within their accounts, there were several common elements of relatedness pertaining to their teachers and peers, including instances that fostered or thwarted their feelings of compatibility (e.g., friendliness, agreeableness), friendships (e.g., likeableness, helpfulness), and social interactions (e.g., closeness, connectedness; Ryan & Deci, 2015).

As quoted at the start of this chapter and illuminated in her story of autonomy, Crystal in Mrs. Hope's classroom shared several accounts of her willingness to accept the assistance and input of others, but she indicated only being willing to accept the help of “some people. . . . if it's my friends” (Crystal Starlight). At the start of her journey, she was open to viewing her classmates' drawings-in-progress, perhaps (in consideration of her delayed start) as a means to get inspiration for her own work. Throughout the rest of her journey, she was willing to enlist her friends' help while working on her artwork and artist statement, as long as she did not feel like she was copying them.

In some instances, Crystal, also, took into account the feedback that she received

from Mrs. Hope. In one such instance, Mrs. Hope advised her that “in Norval Morriseau’s artwork, there are always, like, lines, and, like, it always was connected to something” (Crystal Starlight). This prompted her to draw water spraying from the dolphin’s blowhole in order to add more lines to her drawing. In another instance, Mrs. Hope advised Crystal to draw her dolphin bigger. Although she found the feedback initially “annoying” (Crystal Starlight), she followed her teacher’s advice and, in the process, received some assistance from her friend to incorporate the suggested changes into her drawing: “[Sacrena] did it on the other page and, then, after, I’m like, ‘I don’t want it anymore, ‘cause, like, I wanna try doing it myself.’ . . . I told her, ‘I need some ideas and stuff’” (Crystal Starlight). Her willingness to accept Mrs. Faith’s feedback, as well as Sacrena’s ideas on how to draw her dolphin bigger, revealed the positive social interactions that she had with her both teacher and her friend, as well as her feelings of connectedness with them. Her sense of connectedness appeared to extend, too, to the student teacher when, during one of the in-class work periods, I saw her showing him her artwork draft and overheard her asking him “Do you like it?”

As Crystal worked on her first draft, she described drawing whatever came to her mind. Then, a friend reminded her that she needed to have a topic or message in mind: “I forgot that I was supposed to do that, so I just drew quickly. . . . And, then, my friend told me that I was supposed to do that. I’m like, ‘Oh.’” (Crystal Starlight). The caring and helpful nature of her friend who reminded her of the assignment requirement revealed an instance of Crystal’s positive social interactions and sense of compatibility with one of her peers while engaged with her arts-integrated assignment.

When it came time to create her artist statement, she found the task challenging. Looking at her friend’s work, however, provided her with an exemplar from which to create her own:

I don’t think [my artist statement] made any sense, and stuff. And, like, my friend, she showed me hers and stuff, and, like, it made sense, it was nice and, yeah. So, like, I really didn’t like mine. . . . And then, after . . . I tried, yeah. . . . It’s fine.  
(Crystal Starlight).

For Crystal, being given the opportunity to view an exemplar through her friend’s artist statement allowed her to gain a sense of how to edit her work to her liking. Moreover, her friend’s willingness to help appeared to facilitate Crystal’s closeness with her friend.

Sacrena spoke several times about her willingness to give and receive assistance with drawing parts of her animals. Although she drew the majority of her artwork on her own, she appreciated the role that her peers played in inspiring her, and she exhibited a willingness to accept various classmates' help throughout the planning and drafting processes. As she explained: "I like seeing other people's [work]. . . . I wanna see what they do, so, then, maybe, I can improve on my own drawing. . . . Sometimes, like, . . . I get an idea, like we got an idea from Norval Morrisseau" (Sacrena Rully). Sacrena shared one such account of a friend's work inspiring the direction that her artwork took:

I got an idea from my friend. . . . Sprinkles, she did, like, a bunch of different animals coming out of it, and it was, like, really cool. . . . I saw . . . different kinds of animals, and I only drew a dolphin, so, then, I thought of adding them into mine. (Sacrena Rully)

These accounts revealed Sacrena's closeness with her friend and the ways in which engaging with her arts-integrated assignment facilitated her sense of compatibility with others. Her respectful relationship with Mrs. Hope was evident, too, when she described garnering her teacher's feedback on her artist statement, which directed her subsequent efforts to edit it accordingly:

I showed it to Mrs. Hope, and, then, Mrs. Hope said that "maybe you could add a little more detail about, umm, uh, like, you could, instead of saying, like, 'it' and 'they' all the time, you could just say 'the dolphin' or . . . who 'they' is, who 'it' is." (Sacrena Rully)

With respect to giving and receiving drawing assistance, she spoke freely about these opportunities among her friends. As she explained, "we tried giving each other ideas while we were drawing and, umm, . . . we also tried to help other people, because they were, like, 'Oh, can you help me draw this?'" (Sacrena Rully). The drawing assistance she provided to one of her friends demonstrated that a sense of care and connectedness was fostered within their relationship:

My friend needed help drawing a jellyfish, and, then, like, the tentacle thingies. So, then, I was, like, drawing one, and then she drew the other one, so then . . . I gave her, like, an idea of, like, how to draw them. (Sacrena Rully)

In this account, Sacrena recognized the role that she played in providing an idea to her friend that assisted her friend with developing her drawing.

Sacrena spoke several times about her prior experiences using YouTube tutorials to assist her with developing her artistic skills at home. In an effort to assist her peers, she

shared with them one particular YouTube channel that she frequently used to help her draw various animals: “And, then, like, . . . they wanted some other animals to draw. So, then, . . . I showed them my YouTube channel that I use to draw animals. And, then, they used that and drew, like, the whales and things that I draw” (Sacrena Rully). Appreciative of the influence that the YouTube channel had on assisting her with her drawing needs, she shared this same resource with her classmates. In her willingness to assist her peers, Sacrena appeared to make the effort to further strengthen her connectedness with them.

Soccer spoke, similarly, about his willingness to receive assistance not only from his classmates, but also from Mrs. Hope. In his first draft, he explained that he drew many intricate lines inside his Hybrid Jack. He revised this approach, however, after receiving Mrs. Hope’s feedback:

Mrs. Hope said that . . . when you use pastels it’s gonna be hard to do it. . . . She said that, that the designs were amazing, but . . . she said that the designs were too small to, like, use pastels. So, I made it bigger and bigger. (Soccer Star)

Interestingly, in his account Soccer explained how receiving feedback from Mrs. Hope on his drafts fostered his increased interest in his assignment, suggesting his positive, respectful relationship with Mrs. Hope and the extent of her influence on his work:

When I first started it, I didn’t [try to draw everything well]. . . . I didn’t care much, because, uh, I was by imagination. . . . After Mrs. Hope told me what to improve on. . . . So, like, the advice she gives me, it’ll help me to improve my art. (Soccer Star)

The extent of his respect for Mrs. Hope’s approval was highlighted in one of the first in-class observation periods during which I overheard Soccer calling Mrs. Hope over to his desk, who was circulating the classroom observing learners’ progress with their drafts. When she approached him, he showed her his work while proclaiming with an excited tone of voice, “I’m being creative!” He later explained that he wanted to show her his work because “I just wanted her to see, see that I’m doing really, really good. And, . . . like, I’m thinking very well” (Soccer Star). Evident, too, in his account was his respect for the substitute teacher’s directive to plan out his colour scheme with markers on his draft, rather than with oil pastels: “The supply teacher told me, . . . to, like, colour it in. But, like, she never knew it was for pastels, right? So, I did it, but, like, I feel like this is, like, . . . how I’m gonna plan out the colouring” (Soccer Star).

When two of his classmates, one of whom included Sacrena, went around the

classroom during one of their in-class work periods asking to see their classmates' artwork—perhaps in an effort to seek inspiration for their own work—he explained that he shared his with them gladly. Upon seeing Soccer's work, one of the two classmates wanted to do something similar; Soccer, however, swiftly advised him against it: "I told . . . him that, 'Oh, you can't do it, because Mrs. Hope already said that, uh, uh, you can't use the pastels.' . . . So I gave him . . . an idea, and then he, he went on" (Soccer Star). Recognizing the role that he played in providing his classmate an idea for his artwork, Soccer revealed that he acknowledged the extent of his helpfulness and his willingness to connect with his peer.

Sprinkles revealed in her account that she did not always accept or seek out help and feedback from others. As she explained, "I might, like, think about [their advice], and if I, like, agree with it, then I'll do it" (Sprinkles Candy). This revealed a confidence in her artistic abilities and an interest in creating artistic products that, above all, were pleasing to her. Although Sprinkles did not always accept her peers' feedback, she drew upon them as a resource and appreciated chatting with friends "to get, like, ideas" (Sprinkles Candy). During one of the in-class work periods, Sprinkles asked her seatmate, "What letter does 'effort' start with?" Although asking the question made her feel "kind of silly, 'cause I knew how to spell it. I just forgot what letter it started with" (Sprinkles Candy), her sense of comfortableness with her seatmate prompted her to ask the question without the fear of being judged by her.

When it came to giving her peers feedback on their work, Sprinkles enjoyed sharing with them her positive and encouraging comments. During in-class work periods, her classmates periodically showed her their work, as if seeking her approval. Sprinkles's response often involved smiling; as she explained, "Well, I smile a lot, 'cause I'm happy of what they did" (Sprinkles Candy). Other times, she clapped enthusiastically. In these feedback-sharing situations, her friendly nature was highlighted, as was her desire to connect with her peers. In another instance, a classmate sitting in front of Sprinkles turned around to ask her to rate his artwork by circling a one-word response out of several possible responses that he had listed at the bottom of his draft page. She circled, 'Okay,' and indicated in her interview that his artwork "needed a little improvement" (Sprinkles Candy). She did not share with him, however, her true feelings about the ways

in which she felt that her classmate's work needed improvement, because she preferred to offer him encouraging and positive feedback. In doing so, she appreciated that he may have wanted to be complimented on his drawing efforts and, in response, offered him an agreeable response that appeared to foster a connectedness between them.

In Mrs. Faith's classroom, John spent the majority of the time working on his collage independently. Even so, he periodically sought inspiration from his classmates, which suggested his interest in connecting with his peers. During one of the first in-class work periods, prior to having selected a topic for his collage, he walked over to his friend's desk to see what he was working on. As a result, he thought about one of his favourite online games, *Call of Duty*, and became inspired to choose the topic of war and its negative impact on the world and the people in it. Initially, he described feeling "bad for taking" (John Gerson) his classmate's idea, but in the end he indicated that he felt better because his collage design did not look like his classmate's. Although he spent the majority of the time working independently on his collage, at one point he decided to assist Michael with painting the background of his collage board together with another classmate. His actions suggested his willingness to go outside of the time-related demands of the assignment to assist his peer. Furthermore, his respect for Mrs. Faith's feedback was apparent when, upon working on his gun drawing, he showed it to Mrs. Faith for her feedback. Although she responded that he could add a bit of colour, John explained that he decided to keep it as a black-and-white line drawing, so as to add a bit of visual interest to his collage.

Josh's account revealed instances in which he willingly assisted peers with their work and provided them with his thoughts. It was while helping his classmate on his collage that he discovered that he, too, was required to work on the assignment. Furthermore, during one of the in-class work periods, he felt compelled to share his thoughts on his classmate's collage, exclaiming "that is so much [gold] paint." These instances suggested that arts integration fostered Josh's efforts to connect with his peers.

Makeya's arts-integrated experiences appeared to foster her connectedness, friendship, and compatibility with her seatmate. For her assignment she chose to work closely with her seatmate to locate and collect clippings from newspapers. Makeya described originally not knowing which topic or message to choose for her collage and



being open to whichever social justice-related message inspired her. She ended up deciding upon a topic after reviewing their collection of newspaper clippings and organizing them into two topics—her friend chose one of the two topics while Makeya chose the other (namely, bullying), and they used the newspaper clippings that corresponded to their chosen topic. While creating her collage, Makeya accepted her friend's ideas willingly and regularly sought her friend's feedback. In this way, working with her friend helped to shape the end design of her collage. For example, when her friend reflected on how the blue waves that Makeya had painted along the bottom of her collage looked like tears, she named them 'Ocean of Tears' to represent the many tears shed by the victims of bullying.

Jessica-Marie's engagement during the classroom discussion and the ease with which she asked Mrs. Faith questions pertaining to the design of her collage during the in-class work periods suggested the extent of her respectful and positive relationship with her teacher. Moreover, Jessica-Marie's positive relationships with her peers was evident when she conversed freely with her classmates during in-class work periods and took the opportunity on a few occasions to read articles aloud to her seatmate—one of which related to her chosen topic of anorexia. Similarly, Michael's willingness to offer answers and ask questions during the first few observation periods was indicative, too, of his respectful and positive relationship with Mrs. Faith. When working on his assignment, his feelings of compatibility and feelings of connectedness with his peers were evident when he recruited a couple of his classmates (one of whom was John) to help him with painting the background of his collage, and both of his classmates appeared to assist him willingly. His feelings of frustration, however, that resulted from the incident involving the excessive sprinkling of glitter revealed his investment in his peer relationships and the negative impact that their actions had on his feelings of compatibility. Even after this occurrence, however, Michael indicated that he still considered them to be his friends, indicating his interest in maintaining a sense of connectedness with his peers despite how their actions made him feel.

As a quiet, introverted student who mostly kept to herself, Sequoia exhibited a creative intuition that appeared to be independent of the influence of her peers. Even so, on a few instances Sequoia's feelings of compatibility and social interactions with her

classmates appeared to be fostered. In one in-class work period, overhearing the conversations of her classmates around her inspired her to choose Black Lives Matter as one of the topics for her collage. As she worked on her collage with this topic in mind, she glanced over periodically to view her seatmate's work and, on one occasion, was inspired by her friend's drawing of a chain. She, then, decided to include a chain in her collage, as well, next to the clenched fist, so as to represent Black people's struggle to break away from the bonds of slavery.

The narratives shared here reveal the extent of participants' comfort level with garnering inspiration from their classmates, offering assistance, and seeking out and/or accepting help or feedback from their teachers and peers whenever needed. On a few occasions, there appeared to be an incompatibility between participants' aesthetic ideals and the directives, advice, and feedback provided to them by their teachers and peers. Overall, however, participants' accounts suggested that their arts-integrated assignment facilitated their interest in establishing and maintaining positive feelings of connectedness and relatedness among the individuals with whom they shared their regular classroom landscape.

### **5.3.2 Research Puzzle 2**

In my second research puzzle, I asked, *What do learners' stories reveal about their quality of motivation when learning through the arts in their inclusive classrooms?* In order to explore this research puzzle, I examined participants' accounts within the context of the four qualities of motivation that were identified by the 17-item questionnaire—the Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A; Ryan & Deci, 2015)—that participants were invited to complete prior to the start of the observation period. From least to most self-determined, these four qualities of motivation include external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and intrinsic regulation.

Within several participants' accounts, there were instances in which their quality of motivation when learning through the arts was thwarted (e.g., while researching their topics, preparing materials, or draft-making) and other instances in which their quality of motivation was fostered (e.g., during classroom discussions, while putting together their final products). This wavering quality of motivation appeared to be influenced by various personal and social factors that shaped their perceptions, perspectives, and lived realities

within their regular classroom landscape. Personal factors included their beliefs, interests, and/or values about the lesson and assignment, and social factors involved their relationships with their teachers and peers, as well as the ways in which their identities unfolded within the context of their regular classroom landscape.

This variable characteristic of participants' quality of motivation reminded me of a metaphor of learners' motivation that I came across while exploring my field and interim inquiry texts; that of motivation being akin to the current of a river (Middleton & Perks, 2014). In much the same way that the current of a river can propel the efforts of paddlers towards their journey's endpoint, motivation can power learners' energies and efforts towards their learning destination(s). As with the changing quality of a river current's intensity and quality, learners' motivation can vary over the course of a lesson or task. The parallels that I drew from likening a river current to learners' motivation allowed me, holistically, to make sense of participants' accounts of their varied quality of motivation when learning through the arts.

The *learning destination* common to all participants involved in my inquiry was to create distinct and individual final products within their regular classroom landscape. What differed, however, was the flow of each participant's overall journey from start to finish. Keeping this in mind, participants' experiences could not be categorized as reflecting only one of the four qualities of motivation identified by the SRQ-A (Ryan & Deci, 2015). Rather, many participants' experiences revealed a varying and fluctuating quality of motivation influenced by the changing personal and social circumstances that shaped their lived experiences with their arts-integrated assignment.

Accordingly, four different motivation-related experiences were identified—from least to most self-determined, self-regulated, and internalized (Vansteenkiste et al., 2010)—and each was categorized and identified by the “dominating qualities of that category” (Ruth & Oberg, 1992, p. 135). That is, participants' accounts were explored holistically in consideration of their quality of motivation over time (i.e., throughout the course of the unit) and in context (i.e., within the changing circumstances of their regular classroom landscape). So while some participants appeared equally engaged with the learning task (e.g., Soccer, Sacrena), holistically taking into consideration their accounts of learning through the arts revealed their overall quality of motivation to be different.

For example, in Soccer's account of engaging in his arts-integrated assignment, he spoke about not being much of an "artist person" (Soccer Star) at first, suggesting that his engagement in the assignment was motivated initially by his desire to live out his "good student" identity, as revealed through his representational item (e.g., to earn good grades, to please his mother who expected him to do well in school). As a whole, his motivations were suggestive of an introjected regulation type of quality of motivation. Over the course of his journey towards the learning destination, however, he spoke more about internalizing the value of engaging in the creation of his arts-integrated products, such as when he declared that "I'm not, like, that into art, but now I'm getting, like, three-fourth, four-fourth out of, umm, art, 'cause of . . . Norval Morrisseau's, umm, arts" (Soccer Star). This declaration suggested that Soccer's quality of motivation had become more self-determined (that is, towards the identified regulation type of motivation). In the next section, I elucidate further each of these four types of journeys experienced by participants. First, I note interestingly that for all participants except four (Michael, Crystal, Josh, Makeya), the results from their 17-item questionnaire pertaining to their quality of motivation when learning through the arts (see Table 1 in Chapter 4) was the same or within one quality of motivation as that which predominantly described their motivation-related experiences with arts integration within their regular classroom landscape (see Table 7).

Table 7

*Participants' Quality of Motivation During Observation Period in Comparison With Questionnaire Results*

Participant, Grade (Teacher)	Participant's QofM, as per observations and accounts	Participant's QofM, as per questionnaire results <sup>a</sup>
Michael Philip, 8 (Mrs. Faith)	External Regulation	Intrinsic Regulation
Crystal Starlight, 6 (Mrs. Hope)	Introjected Regulation	Identified Regulation & Intrinsic Regulation
Josh Enderman, 7 (Mrs. Faith)	Introjected Regulation	Intrinsic Regulation
Jessica-Marie Chance, 8 (Mrs. Faith)	Introjected Regulation	External Regulation
Soccer Star, 6 (Mrs. Hope)	Identified Regulation	Intrinsic Regulation
Sprinkles Candy, 6 (Mrs. Hope)	Identified Regulation	Identified Regulation
John Gerson, 7 (Mrs. Faith)	Identified Regulation	Intrinsic Regulation
Sacrena Rully, 6 (Mrs. Hope)	Intrinsic Regulation	Identified Regulation
Makeya Bradford, 7 (Mrs. Faith)	Intrinsic Regulation	Introjected Regulation
Sequoia Banks, 8 (Mrs. Faith)	Intrinsic Regulation	Intrinsic Regulation

*Note.* QofM = Quality of Motivation.

<sup>a</sup>As per results from SRQ-A.

For Michael, Crystal, and Josh, their quality of motivation was two or more qualities of motivation higher in their questionnaire results (i.e., towards the most self-determined type on the continuum) than what they experienced while engaged with working on their arts-integrated assignment; for Makeya, her quality of motivation was lower in her questionnaire results (i.e., towards the less self-determined type on the continuum) than when engaged with her arts-integrated assignment. This variance in the quality of motivation experienced by these four participants—that is, between their questionnaire results and their lived experiences with arts integration—speaks to the contextually-mediated nature of learners' quality of motivation; that is, a learner's quality of motivation can differ even among analogous tasks. As the following sections reveal, over time, each participant's quality of motivation varied, too, as they experienced changes in the contextual factors that shaped their lived experiences with arts integration.

### **5.3.2.1 The Roaming River of External Regulation**

The quality of motivation known as external regulation can be characterized as engaging in an activity due to consequence-avoidance and/or external influence, usually from a significant other in the individual's life (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Within the context

of education, a significant other could be the learner's teacher, parent, or peer. For Michael in Mrs. Faith's classroom, his journey towards the learning destination while engaged with the creation of his social justice collage appeared to be best described by *The Roaming River of External Regulation*, which involved a slow-moving current of motivation with very few spurts of a steady-flowing current.

The start of Michael's journey began positively with his active participation in the classroom discussion on social justice during the first observation period. As he answered several questions posed by Mrs. Faith to activate learners' knowledge about the topic, a spurt of steady-flowing current of motivation was evident within Michael. This spurt continued as he appeared interested in observing the slideshow presentation that followed with pictures of artists' social justice artwork. The choice provided to learners to select whichever social justice topic or message that they wanted to communicate through their collage appeared to facilitate further Michael's initial interest in the arts-integrated assignment.

While searching for a social justice topic or message, Michael delayed working on his collage in order to find one that resonated within him. Without a topic or message upon which to focus, during several in-class work periods Michael walked around the classroom to converse with his peers, mostly about unrelated subject matters. Upon deciding on his topic, however, he appeared more focussed while working on his collage.

Several occurrences, however, made Michael feel upset and frustrated during the collage-making process. Consequently, these circumstances weakened his intrinsic interest to engage with his arts-integrated assignment. Although Michael felt frustrated with continually losing the newspaper clippings that he collected during in-class work periods, it did not stop him from continuing to work on his collage; he indicated, however, that he would have enjoyed working on his collage more had he, from the start, been given the clippings to work with. In this way, as he explained, he would have been able to focus more on his collage design and on how to communicate his social justice message effectively. He explained, too, that during one of the in-class work periods, when comparing his work to that of his classmates', he noticed that they had more words and phrases on their collages than he did. With this realization, Michael's initial intrinsic interest in the assignment continued to dissipate. Moreover, the occurrence involving his

friends sprinkling more glitter on his collage than he intended to include made him consider giving up on his collage entirely. Even with these negative experiences, Michael chose to continue working on his collage, so that he could complete and submit his work to Mrs. Faith to earn a grade on it. In this way, Michael's overall journey towards the learning destination could be described as being motivated by external influences (i.e., his desire to earn a grade on his work) —a journey which was manifested as an initial spurt of a steady-flowing current of motivation but, discouraged by several adverse experiences, was dominated by a slow-moving current of motivation.

### **5.3.2.2 The Rolling River of Introjected Regulation**

According to SDT, the quality of motivation referred to as introjected regulation can be manifested when an individual's actions are externally-motivated by their ego or interest to avoid feelings of guilt (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). For Crystal in Mrs. Hope's classroom and for Josh and Jessica-Marie in Mrs. Faith's classroom, their journey towards the learning destination while engaged with their respective arts-integrated assignment appeared to be represented best by the journey identified as *The Rolling River of Introjected Regulation*. This journey type consisted of varied motivational currents, alternating between slow-moving and steady-flowing.

At the start of the first observation day, Crystal arrived late to her classroom due to being upset as a result of a negative encounter with her friend earlier that day. Upon her late arrival, she did not appear to be in the mindset to engage in the newly-assigned arts-integrated assignment. Even so, Crystal's seatmates and teacher tried to support her emotionally, so that she could feel better about her situation. Towards the end of the first observation day, Crystal's mood appeared to shift and the freedom to select whichever animal she wanted to as the subject of her artwork appeared to motivate her to spend the rest of the in-class work period endeavouring to draw a bear for the first draft of her Norval Morrisseau-inspired artwork.

Despite her delayed start, during subsequent in-class work periods Crystal appeared engaged periodically with working on her artwork. While her main choice of animal shifted—from a bear and an owl to a dolphin—her aim was to try drawing them independently or with minimal assistance from her friends. Her focus on doing so, however, was periodically interrupted by negative peer interactions, such as when her

classmates bothered her through their comments. Although Crystal tried to ignore these situations, she felt compelled sometimes to react to those classmates either verbally (e.g., by rebutting) or physically (e.g., by throwing an eraser). During the in-class work period that learners spent brainstorming ideas for their artist statement, Crystal put on her sweatshirt hoody as if to shut out her surroundings, even though she was aware of the school rule against doing so. As she explained, “when I have my hoody on, . . . I’m more focused and stuff” (Crystal Starlight). At some point during the work period, however, Mrs. Hope walked over to Crystal and gently removed it—which Crystal accepted in acknowledgement of the school rule.

While she enjoyed the process of creating her artwork, writing her artist statement posed a challenge to Crystal as she was “trying to figure out a message [to write about]” (Crystal Starlight). These challenges, however, resulted in her feeling satisfied with her final artwork and the message that she conveyed through her work, that “anyone can be who they want to be” (Crystal Starlight). Although Crystal experienced several instances in which her motivation to reach the learning destination was steady-flowing (such as when drawing her drafts and thinking about the message that she wanted to convey), there were several other instances in which her motivation was slow-moving—most notably at the start of her journey, which resulted from a negative peer interaction that occurred earlier that day. The characteristics of Crystal’s journey revealed that she was externally motivated by her ego to engage with her assignment, so as to produce an artwork that she was happy with.

Although Josh appeared attentive during the introductory lesson on social justice, he experienced a delayed start with his arts-integrated assignment. He spoke about how he was unaware for the first several periods that he was expected to produce a collage alongside his classmates. As a learner of a Home School Program (HSP) classroom (i.e., a pull-out classroom that offers learners who require it, as per their IEP, special education opportunities for 50% or more of the school day), he thought that the collage was meant only to be completed by his peers within his regular classroom. As he explained, it was while assisting one of his friends with his collage that he realized that he, too, was supposed to be working on his own arts-integrated product: Mrs. Faith walked over and asked him, “Josh, don’t you have to do your collage?” (Josh Enderman). After coming to



this realization, he shifted his efforts and began working on his assignment.

About the experience, Josh indicated that he liked putting together his collage. This appeared to be the case when observing the word 'suicide' on the left-hand side of his collage pieced together using letters from different words. As he shared his lived experiences with working on his arts-integrated product, he spoke mainly about the creative decisions that he made. These included consciously choosing to place his main picture (and words and phrases) on a diagonal, paint the background his favourite colour, add colourful glitter that shimmered noticeably, and glue colourful feathers around the border of his final product to add some visual interest. Working on his collage appeared to provide Josh the opportunity to express himself and to further develop his identity as a technicolour dreamer (as revealed through his representational item). Even with the aesthetic interest that he developed while working on his social justice collage, Josh's lack of interest in engaging with it prior to realizing that Mrs. Faith expected him to work on it suggested that his motivation was of the introjected regulation type; it appeared that he engaged in the task so as to avoid the negative consequences involved in not doing so.

Unlike Crystal's and Josh's beginning experiences, Jessica-Marie's learning through the arts experience started off strong. She felt excited when Mrs. Faith introduced the assignment, because she recalled enjoyable experiences working on making collages in the past. Referring to her previous positive experiences allowed Jessica-Marie initially to become intrinsically motivated to create her own social justice collage. Her initial interest in the assignment was further exemplified through her participation in the classroom discussions led by Mrs. Faith on what social justice means and on the elements of a collage. Jessica-Marie was interested, too, in observing the images of artists' social justice collages shown during the slideshow presentation.

During several in-class work periods, however, Jessica-Marie's intrinsic motivation appeared to waver. Throughout one period in particular, she got up periodically from her seat to interact with her classmates (mostly about unrelated topics), which appeared to hinder her progress on the assignment. In another work period, she was tasked by Mrs. Faith to focus on copying down notes that she missed from a previous Mathematics lesson. Even with these distractions, when engaged with working on her collage she was interested in the task of creatively communicating her social justice

message. She shared how she liked figuring out her design and thinking about how to communicate her message about the media's impact on shaping young women's conceptions of the "perfect" body image. Although Jessica-Marie's actions at the start of the lesson appeared to suggest that she was intrinsically motivated to engage with her collage, at times her steady-flowing motivation wavered and was replaced by periods of slow-moving motivation, which was evident especially as she interacted with her peers in ways that did not relate to her arts-integrated assignment and as she copied notes from a missed Mathematics lesson. Overall, Jessica-Marie's journey towards the learning destination appeared to be externally motivated by her ego to produce a collage that she felt did an adequate job of expressing her chosen social justice theme.

### **5.3.2.3 The Running River of Identified Regulation**

Identified regulation as a quality of motivation can be manifested when an individual is motivated by external rewards that are personally deemed to be valuable (Garn & Jolly, 2014). For Soccer and Sprinkles in Mrs. Hope's classroom and John in Mrs. Faith's classroom, their journeys towards the learning destination while engaged with their respective arts-integrated assignment appeared to be represented by the journey type identified as *The Running River of Identified Regulation*. This journey type consisted mostly of steady-flowing motivational currents, interspersed with some slow-moving currents of motivation.

Initially, Soccer's engagement with his arts-integrated assignment appeared to be motivated by his desire to live out the good student identity, despite his initial sentiments that he was "not a g- art person" (Soccer Star). At the start of the introductory lesson, Soccer was attentive during the classroom discussions and was focused on the slideshow presentation of Norval Morrisseau's artwork. As he progressed with working on his assignment, his interest in the arts-integrated assignment appeared to grow. The freedom to select any animal subject for his artwork allowed him to combine three animals from a science-fiction book series that he enjoyed reading. Moreover, it was during the first work period that Soccer's intrinsic motivation with the assignment was first revealed, as he called over Mrs. Hope to assert happily, "I'm being creative," while showing her his intricately-lined artwork-in-progress.

Although he appreciated the value and purpose of creating drafts for his artwork,

he did not initially like having to complete at least two or three drafts prior to moving on to his final artwork. He changed his mind, however, when he considered the role that draft-making played in Norval Morrisseau's artwork: "[I] was actually pretty frustrated, 'cause I don't wanna do it again and again. But after, . . . I felt like, 'Okay, you know what? . . . That's how, I thought, Norval Morrisseau did it.' . . . A lot of drafts and stuff like that" (Soccer Star). Another instance that helped facilitate Soccer's increased quality of motivation for engaging with his arts-integrated assignment was receiving feedback on one of his drafts from Mrs. Hope, which allowed him to improve upon it in subsequent drafts. The experience of working on his drafts, then, appeared to allow him to become more invested in his artwork. Although it appeared that he was motivated initially to engage in the assignment due to his interest in upholding his good student identity, he explained that, "after when I got into it, . . . I liked it better" (Soccer Star). As a result, he felt more interested in the opportunity to engage in future artistic pursuits, which speaks to his increased personal valuing of engaging with the assignment. It appeared, then, that as the contextual factors changed during his lived experiences with working on his arts-integrated assignment, so did his quality of motivation—from being less self-determined to more self-determined.

Although she did not exhibit outward indicators of her feelings when engaged with her arts-integrated assignment, Sprinkles spoke about how she was excited at the assignment's introduction because she loved art and drew a lot. Sprinkles appeared attentive during the lesson introduction and focused on drafting ideas for her artwork during the in-class work periods. When the substitute teacher, however, was present for an in-class work period in Mrs. Hope's absence, Sprinkles felt "kind of not excited, 'cause people fool around when there's supply teachers" (Sprinkles Candy). Perhaps it was for this reason that Sprinkles revealed feeling tired and unmotivated to work on her draft during the period that Mrs. Hope was not present in class.

Sprinkles spoke several times about wanting to ensure that her final artwork was in accordance with Mrs. Hope's expectations. As she explained, "I don't like getting things wrong and have to, like, redo it . . . all over again" (Sprinkles Candy). With this statement, Sprinkles revealed herself to be a learner who valued receiving a grade that she felt she deserved and would, otherwise, feel compelled to redo any work that was not

according to Mrs. Hope's expectations. During the various in-class work periods, Sprinkles remained focused on developing her draft drawings, and although she originally chose a cat as the main subject of her artwork, she chose to draw a bear instead, because she felt more confident drawing a bear in the style of Norval Morrisseau, which was one of the requirements for the assignment. On a whole, Sprinkles's lived experiences with arts integration revealed that she was motivated, largely, by the external reward of garnering her teachers' approval. Even so, she experienced pockets of decreased self-determined and self-regulated motivation, such as when she questioned periodically Mrs. Hope's acceptance of her artistic direction and when she decided to draw a bear instead of a cat, due to being unsure of how to draw the latter in the required style.

During the introductory lesson for the social justice collage assignment, John described feeling a bit tired and bored but, also, intrigued to learn more about it. While conducting online research in the library to assist with selecting a social justice topic or message, he found the task challenging; in a subsequent work period, however, he selected war as his topic and its negative impact on the world and people, inspired by one of the online games that he enjoyed playing. With a topic in mind, he became more interested in working on his collage and focused his collage-making efforts on expressing his message. Throughout the process of creating his collage, John kept mostly to himself, venturing over to his classmates' desks periodically to get inspiration for his collage. As he progressed with his collage, he felt increasingly better about his work, because he was confident that his efforts would earn him a good grade.

Although John found the task of sifting through newspapers to locate and cut out appropriate clippings quite mundane and physically tiring, he enjoyed designing and putting his collage together and aimed to do his best on it. An example of his interest in doing his best was when he decided to draw a gun, which he accomplished by resourcefully tracing an image of a gun that he found online by placing his paper over the classroom computer screen. After carefully tracing the image, he felt compelled to show off the fruit of his labours to Mrs. Hope. Although John's journey towards the learning destination began as a slow-moving current of motivation, over the course of working on his social justice collage, he developed a more self-determined quality of motivation to

do his best and to see his artwork to completion. In this way, the majority of his journey involved a steady-flowing current of motivation, wherein he personally grasped the value of engaging in the assignment to create a final product that he was pleased with.

#### **5.3.2.4 The Roaring River of Intrinsic Regulation**

As a quality of motivation, intrinsic regulation involves intrinsically-regulated actions that are characterized as highly autonomous; individuals undertaking these types of actions experience inherent satisfaction performing them (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). For Sacrena in Mrs. Hope's classroom and Makeya and Sequoia in Mrs. Faith's classroom, their journeys towards the learning destination while engaged with their respective arts-integrated assignment appeared to be depicted best by the journey identified as *The Roaring River of Identified Regulation*. This journey type involved participants exhibiting a steady-flowing motivational current with very few, if any, instances of a slower-moving current. Perhaps it is no coincidence that each of these participants expressed an interest in art and drawing.

From the introductory lesson, Sacrena's intrinsic motivation for the lesson and assignment was fostered due to her love of engaging in artistic pursuits. One of the first indications of Sacrena harbouring this quality of motivation was with her participation in the classroom discussions wherein Mrs. Hope posed questions to learners to activate their prior knowledge about Norval Morriseau and about their understanding of how to properly use oil pastels. Her intrinsic interest in the introductory lesson was further manifested through her attentiveness and frequent commenting and question-asking pertaining to the slideshow presentation of Norval Morriseau's artwork.

When selecting an animal as the subject for her artwork, Sacrena did not hesitate to select a dolphin, which was her favourite. With the added requirement of communicating a message to viewers through both her artwork and accompanying artist statement, she chose to share her concern about an issue that she felt strongly about: how unsafe fishing practices have resulted in the near-extinction of certain dolphin species. During the in-class work periods, Sacrena's engagement with creating several drafts of her artwork did not waver and did not inhibit her willingness to assist her classmates periodically with their drawing needs. Although Sacrena's interest in art and drawing helped to facilitate her intrinsic interest in the arts-integrated assignment, the freedom she

felt to express herself and her chosen message sustained her interest during her journey towards the learning destination.

In Mrs. Faith's classroom, Makeya appeared intrinsically motivated to engage with her social justice collage and finding creative ways to communicate her chosen message. The only occasion that Makeya appeared bored and inattentive was during the classroom discussion that unfolded on the first observation day when learners were introduced to the social justice collage assignment. During this time, Makeya was reading a comic book, but quickly put it away when tasked to draw a symbol that represented social justice and kept drawing her symbol during the slideshow presentation that followed, which showcased examples of various artists' social justice artwork. Her actions may not be surprising considering that she relished the opportunity to draw in her spare time.

Makeya enjoyed the opportunity to work alongside her seatmate to locate and cut out newspaper clippings, to share ideas, and to provide each other feedback. Once she decided on her collage topic of bullying, Makeya focused her subsequent efforts on creatively communicating her message. She began and ended most in-class work periods the same way: by taking out her materials to work on her arts-integrated assignment without being prompted by Mrs. Faith and by being the last to clean up. Although Makeya's interest in art and drawing intrinsically motivated her to engage with the arts-integrated assignment, it was her interest in creatively communicating her chosen social justice message via her collage that sustained her intrinsic motivation for the assignment.

Early on in her interview, Sequoia established her identity as a future learner in an arts high school. While I was unaware of this information during the observation period, understanding this about Sequoia afterwards helped to contextualize my observations of her actions within her regular classroom landscape. During the introductory lesson, when Mrs. Faith led a classroom discussion to activate learners' prior knowledge about the topic of social justice, Sequoia worked on an unrelated task and did not appear to be engaged with the lesson. Her reserved demeanour made it appear as though she was uninterested and unaffected by her classroom landscape; in her interview, however, she expressed feeling no different than the way that she felt during a "normal lesson" (Sequoia Banks). The first indication that Sequoia was interested in the arts-integrated

assignment came when she and her classmates were asked to draw a symbol that they thought represented social justice. For this task, Sequoia spared no time to open her sketchbook and begin drawing her ideas. During the slideshow presentation of various artists' social justice artworks, Sequoia appeared attentive only periodically as she continued working on her symbol of social justice and, when attentive, appeared to pay particular attention to the various words that the artists used in their work.

Throughout the in-class observation period, her quiet disposition allowed her to focus on creating her collage. She experienced very few instances of being distracted by her immediate classroom landscape, such as when she could not locate any newspaper clippings (prior to her selecting her topic and message), which prompted her to begin researching discretely for dress ideas for her Grade 8 graduation. While doing so, she overheard her classmates talking about their collage topics, which gave her the inspiration to select Black Lives Matter for hers. Having a topic in place allowed Sequoia to become increasingly interested in working towards seeing her collage come to life.

Having a reputation among her peers to possess an artistic aptitude, Sequoia felt compelled to challenge herself artistically while creating her collage. Sequoia experimented with different media, such as trying to use papier mâché to create a clenched fist, so as to add a three-dimensional element to her collage. When her idea did not work out, she took great care to ensure that her painting of a clenched fist was done well—especially the fingers, which she revealed were the most challenging part for her, and she was happy that they turned out well. The sum of Sequoia's experiences revealed that her journey towards the learning destination consisted mostly of a steady-flowing motivational current powered by her intrinsic motivation to engage in pursuits that involve art and drawing.

My exploration of this second research puzzle revealed participants' varying quality of motivation as they journeyed towards the learning destination—not only among participants but also within themselves as their lived experiences with arts integration unfolded over time. Various contextual factors explained each participant's varied motivational current when engaged with their arts-integrated assignment. These contextual factors appeared to be ones that fostered or thwarted participants' feelings of autonomy, competence, and relatedness—the three basic psychological needs that,

according to SDT, can influence quality of motivation. It is no wonder, then, that within the context of my inquiry, the more participants' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness were fostered, the more self-determined, self-regulated, and internalized their journeys were described to be (namely, The Running River, The Roaring River).

### **5.3.3 Research Puzzle 3**

My third research puzzle involved exploring, *In what ways do the stories of learners with exceptionalities and their peers without exceptionalities differ from or relate to each other?* According to the demographic questionnaire completed by their parents, two learners in my inquiry were on an individual education plan (IEP): Crystal, who was a Grade 6 learner in Mrs. Hope's classroom, and Josh, who was a Grade 7 learner in Mrs. Faith's classroom. Each participant, however, was not formally identified with an exceptionality. Even so, when considering their respective learning through the arts journey and exploring it in relation to the journeys of their peers without exceptionalities, two differences and two similarities emerged.

#### **5.3.3.1 Differences in Participants' Stories**

One difference between Crystal's and Josh's accounts of their lived experiences with learning through the arts and those of their peers without exceptionalities was that Crystal's and Josh's engagement in their arts-integrated assignment appeared to start off with a slower motivational current than their peers without exceptionalities. During the introductory lesson of their arts-integrated assignment, their classmates appeared immediately engaged, at best, or attentively aloof, at worst. In the case of Crystal and Josh, however, they appeared unprepared to engage with the assignment at the start of it. Crystal arrived upset approximately twenty minutes into the introductory lesson and, although some of her classmates tried cheering her up and her teacher tried speaking with her to diffuse her negative feelings, it took some time after Crystal's entry into the classroom for her to find out about the assignment requirements and engage in working on the first draft of her artwork. In Josh's lived experience, he spoke about not realizing until a few periods after the introductory lesson that he was expected to engage with the arts-integrated assignment alongside the rest of his peers. It is worth noting, however, that once Crystal and Josh began planning for and working on their respective arts-integrated assignment, they became increasingly more engaged and invested in their work.



Another difference was that Crystal and Josh had a different approach to beginning their learning through the arts journey. While many of their peers appeared to be interested, first, in selecting a topic or message upon which to create their artwork, Crystal and Josh chose to engage, first, with creating their artwork and, then, selecting a topic or message that would suit their respective creation. Although there was no right or wrong way to initiate their engagement with their arts-integrated assignment, this reversal of approach suggested that they felt most comfortable beginning their respective arts-integrated journey by focusing on developing, first, the aesthetic features of their work, rather than the message that they wanted to communicate through it.

### **5.3.3.2 Similarities in Participants' Stories**

One similarity between Crystal's and Josh's stories of their lived experiences with learning through the arts and those of their peers without exceptionalities was that the learning destination for all participants appeared to be the same: to create original arts-integrated products among their peers within their respective regular classroom landscape. The creative and thematic decisions that Crystal and Josh made in the process of creating their respective arts-integrated products resulted in identity texts that showcased the identities that they wanted to live by—Crystal as a creative designer who sought creative independence and Josh as a technicolour dreamer who chose to add a lot of colour and visual interest to his collage. Similarly, the arts-integrated products of their peers without exceptionalities reflected, too, their identities (see Table 6 in this chapter). This similarity, also, came through in participants' stories of autonomy, which were shared while exploring the first research puzzle and addressed therein more fully.

Another similarity was that several participants spoke about particular elements in their works-in-progress that they worked on for the betterment of their work or things that they wished they could have improved upon in their final products. This suggested an invested interest in their arts-integrated assignment, even upon its completion. Crystal, in particular, spoke about wanting to increase the size of her animals, as per the advice given to her by Mrs. Hope. Josh spoke about how, although blue was his favourite colour, the his collage background was a lighter shade of blue than he wanted to use and would have chosen a darker blue instead, had it been available to him. Crystal's and Josh's classmates, too, spoke about parts of their arts-integrated assignment that, in the process

of its creation, they worked on improving. Sacrena spoke about how she laboured over perfecting the tail and fin of her dolphin and that she heeded the advice of her teacher on how to improve upon her artist statement. Soccer began working on his second draft to incorporate Mrs. Hope's feedback on lessening the number of intricate lines, so as to make it easier to colour it in using oil pastels. Soccer spoke, too, about changing his colour theme a week before completing his artwork because he thought it would look better that way. Sprinkles spoke about how she wanted to work on her artwork concurrently with her artist statement in order "to add a few more things to it that I couldn't during the period" (Sprinkles Candy).

In Mrs. Faith's classroom, John spoke about how he felt better about his collage the more time he spent working on it and thinking about how to creatively express his message on war's negative impact. When describing his collage, Michael mentioned several times about how he felt his finished collage looked "weird" (Michael Philips), explaining that, had he been given the chance, he would have changed several things on his collage, such as included more words to fill up the empty spaces, and replaced the smaller head on the top left-hand corner with a larger one. Sequoia, too, spoke about wanting to "add more [words and articles about First Nations people and about things happening in Black communities] into the blank spots" (Sequoia Banks).

#### **5.3.4 Research Puzzle 4**

For my fourth and final research puzzle, I wondered, *In what ways do learners' stories differ from or relate to each other when considering the style of arts integration that they are exposed to?* Although participants in both classrooms were exposed to the co-equal style of arts integration (Bresler, 1995)—that is, both involved addressing and assessing curricular expectations in Visual Arts and Language Arts—the nature of the arts-integrated assignment differed between the two classrooms. Participants in Mrs. Hope's classroom worked on creating an oil pastel artwork that involved drawing animals in the style of Norval Morrisseau, as well as an artist statement that explained their work. Participants in Mrs. Faith's classroom worked on creating a mixed media newspaper collage to communicate a social justice theme or message of their choice. It is with this understanding in mind that I explored the accounts of participants in Mrs. Hope's and Mrs. Faith's classrooms. Had each classroom implemented a different style of arts

integration, however, I would have been able to explore this research puzzle in a more meaningful way. Nonetheless, the differences in the artistic medium and in the resulting arts-integrated products revealed three differences and two similarities among participants' stories of their lived experiences with arts integration.

#### **5.3.4.1 Differences in Participants' Stories**

One difference between the stories of participants in Mrs. Hope's and Mrs. Faith's classrooms was that the participants in Mrs. Hope's classroom chose a topic or message relatively more quickly, which allowed them to develop their drafts and artist statement soon thereafter. The majority of participants in Mrs. Faith's classroom (John, Makeya, Jessica-Marie, Michael, Sequoia), however, took their time with selecting a social justice topic or message for their collages that resonated with them. This delay in selecting a topic was due, perhaps, to the period that Mrs. Faith provided to learners to conduct their online research in the library. During the process of researching a topic or message to select, the participants in Mrs. Faith's classroom had differing experiences. John described feeling bored, while Makeya, Jessica-Marie, Michael, and Sequoia described feeling excited about or interested in the opportunity to select a topic or message that they felt strongly about. Interestingly, however, although the participants in Mrs. Faith's classroom were given more time to select a topic or message—which, one might argue, provided them with the opportunity to become more invested in their topic selection—the participants in Mrs. Hope's classroom opted, too, to select a topic or message that they were invested in; that is, one that resonated within them or that reflected their identity.

Another difference was that the participants in Mrs. Hope's classroom felt more compelled to labour over the details of their artwork, so as to ensure that their work was to their aesthetic liking. Crystal spoke about erasing frequently her drawing of an owl and, then, a dolphin until she felt happy with how they turned out. Sacrena spoke about not liking the way that the tail and fin of her dolphin looked and erasing them with the determination to redraw them better. When Soccer was still in the planning stages of his artwork, he spoke about how he created several drafts to incorporate the feedback that he received from Mrs. Hope and the substitute teacher. During the in-class work periods, Sprinkles spent a fair amount of time drawing, erasing, and redrawing parts of her draft that she wanted to refine further. In contrast, the participants in Mrs. Faith's classroom,

who worked primarily through the medium of collage, appeared to labour less over the details of their collage. Many participants in Mrs. Faith's classroom quickly cut or ripped out the newspaper clippings that they found, so as to add them to their growing collection of clippings that they would use later when putting together their collage. John and Sequoia, however, who had at least one drawn or painted element in their collage, appeared to labour more over the details of those particular parts of their collage.

A third difference was that for participants in Mrs. Hope's classroom, the act of writing an artist statement to explain their artwork encouraged them to be more thoughtful about the message that they wanted to communicate. This thoughtfulness resulted in instances in which several participants, despite their sentiments towards writing, described having to think even more about their arts-integrated works-in-progress and feeling the need to modify parts of their artwork while writing their artist statement (and vice versa). They described, also, referring to their artwork in order to assist them with what to write about in their artist statement.

Pertaining to the period in which learners were asked to copy notes on the elements of an artist statement, Crystal expressed her interest in writing: "I like writing, like, when I don't have a specific topic to write about" (Crystal Starlight). About her arts-integrated assignment, she explained that, "drawing it, it was just like . . . fun, but the writing we had to think about it and stuff. . . . Like, what the animal represents about, and, yeah, what they do" (Crystal Starlight). Furthermore, when writing her artist statement, she got the idea to add another animal to fill in the empty space in her artwork: "When I was doing my artist statement, I'm like, 'I should add something.' And, then, after, I heard the butterfly can mean that 'you can believe in yourself'" (Crystal Starlight). When asked why, during the in-class work period for the artist statement, she felt like looking at her artwork while working on her artist statement, Crystal explained "I was looking at it so it helps me write what I'm supposed to write and stuff" (Crystal Starlight).

When asked about her experience with writing her artist statement based on her artwork, Sacrena explained: "I don't really like writing that much, unless they're, like, stories, or, like, things that I can, like, look at my other work and do" (Sacrena Rully). Considering the artist statement fell into the latter category, her focus on her assignment

was fostered: “I felt, uh, kinda, like, . . . focused, because, umm, I wanted to talk about my art, and I wanted people to know [about my topic]” (Sacrena Rully). Aside from her focus, writing her artist statement facilitated the planning of the colour theme for her collage: “The second paragraph was, like, why’d you use these colours. So, then, I knew what colours I was gonna use, so then I just . . . wrote that part anyway” (Sacrena Rully).

Although Soccer expressed that he liked writing, he confessed, “in writing, I’m not all that good” (Soccer Star). During the in-class work period on writing artist statements, Soccer added to his sketch while brainstorming his thoughts for his artist statement, explaining that “sometimes when I write, I think of . . . other [ideas] and, then, I might get it together . . . and add it [to my artwork]” (Soccer Star). Soccer elucidated, too, the reason that he kept looking at his artwork while writing his artist statement: “Cause, I’m writing my artist statement about it, too. So it’s based on this, [*pointing to artwork*] the writing about my art. So I tried to use that to help me” (Soccer Star). Recognizing that his writing needed improvement, he noted, “I’ve done a lot of writing at home to improve” (Soccer Star), adding that for his artist statement, “I’ve improved it a lot. So, it actually helped me, umm, with my writing” (Soccer Star).

When asked about her thoughts and feelings during the lesson on artist statements, Sprinkles declared, “I honestly do not like writing, at all. So I kind of felt a little awkward” (Sprinkles Candy). Even so, she expressed that looking at her artwork helped her write her artist statement, which paralleled the sentiments of Crystal, Sacrena, and Soccer: “So I’d know, like, like, what I’m writing about, so I don’t go off topic . . . on what I’m writing about” (Sprinkles Candy). She shared, too, how looking at something to write about “makes me, like, think a little more” (Sprinkles Candy).

Although participants in Mrs. Hope’s classroom expressed their topic and message primarily through their written artist statement, the participants in Mrs. Faith’s classroom shared their collage’s topic and message verbally during their interview. Without an artist statement, Josh, Michael and Sequoia appeared less assertive when they explained the topic and message that they wanted to communicate. Within their collage, this was reflected by participants’ inclusion of pictures, words, and/or phrases that reflected more than one topic or that appeared unrelated to the topic or message expressed by participants themselves.

For Josh, he explained that the topic that he chose for his social justice collage was that of First Nations people and the suicide crisis within their communities. Looking at his collage, however, I got the impression that his topic was not unified. His inclusion of the phrase ‘Black Lives Matter’ as well as the headline ‘Journalist defied ‘postwar expectations of women as housewives’ suggested his interest in several social justice-related topics and his indecisiveness with choosing one to focus on.

Early on, Michael stated that, because he could not decide upon a topic, he chose multi-media as his topic. Michael later explained that his collage’s topic involved “‘medical,’ ‘live,’ ‘growth,’ ‘power,’ ‘victory,’ ‘life,’ ‘city,’ ‘racism,’ it’s, like, all people. It’s like humans doing that type of stuff” (Michael Philips). Taken as a whole, however, the images, words, phrases, and newspaper article that he chose to include in his collage did not appear to reflect a coherent topic. In consideration of Michael’s lived experiences with working on his social justice collage, however, we may be able to conclude that being upset and frustrated as a result of several negative occurrences during the in-class work periods might have resulted in his creation of a collage without attention to a unified topic or message.

The topic that Sequoia spoke mostly about as one of the topics of her collage was that of Black Lives Matter and the struggles of Black people to break free from slavery. Additionally, she mentioned that, in her online research, she was inspired by many social justice topics, so she chose social justice as the general theme for her collage and decided to include, too, the crisis of missing women among First Nations communities. Accordingly, her collage contained an image of a First Nations woman holding a painting of her murdered daughter. It also contained several words that appeared to be unrelated to either of her two social justice topics: ‘triggers,’ ‘reputations,’ and ‘art.’ Taken as a whole, Sequoia’s collage appeared to consist of a bricolage of social justice topics.

#### **5.3.4.2 Similarities in Participants’ Stories**

One similarity between the stories of participants in Mrs. Hope’s and Mrs. Faith’s classrooms was that, even though they were provided guidelines to follow (such as the success criteria for their arts-integrated assignment), several participants in both classrooms expressed feeling a sense a freedom in being able to select their own topic or message and being able to decide how to communicate it creatively. As a result,

participants' sense of ownership over their artwork was fostered which encouraged them, be it consciously or subconsciously, to wish to express themselves—their beliefs, interests, and/or values—resulting in arts-integrated products that reflected their identities. Michael in Mrs. Faith's classroom, however, was the only participant who faced several incidents that hindered his ability to create a final product that he felt satisfied with.

Another similarity was that several participants expressed their interest in creatively and uniquely communicating their chosen topic or message in such a way that their arts-integrated products would not be a copy of another classmate's work (Crystal, Soccer, Sprinkles in Mrs. Hope's classroom; John, Makeya, Sequoia in Mrs. Faith's classroom). With participants' work serving as identity texts, creating original arts-integrated products became an important element of their lived experiences with arts integration, so that their work could reveal something about who they were. While addressing the first research puzzle, this similarity, also, came to the forefront of participants' stories of autonomy and was explored more fully.

#### **5.4 Chapter Summary and Concluding Thoughts**

In this chapter, I shared the meanings that I garnered from the field texts and interim inquiry texts in relation to each of the four research puzzles guiding my inquiry. This journey was an eye-opening one for me, allowing me to appreciate the candidness of participants' lived experiences with arts integration within their regular classroom landscape. Through their accounts, participants traversed time (i.e., temporality) and space (i.e., place), while sharing, too, their inner thoughts and feelings and instances involving their relationships with their teachers and peers (i.e., sociality). Engaging in their arts-integrated assignment appeared to provide participants with an opportunity to express themselves, showcase their identities, and re-invent themselves.

In the first research puzzle, participants' stories revealed three stories that shed light upon their motivation when engaged with their arts-integrated assignment. Their stories of autonomy revealed how their arts-integrated products served as identity texts, reflecting their beliefs, interests, and/or values. Their stories of competence spoke to arts integration fostering their flexible thinking through their spontaneous creative and thematic decisions. Their stories of relatedness highlighted the extent to which engaging

with the creation of their arts-integrated assignment facilitated their positive relationships with both their teachers and peers through their willingness to share their advice, feedback, and assistance and accepting the same from others.

For the second research puzzle, I explored participants' stories for what they revealed about their quality of motivation when learning through the arts within their regular classroom landscape. Participants' accounts brought to light their varying quality of motivation, much like the current of a river. This varying quality not only appeared among participants, but also within participants, influenced by the changing contextual factors (both personal and social) that they faced as they journeyed towards the learning destination.

The third research puzzle allowed me to look at the ways in which the stories of participants with exceptionalities differed from or related to those of their peers without exceptionalities. This exploration revealed two differences: Crystal and Josh (a) experienced a slower current of motivation at the start of their respective arts-integrated journey and (b) approached the start of their respective arts-integrated assignment focused on the aesthetic details of it, rather than selecting a topic or message to communicate through their work. Two similarities between Crystal's and Josh's arts-integrated experiences and those of their peers without exceptionalities were that all participants (a) were interested in the same learning destination of creating original products and (b) spoke about various elements of their arts-integrated products that they worked to improve upon while engaged with creating them and/or spoke about what they wished they could have improved upon when assessing their final products.

The fourth and final research puzzle allowed me to explore the ways in which participants' stories of learning through the arts differed from or related to each other in consideration of the regular classroom landscape that contextualized their lived experiences. Three differences were brought to light, which involved the participants in Mrs. Hope's classroom (a) selecting a topic or message more quickly and working on their arts-integrated assignment soon thereafter, (b) feeling more compelled to be meticulous about the details of their artwork, and (c) being more thoughtful about the message that they wanted to communicate (which appeared to result from the process of writing an artist statement about their artwork). The two similarities between the accounts



of participants in each regular classroom landscape were that several, if not all, participants (a) felt a sense of freedom and ownership in selecting a topic or message and deciding how to communicate it creatively and (b) expressed wanting to produce unique work that did not involve copying anyone else's ideas (which effectively resulted in their products serving as identity texts).

Overall, participants' candid accounts of their respective learning through their arts journey allowed me to meaningfully explore their lived experiences within the context of their regular classroom landscape. On a whole, their accounts revealed not only the uniqueness of each participant's journey towards the learning destination, but also the extent to which their feelings of autonomy, competence, and relatedness were fostered or thwarted when learning through the arts. With these meanings that I gleaned from the field texts that were collected and the interim inquiry texts that were co-composed, I, now, move on to the next and final chapter in which I extend my understanding of the meanings that were gleaned by contextualizing them within the research literature (Polkinghorne, 2007).

## Chapter 6

### 6 Extending My Understanding of the Meanings Found

*In a manner similar to the Discussion section of conventional research, narrative research extends the understanding of a story by contextualizing it. Where interpretation in conventional research offers an explanation of the implications of the results of its statistical analyses, narrative interpretation often develops implications by comparing and contrasting assembled stories with one another or with other forms of social science literature. (Polkinghorne, 2007, p. 483)*

In the previous chapter, I went on an exploratory journey to find meanings in the field texts that I collected and the interim inquiry texts that I co-composed pertaining to the arts-integrated experiences of ten Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 participants from Mrs. Hope's and Mrs. Faith's regular classrooms. My journey revealed several insights about participants' accounts of their motivation-related experiences with arts integration. As the title of this chapter suggests—and as the opening quote illuminates so eloquently—I proceed in my inquiry journey by extending my understanding of the meanings found—both through exploring the associations among participants' stories and through the research literature.

As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggested, narrative inquirers enter their inquiry field in the midst of living out their stories, while their participants are in the midst of living out their own. With this realization, I note that participants' arts-integrated accounts were ones that they experienced among the stories they were living—and continued to live—within their regular classroom landscape. For this reason, the meanings that were gleaned from participants' accounts were ones that, in many ways, reflected participants' lived experiences during a period of time (that is, over the course of their arts-integrated unit of study) and within a particular context (namely, in Language Arts, within their regular classroom landscape). Participants' willingness to share authentically their lived experiences, in turn, allowed for an authentic understanding of their motivation-related experiences with arts integration within those contexts, which may not have been as accessible to me through other means of inquiry.

The accounts of participants, as highlighted in the preceding chapter, involved the elements of place, sociality, and temporality—the three commonplaces of narrative inquiry, described as thinking narratively (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). These three commonplaces pervaded participants' retelling of their lived experiences. Participants'

accounts reflected contextual factors within their regular classroom landscape (such as what was happening around them), information about the quality of their interactions with their teachers and peers, and instances of recalling past lived experiences (which often took place outside of their in-school landscape)—all of which helped to shape the thematic and creative decisions that they made when working on their arts-integrated products. With the elements of place, sociality, and temporality present in their accounts, the meanings that participants held of their motivation-related experiences when learning through the arts were, more holistically, brought to the forefront.

As I explored the meanings that were gleaned from participants' accounts, their stories spoke to various elements involved with engaging in the arts. They spoke to the non-linear creative process of artmaking, such as that proposed by Moore (2015). Their stories spoke, too, to the eight studio habits of mind that a quality education in the visual arts can foster in high school students (Winner et al., 2006), as well as several of the “distinctive forms of thinking” (Eisner, 2004, p. 4) that an education in the arts can engender. I refer to these parallels throughout this chapter and, in order to facilitate an understanding of the parallels that I draw, I describe each briefly here.

Artistic creations result from their creators submitting to a process that, oftentimes, does not have a linear trajectory (Moore, 2015). Although several typologies of the creative process exist (see Christensen, 2013; Davis Publications, n.d.; Gilkey, 2008; Moore, 2015; Taylor, 2014), they all parallel each other in some respects. According to Moore (2015), creating art is a creative process that involves five stages: (a) being inspired, such as from a piece of artwork, nature, or a personal event; (b) allowing ideas to percolate, such as by taking time away from an idea or exploring ideas through playing with sketches; (c) organizing materials, such as getting together any necessary supplies or creating drafts or ideas; (d) creating the finished work (which, some have argued, is never really finished); and (e) reflecting on the resulting product (which, for some, can involve feeling a sense of relief and preparedness to engage in the next project or regrets on what could have been done differently).

To determine the eight studio habits of mind that the visual arts can engender, the researchers explored the teaching moments in videotaped classes where high school students were exposed to quality instruction in the visual arts (Winner et al., 2006). Six of

these paralleled my exploration of the meanings that were gleaned from the accounts of participants involved in my inquiry. These included (a) engage and persist (i.e., embracing problems with focus and perseverance); (b) envision (i.e., cultivating spatial intelligence); (c) express (i.e., creating work that conveys ideas, feelings, and/or meanings); (d) observe (i.e., being acutely attentive of visual contexts); (e) reflect (i.e., working with others to develop ideas on one's work, and judging one's work and creative process, as well as others' work); and (f) stretch and explore (i.e., extending competencies beyond one's comfort zone, and exploring and embracing mistakes as learning opportunities). Although these studio habits of mind pertain particularly to high school learners, it is interesting to note that several of these habits of mind came through, too, in the accounts of the upper elementary learners involved in my inquiry.

Eisner (2002a) described various unique ways of thinking that an education in the arts can foster within learners. Most particularly, the ones that paralleled the meanings that were gleaned from participants' accounts were (a) the notion that "surprise is a friend, not a foe" (p. 164); (b) an awareness that there is "more than one solution to a problem" (p. 196); (c) an understanding that originality is valued because "diversity and variability are made central" (p. 197); (d) an appreciation of "the importance of imagination and . . . of refining and using the sensibilities" (p. 198); (e) the understanding that, in learning, "intrinsic satisfactions matter" (p. 202); (f) the idea that meaning can be communicated through other means and "that literal language and quantification are not the only means through which human understanding is secured or represented" (p. 204); and (g) the willingness to be "flexibly purposive in the course of one's work" (p. 205).

With the preceding preface in place, I begin this chapter by extending my understanding of participants' chosen representational item as a means through which they could express their in-school and out-of-school identities. I, then, extend my understanding of the meanings that were gleaned from exploring participants' accounts within the context of each of the four research puzzles guiding my inquiry. I conclude this chapter by sharing various implications for classroom practice, the limitations of my inquiry, directions for future research, and my concluding thoughts.

### **6.1 Participants' Chosen Representational Item**

Meant initially to facilitate their comfortableness with the interview environment,

the items that participants chose to share at their interview revealed interesting insights about them that I did not anticipate. As they spoke about their item and their rationale for choosing it, they expressed elements of their in-school and/or out-of-school identities. Explored alongside their accounts about learning through the arts, these identities helped to contextualize my understanding of the meanings that participants held of their motivation-related experiences with arts integration. By exploring the ways that participants present themselves through their accounts (and, in the case of my inquiry, through the accounts of their representational item), the richness and complexity of narrative inquiry can be highlighted (Goffman, 1959, as cited in Saldana, 2013). As I came to realize, exploring participants' accounts for expressions of their positionality facilitated a rich and complex understanding of their lived experiences with arts integration.

For all participants, their representational item embodied a favoured pastime, memory, or possession and, as such, served as a gateway to participants' in-school and out-of-school identities. Through their accounts, some participants positioned their identities as an artist (Crystal, Sacrena, Sprinkles, Makeya, Michael). Others positioned themselves as possessing various qualities of a learner (Soccer, Jessica-Marie, Sequoia), and others, still, positioned themselves as an avid fan (John of online gaming; Josh of anim ). Participants' desire to express their identities can be understood in light of self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985), which postulates that humans possess an innate desire to explore their environment, build knowledge, and exercise and extend their capacities (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Indeed, several participants in Mrs. Hope's and Mrs. Faith's classroom expressed such desires (Crystal, Sacrena, Soccer, John, Makeya, Sequoia), and, more particularly, an interest in exercising and extending their capacities.

As with their accounts of learning through the arts, when exploring participants' accounts through the lens of narrative inquiry, all participants' accounts of their representational item involved an element of place, sociality, and temporality. The element of place was present as they shared an item of their choosing that reflected a landscape outside of those of their immediate interview or schooling environment. Shaped by the element of sociality, in many cases participants' accounts of their item involved delving inward to describe their personal thoughts and feelings about using it, as

well as delving outward to share their social experiences involved with it. The element of temporality appeared in participants' accounts, too, as they shared the ways in which their item connected them with happy, exciting, and/or fun memories of their lived life worlds in other times past.

Overall, participants' accounts of their representational item provided me with a glimpse into another dimension of their lived experiences with arts integration. The freedom given to participants to select an item to bring and share during their interview that represented to them how it felt like learning through the arts appeared to facilitate their willingness to share something about their in-school and/or out-of-school identities. Prior studies have suggested that, when given the freedom to share their beliefs, understandings, or experiences through creative means—such as through photo-elicitation (Barker & Weiler, 2003; Gabhainn & Sixsmith, 2006), drawings (Barker & Weiler, 2003; Driessnack, 2006), and role playing (Yardley, 1995)—participants appear more open to share things of personal significance to them. In so doing, they can reveal facets of their identities—many of which, as young participants, are in the process of becoming. In the case of my inquiry, participants' selection and description of their chosen representational item certainly revealed aspects of their identity that they wished to share and, in so doing, deepened my understanding of their learning through the arts experiences.

## **6.2 Extended Understandings: Research Puzzle 1**

For the first research puzzle, I asked, *What stories do learners tell about their motivation when learning through the arts in their inclusive classrooms?* Exploring participants' accounts within the context of the three basic psychological needs identified by SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985)—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—revealed three themes. First, participants' accounts revealed stories of autonomy in which arts integration served as a means to express their identities. Second, their stories of competence revealed that arts integration served as means to foster their flexible thinking. Third, their stories of relatedness revealed that arts integration facilitated their classroom relationships with their teachers and peers.

In the first theme, participants' stories of autonomy when learning through the arts revealed that their arts-integrated assignment facilitated expressions of their in-school

and/or out-of-school identities. In their stories, participants shared that they felt a sense of freedom, engaged in making thematic and creative decisions, were in a positive emotional state, and desired to assert their individuality (Ryan & Deci, 2015). This understanding speaks to three studio habits of mind that an education in the visual arts can foster: express, envision (cultivating learners' spatial intelligence), and observe (being acutely attentive to visual contexts; Winner et al., 2006). That is, through participants' engagement with their arts-integrated assignment, they were able to not only express the ideas, feelings, and/or meanings that were personal to them, but, as a means through which to engage their multiple senses (Sousa & Pilecki, 2013), they were, also, able to cultivate their spatial and visual literacies (New London Group, 1996). Furthermore, the uniqueness of participants' arts-integrated products appears, also, to substantiate two ways of thinking that, as Eisner (2002a) maintained, an education in the arts can foster: a valuing of originality as a means to express diversity and variability of thought, and an appreciation for thinking imaginatively and cultivating and tapping into the sensibilities.

In the second theme, stories of competence pervaded participants' accounts as they described instances in which they exhibited flexible thinking with the planning and creation of their arts-integrated products and a willingness to move their products into unanticipated directions when faced with challenges. This finding might not be surprising if we consider that risk-taking and perseverance in the face of unclear solutions are qualities that are crucial to the creative process (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Kind, 2010; Lindström, 2006). Through their accounts, it appeared, too, that participants' arts-integrated products fostered their feelings of achievement, capability, and self-efficacy, as well as their cognitive engagement (Ryan & Deci, 2015). This theme speaks to two studio habits of mind that an education in the visual arts can foster: engage and persist (embracing challenges with focus and persistence) and stretch and explore (broadening skills beyond comfort zones and perceiving mistakes as opportunities; Winner et al., 2006). This theme, also, paralleled four unique ways of thinking that an education in the arts can nurture (Eisner, 2002a): an acceptance of surprises as welcomed evolutions in the creative process, an appreciation for the multiple ways that challenges can be addressed, a valuing of originality as a means to express diversity and variability of thought, and a

willingness to exercise purposive flexibility with the aims of a project, so as to allow for explorations of new opportunities as they arise.

In the third theme, participants' accounts revealed stories of relatedness in which they freely gave of their ideas, feedback, and assistance to peers and, also, willingly accepted the same from their teachers and peers. More particularly, they shared instances in which they felt a sense of compatibility with their teachers and peers, in which they interacted with them socially, and in which their actions appeared to cultivate their friendships within their regular classroom landscape (Ryan & Deci, 2015). This theme speaks to another studio habit of mind, which is the ability to reflect (a willingness to work with others to develop one's ideas and an ability to judge one's work and creative process, as well as the work of others).

Ultimately, it appeared that participants' accounts of learning through the arts revealed similar storylines involving experiences that either fostered or thwarted their basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Perhaps this is not surprising when considering that these needs are common across cultures and gender (Chirkov et al., 2003, 2005; Sheldon et al., 2001). Moreover, I note that, according to Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT)—one of six mini-theories derived from SDT—autonomy, competence, and relatedness each play a role in fostering an individual's psychological health and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2017). When learners' basic psychological needs are fostered, not only do they experience cognitive benefits, such as academic engagement and meaningful learning experiences (Grolnick et al., 1991; Miserandino, 1996), but they can also experience several other gains in other domains, such behavioural (e.g., sustained effort and perseverance on tasks; Patall et al., 2008; Vansteenkiste et al., 2005), emotional (e.g., self-confidence; Deci & Ryan, 1995), and affective (e.g., mental health and well-being; Véronneau et al., 2005). In relation to my inquiry, each of the three themes gleaned from participants' accounts of their lived experiences with arts integration pertained to a basic psychological need. This suggests that, in many instances throughout their learning through the arts experiences, their mental health and feelings of happiness were nurtured within their regular classroom landscape.

In the following pages, I extend further my understanding of each theme by



exploring participants' accounts for the tensions within and between their stories (Clandinin et al., 2010). In so doing, I uncover four types of narratives that underlay participants' lived experiences with arts integration: the (a) grand narrative (i.e., a story held universally among participants; Pinnegar & Daynes, 2006); (b) counternarrative (i.e., a story of resistance that defied the grand narrative; Nelson, 1995); hidden narrative (i.e., an unseen story; Rolling, 2010); and metanarrative (i.e., a story that ordered and elucidated participants' knowledge and subjective experiences; Stephens & McCallum, 1998). Uncovering these narratives helped to facilitate my extended understandings of the meanings gleaned from learners' stories of autonomy, competence, and relatedness when learning through the arts. See Table 8 for an overview of these understandings.

Table 8

*Extending My Understanding of Participants' Stories Through the Four Narrative Types*

Basic Psychological Need <sup>a</sup>	Grand Narrative: Measurement & Achievement	Counternarrative: Uninterested in Measurement & Achievement	Hidden Narrative: Carving Out an Identity	Metanarrative: 'Archetypal,' Good & Proper Student
Autonomy: Arts Integration as Expressing Identities * freedom * decision-making * emotional state * individuality	when autonomy fostered, decisions & actions reflected care for grades & doing well academically	when contextual circumstances (personal & social) thwarted or fostered autonomy, unconcerned with grades & doing well academically	when autonomy fostered, desired to be different from peers or to be recognized by teachers & peers to be good at something	when autonomy fostered, participants expressed (implicitly or explicitly) good student identity
Competence: Arts Integration as Fostering Flexible Thinking * achievement * capability * cognitive engagement * self-efficacy	when competence fostered, desired to earn good grades & do well academically, as long as work was 'acceptable' to teachers	when competence fostered, did not mind if aesthetic inclinations went against grain, so long as learner was pleased with result & felt confident about capabilities	when competence fostered, expressed interests & stories or identities that they wanted to live by	when competence fostered, showcased good student identity, alongside grand narrative
Relatedness: Arts Integration as Facilitating Classroom Relationships * compatibility * social interactions * friendships	when relatedness fostered with teacher, cared about doing well, following feedback & advice, & doing what teacher expected of them	when relatedness with teacher was thwarted or fostered, exhibited disinterest in grades & achievement	when relatedness fostered, felt safe to assert an identity for themselves among teachers & peers	when relatedness fostered, implicitly desired to live out good student identity

*Note.* <sup>a</sup> SDT-related descriptors accompanied by an asterisk (\*) indicate elements of participants' experiences that were thwarted or fostered.

### 6.2.1 The Grand Narrative of Participants' Lived Experiences With Arts Integration

The grand narrative that was present predominantly throughout many of participants' accounts of their autonomy, competence, and relatedness was that of the grand narrative of education: stories of measurement and academic achievement. At times, these stories were implicit, but some were, also, explicit. For several participants, this grand narrative comprised their "stories to live by" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999)—and, in many cases, these stories were very much in line with that which was expected of them by others. Moreover, the grand narrative lived by participants emerged more distinctly through their stories of autonomy—that is, arts integration as expressing identities—but were also present in their stories of competence and relatedness, as identified in Table 8.

In Mrs. Hope's classroom, Crystal spoke about how she felt when she was unable initially to draw her dolphin to her liking: "mad and sad. . . . 'Cause, like, other people had nice drawings, but then, after, like, I didn't really like mine" (Crystal Starlight). By comparing her work to that of her classmates, she implicitly evaluated her efforts, which prompted her to realize that the quality of her drawing did not compare with that of her peers' and might not earn her a grade that she would be happy with. When Crystal spoke, too, about incorporating Mrs. Hope's advice and feedback into her artwork, she revealed wanting to follow her teacher's advice who would be the one assessing her work.

Asked about how she felt copying the notes that Mrs. Hope wrote on the blackboard pertaining to the elements of an artist statement, Sacrena explained that she wanted to do so, because she knew it would assist her later on with guiding her to meet the requirements of the assignment. Moreover, to improve upon her artist statement, Sacrena shared that she enlisted and incorporated her mother's feedback:

I asked my mom to read it, and, then, . . . she said . . . like, . . . I needed to add more details. So, then, uh, I kept thinking about it, and, then, . . . I looked back to my notes and, then, told me I have to do a second paragraph, about the oil pastels and, like, how I was gonna colour it, so, then, I, I wrote about that. (Sacrena Rully)

As with Crystal, Sacrena spoke about, also, wanting to follow the advice of her teacher. Through her teacher's advice, she substituted in a subsequent draft of her artist statement

words like ‘it’ and ‘they’ with words that identified specifically those things that she was referring to.

Soccer relayed several instances in which, after he received his teacher’s advice, he worked on incorporating those suggestions into his artwork. In one such instance, Mrs. Hope advised him that he might experience difficulty colouring his first intricately-lined draft design with oil pastels. Furthermore, during the work period in which the substitute teacher was present, Soccer indicated that he wanted to seek her feedback to see if he was on the right track. He felt like doing so because he wanted to avoid having to do his work over again if it did not meet the teacher’s expectations. Her subsequent advice directed his next draft edits to make his drawing bigger and outline it with coloured markers. Although Soccer was very much interested in creating a unique and creative final product, the grand narrative in his account revealed that he was interested concurrently in ensuring that his efforts would earn him a good grade. He explicitly expressed his interest in earning good grades when sharing how he felt during the same work period after receiving the student teacher’s comments about his draft drawing:

He said, “Oh, . . . good job! You’re doing very well!” Uh, it made me feel proud, ‘cause my mom always said she wanted me to get, like, good grades. Like, have fun, as most importantly, but not all of the time, ‘cause, I also focus on my education work. (Soccer Star)

Sprinkles spoke similarly about her interest in knowing Mrs. Hope’s expectations prior to embarking on an assignment: “‘Cause if I don’t [know what she’s looking for], then I’ll get it wrong, and I’ll have to do it all over again” (Sprinkles Candy). For Sprinkles, doing an assignment incorrectly was a real possibility that would necessitate her redoing it. This is why she cared to know the success criteria in advance, so as to mitigate such an occurrence. It appeared, then, that Sprinkles wanted not only to create an artwork that she was happy with, but, also, to follow her teacher’s expectations, so as to ensure that she would do well academically on whatever she produced for submission.

In the accounts of their lived experiences with learning through the arts, several participants in Mrs. Faith’s classroom revealed similar stories of measurement and academic achievement. John spoke about how, as his ideas evolved to express creatively his social justice message, he felt “better and better” (John Gerson), because he knew that his creativity would earn him a better mark on his work. Makeya’s invested interest in

selecting a topic that was different from her seatmate's—as well as her willingness to seek out her seatmate's input throughout the planning and creation of her collage—suggested her interest in creating a final product that would earn her a good grade. Although Michael had intentions to do well on his collage at the onset of the assignment, several incidents thwarted his ability to do well (that is, continually losing his newspaper clippings and having more glitter sprinkled on his collage than he wanted to include). These incidents appeared, too, to thwart his positive coping strategies (Ryan & Connell, 1989), which was suggested when Michael's frustrations eventually led him to poke holes through his collage board. His motivation for his work diminished, too, when, after comparing his collage to his classmates' collages, he realized that they had more words and letters on their work than he did. This suggested his disinterest with putting in the effort to work on something that he felt would earn him a lower grade than his peers. In Sequoia's account, her acceptance to an arts high school the following school year appeared to make her hyperaware that she needed to do well on her assignment. Accordingly, she worked on her assignment diligently, so that the caliber of her end product matched what was expected of her.

In all, participants' stories of autonomy revealed the ways that, through situations that fostered their sense of freedom, decision-making power, emotional state, and individuality, they expressed a desire to earn good grades and to succeed academically. Moreover, through their stories of competence—that is, instances in which their feelings of achievement, capability, cognitive engagement, and self-efficacy were fostered—participants revealed an interest in periodically checking in with their teachers, so as to ensure that they were on the 'right' track. Participants' stories of relatedness, which revealed their sense of compatibility and positive social interactions with their teachers and peers, appeared to facilitate the grand narrative of measurement and academic achievement in that these positive relationships compelled them to be willing to accept their teachers' and peers' feedback and to want to do well.

Keeping in mind that arts-related learning experiences can nurture learners' self-concept (Leigh, 2015; Russell-Bowie, 2013) and sense of agency (Burnaford et al., 2001), it appears that participants' lived experiences with planning and creating their arts-integrated products allowed them to express something about who they were. This is not

surprising considering that the arts can foster learners' meaning-making in ways that can encourage them to draw upon prior lived experiences (Stevenson & Deasy, 2005). These expressions of identity, however, were present not only explicitly, but also implicitly; participants' stories of autonomy reflected not only the identities and stories that they lived by and wished to identify themselves with, but also the identities that were shaped implicitly by the grand narrative of measurement and academic achievement.

## **6.2.2 The Counternarrative of Participants' Lived Experiences With Arts**

### **Integration**

The counternarrative that ran alongside, but contrary to, the grand narrative was of participants not caring about their grades and/or academic achievement. Although not reflected in many participants' accounts, this counternarrative was present implicitly in the accounts of some. Moreover, as the grand narrative predominantly emerged through participants' stories of autonomy, the counternarrative, too, was highlighted more clearly in consideration of these same stories but was, also, present through participants' stories of competence and relatedness, as outlined in Table 8.

On the first day that Mrs. Hope introduced the arts-integrated assignment, Crystal arrived late to class due to being upset by a situation that occurred earlier in the day with one of her friends. Her negative mood originated from what she perceived to be a negative peer situation, so her mood was not unfounded; however, it prevented her from being fully present as a learner in her classroom. Moreover, she shared other instances in which she felt bothered by her peers (most of whom were boys), which distracted her further from engaging with her learning. In one particular incident that took place during an in-class work period, Crystal yelled "Get off my desk!" to a boy who was sitting at her seat while she was conducting online research on the classroom laptop near the front of the classroom. As she explained, she did this "because, like, last time, he farted on my desk on purpose. *[said with a smile in her voice]* . . . . I don't . . . trust the boys right now" (Crystal Starlight). Crystal's negative feelings of relatedness appeared to give rise to the counternarrative that, at times, appeared to underlay her lived experience with arts integration within her regular classroom landscape. Perhaps more poignantly, these experiences speak to the relationship between Crystal's positive feelings of relatedness with her peers and her inclination to focus on her grades and succeed academically.

Indeed for learners with LD, there is evidence to suggest that, when it comes to their reading achievement, peer relationships can play an influential role (Fleming, Cook, & Stone, 2002).

For a few instances during the in-class work periods, Sacrena was found playing around or singing songs with her seatmates. Although these actions suggested her level of comfort within her regular classroom landscape, in those moments they also suggested a lack of focus on her artwork. Regarding her intermittent focus, Sacrena confessed,

I'm not a very focused person. . . . If someone is talking about something, then, I'll go there and . . . talk to them about it, and, then, I'll remember, "Oh, yeah, I have to draw on my work." And, then, I will do it, and then I'll get off track again. . . . But in the end, I'll finish it. . . . 'Cause I'm like, "Oh, oh, I still have to draw this," and then I will just focus on that at the end, and, then, I can [finish my work]. (Sacrena Rully)

Although Sacrena shared candidly that her lack of focus, at times, drew her away from working on her arts-integrated assignment, her interest in seeing her work to completion allowed her to focus on her work as she approached the assignment's submission date.

At the beginning of the first introductory lesson, Soccer was reading a book, which suggested that he was living out the counternarrative. As he explained, "Sometimes . . . I don't need to pay attention, 'cause, 'cause sometimes I already know . . . the information. . . . So I could finish my other work" (Soccer Star). For Soccer, it appeared that paying attention was necessary only when he was unfamiliar with the information that his teacher was sharing—and unnecessary if he knew what his teacher was talking about. Soccer's actions appeared to align with SDT-related notions that we are innately interested in engaging with intriguing, new, and/or thought-provoking pursuits (Deci & Ryan, 2000). On the topic of marks, while he was confident that his artwork would earn him a high grade, Soccer confessed why he thought that his artist statement would not earn him the same: "Because, in writing, I'm not all that good" (Soccer Star).

Sprinkles spoke similarly about her disinterest in writing, sharing candidly her initial feelings when Mrs. Hope introduced the artist statement part of their assignment: "Well, I honestly do not like writing, at all. So I kind of felt a little awkward. . . . Like, I felt like I didn't want to do it, and I felt like I wanted to do it" (Sprinkles Candy). Her assertions revealed that, although the thought of writing did not excite her, she wanted to

work on her artist statement to complete it and earn a grade on it. With their accounts in mind, Soccer's and Sprinkles's weakness in or dislike of writing, respectively, ran contrary to the grand narrative of measurement and academic achievement that they lived out when learning through the arts within their regular classroom landscape.

In Mrs. Faith's classroom, observations of Josh's actions during several in-class work periods appeared to suggest that he was living out the counternarrative. For the first few observation days, given that he was under the impression that he was not supposed to work on the assignment, he was not engaged with planning or creating his collage—rather, periodically he was found working on other things or speaking with his classmates about unrelated topics. Observations of Jessica-Marie's actions during the in-class work periods appeared to suggest, as well, her relaxed demeanor towards her arts-integrated assignment (e.g., when she read an article out loud to her seatmate about anorexia, when she copied Mathematics notes from a missed class). When Michael spoke about the demotivating effects of several negative occurrences that transpired during his learning through the arts journey, his feelings went against the grand narrative and reflected his loss of interest in his work and in earning a good grade on it. Although he did not embark on his learning through the arts journey with this negative disposition in mind, these incidents led him to feel this way by the end of his journey.

Taken together, participants' stories of autonomy reflected the influential role that changing contextual factors (both personal and social) played in fostering or thwarting their emotional state, sense of freedom, capacity to make decisions, or expressions of their individuality. Some participants' accounts of competence reflected, too, instances in which their feelings of achievement, sense of capability, cognitive engagement, and self-efficacy appeared to foster their desire to pursue creative avenues that did not necessarily follow the assignment requirements, so long as they felt confident in their abilities and/or in the outcome of their aesthetic preferences. Lastly, for some participants, their stories of relatedness revealed that, when their feelings of compatibility, social interactions, and friendships were jeopardized, they lived out the counternarrative; for some others, the fostering of these same feelings appeared to make them feel comfortable enough to live out the counternarrative, perhaps because they felt unconcerned by any potential consequences.

Classroom environments that foster learners' competence—such as through challenging tasks, timely feedback, and valuing of opinions—can nurture their intrinsic motivation with learning (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). In the case of a few participants, their feelings of competence appeared to facilitate their desire to make creative decisions that, perhaps, suggested that they were more interested in creating something pleasing to them than earning a good grade on their work. This appears to speak to the findings of an older study in which the researcher found that, when provided choice-making opportunities in Visual Arts, students exhibited a higher sense of agency in their learning (King, 1983). Moreover, controlling limits can inhibit learners' intrinsic motivation and their creativity (Koestner et al., 1984). Perhaps it is these facilitating conditions that motivated participants to, at times, engage in their arts-integrated assignment with a desire to satisfy their aesthetic inclinations, rather than to pursue a good grade on their work.

### **6.2.3 The Hidden Narrative of Participants' Lived Experiences With Arts Integration**

The hidden narrative in several participants' accounts was one that unfolded alongside another grand narrative of education: that of inclusive education for all. It can be said that the aims of inclusive education shaped participants' regular classroom landscape into a microcosm of the society in which they lived. Amongst the diverse learners within their classroom and school, several participants' stories of autonomy, competence, and relatedness were underscored by their efforts to carve out an identity for themselves among their teachers and/or peers (see Table 8 in this chapter). Several of these identities paralleled those that came through as participants shared their chosen representation item (see Table 6 in Chapter 5).

The identity that Crystal appeared to express through her experience was that of an artist who, although she was inspired by the work of her classmates, endeavoured to draw her artwork autonomously and, while doing so, failed at times and persisted through those challenges. An indication of this identity was when she asserted to her friend helping her that she did not want to copy her artwork, prompting her to draw the challenging parts herself. During one in-class work period, Crystal showed Sprinkles her artwork-in-progress who commented, "Oh, it's so cute!" The presence of the hidden narrative in Crystal's lived experiences with arts integration was evident when, as a result



of the comment, Crystal felt “nice, happy” (Crystal Starlight), because her friend indirectly complimented her drawing skills and, thus, validated her artistic identity.

Sacrena’s identity was that of an accomplished artist who helped others with their drawing challenges. For Sacrena, always trying to draw her best was important to her because it showcased her abilities to others: “I wanna, like, like, share that I can draw something, because I know I can, and, then, if I don’t try hard, then, I, it’s just, like, disappointing myself” (Sacrena Rully). The accounts shared by Sprinkles in Mrs. Hope’s classroom and Sequoia in Mrs. Faith’s classroom appeared to convey a similar identity. When asked about how she felt when a peer of hers commented during one of the in-class work periods, “Oh, she draws really good,” Sprinkles indicated, “I kind of felt happy, ‘cause I did my best” (Sprinkles Candy). Similarly, when one of her classmates commented on how well she drew, Sequoia indicated that it made her feel good about herself, perhaps because being accepted to an arts high school meant that she had a reputation to uphold for herself and in the face of her peers.

For Soccer, it appeared that he asserted for himself two identities: a mathematics guru and a creative artist. Considering his initial assertions that mathematics was his “main subject” (Soccer Star) and that he was not much of an “artist person” (Soccer Star), his mathematics identity appeared to be more longstanding in comparison with his identity as a creative artist. Soccer’s identity as a creative artist came to light when, during the first in-class work period, he called over Mrs. Hope to share with her his drawing. As he did so, he exclaimed proudly that he was being creative, and he explained that he did so to show her how well his draft was coming along. This comment is interesting in consideration of Soccer’s assertions that, before the Norval Morriseau assignment, he was not very interested in art, which suggested that his engagement in the arts-integrated assignment nurtured his identity as a creative artist, which was in the process of becoming.

In Mrs. Faith’s classroom, Josh, Michael, and Jessica-Marie constructed an identity for themselves that was facilitated by their arts-integrated, regular classroom landscape: that of a sociable classmate. This identity was revealed primarily through my in-class observations, more so than participants’ accounts. For instance, my observations of their actions revealed several instances in which they were sociable and appeared more

interested in connecting with their peers during in-class work periods than working on their arts-integrated assignment. When they did so, they walked over to their classmates' desks and spoke to them about topics over which they could bond. Josh conversed with his seatmates on various topics mostly unrelated to the focus of the work period while Michael, on the other hand, shared excitedly with his peers current sports-related topics inspired by newspaper articles that he found while searching for collage clippings. Jessica-Marie's sociable identity was evident when, during a few in-class work periods, she chose to read aloud magazine articles to her seatmate on issues impacting youth, such as anorexia—which happened to relate directly to her collage's social justice topic.

As a whole, participants' accounts of their autonomy revealed instances in which their sense of freedom, decision-making, emotional state, and/or individuality facilitated their desire to be different from their peers or to be recognized by those in their regular classroom landscape as excelling at a skill. Participants' stories of competence showcased instances in which, as their feelings of achievement, capability, cognitive engagement, and/or self-efficacy were fostered through their arts-integrated assignment, they felt confident in their abilities and wished to express their interests in such a way that suggested the identities or stories that they wanted to live by. Their stories of relatedness suggested, too, that through fostering their feelings of compatibility, social interactions, and friendships, participants' engagement with the planning and creation of their arts-integrated products fostered their desire to shape an identity for themselves among their teachers and peers who were ever-present within their regular classroom landscape.

Participants whose identities involved a willingness to turn mistakes and challenges into opportunities to explore other avenues in the planning and creation of their arts-integrated products (as was uncovered through their stories of competence) revealed themselves to be flexible thinkers—a notion that parallels that of cognitive flexibility. Although several definitions of cognitive flexibility exist in the research literature (Barak & Levenberg, 2016; Ionescu, 2012), Martin and Rubin's (1995) definition is the one that most closely resembles the type of flexible thinking that the participants in my inquiry appeared to engage in: "Cognitive flexibility refers to a person's (a) awareness that in any given situation there are options and alternatives available, (b) willingness to be flexible and adapt to the situation, and (c) self-efficacy in

being flexible” (p. 623). Participants’ flexible thinking appeared to facilitate their task persistence, risk-taking, and willingness to move beyond challenges and explore creative solutions—all of which are competencies that not only speak to the types of skills that the creative process can promote (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Kind, 2010; Lindström, 2006) and that can be nurtured through an education in the arts (Eisner, 2002a), but that suggest the hidden narrative that underlay participants’ stories of competence.

Furthermore, the SDT-related research literature is clear that learners harbor a natural tendency to assimilate into their social contexts (Niemic & Ryan, 2009) and that individuals have an innate interest in connecting with their social groups (Deci & Ryan, 2000). These understandings explain, at least in part, the emergence of this hidden narrative. That is, through these natural tendencies, the participants in my inquiry desired to shape and express an identity for themselves within their regular classroom landscape alongside those which were being shaped and expressed by their peers. This understanding may not be surprising if we consider that arts integration can facilitate a safe classroom environment in which learners can feel comfortable to take risks (Baum et al., 1997; Chemi, 2015; Duma & Silverstein, 2014; Lynch, 2007), persevere (Robinson, 2013), overcome challenges (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 1999; Duma & Silverstein, 2014; Loughlin & Anderson, 2015; Smith, 2001), and foster their problem solving and critical thinking skills (Duma & Silverstein, 2014). It appears that such a regular classroom landscape encouraged participants to embody and confidently live out the identities that they wanted to live by.

#### **6.2.4 The Metanarrative of Participants’ Lived Experiences With Arts Integration**

The metanarrative that pervaded implicitly the accounts of several participants was one that paralleled the grand narrative of measurement and academic achievement: that of the ‘archetypal,’ good and proper student. For participants, the archetypal student metanarrative was about what it meant to be a good student and involved participants’ assertions of not wanting to copy their peers’ work, doing their best, helping others, participating in class, and following the rules. These accounts were evident throughout several of participants’ stories of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (see Table 8 in this chapter).

In Mrs. Hope’s classroom, both Crystal and Soccer revealed that creating

something original was a priority to them. Crystal, in particular, expressed several times that, although her friend tried helping her to draw a dolphin, she did not want to copy her. Not satisfied that the end result would be a reflection of her efforts, Crystal tried drawing the dolphin herself. Although she indicated that she failed several times, she explained that she persevered, showcasing her identity as the archetypal student who does not give up. About her persevering efforts, Crystal declared that, whenever working on an assignment, “I try my best for everything” (Crystal Starlight), further revealing her interest, albeit implicitly, in living out the metanarrative. Similar to Crystal’s stance, Soccer’s archetypal student identity was suggested, too, when he declared that, even though art was not his strong suit, “everybody needs to try. They don’t give up. . . . I’ve learned not to give up” (Soccer Star).

Sacrena shared similar sentiments about not wanting to copy her peers’ work: “I think copying people is, . . . not, like, a nice thing to do, because you’re just taking their ideas without, like, permission. So, then, I just try to change it myself, so, then, . . . it doesn’t look like I’m copying people” (Sacrena Rully). By transforming peer-inspired ideas, this allowed Sacrena to avoid copying others, effectively highlighting implicitly her archetypal student identity. Her interest in the good student identity was furthered as she spoke unreservedly about her participation during the discussion that unfolded during the introductory lesson, and that she was one of only a handful of learners who participated regularly in classroom discussions:

I was, like, one of the, like— three people put their hands up. . . It’s like, ‘cause, in mostly in math, me and this other kid, Soccer, he, he puts his hand up for math, and . . . [*giggled*] we’re the only people who do. . . . And [*giggled*] . . . sometimes we’re not allowed to answer [because we answer too much]. (Sacrena Rully)

In this account, Sacrena revealed herself to be a learner who participated frequently in classroom discussions—so much so that her efforts were overlooked by her teacher.

Echoing Sacrena, Soccer spoke about his frequent participation in classroom discussions: “I usually . . . [raise my hand], but sometimes [Mrs. Hope] tells me to put it down, ‘cause . . . I usually answer all the questions, ‘cause some people just think, ‘Oh, I don’t need to do this. . . I’ll let Soccer do it’” (Soccer Star). When it came time to help his peers, Soccer enjoyed assisting them to understand concepts—and, more particularly, when their questions related to mathematics—so long as his classmates did not ask him to

give them the answers. On the topic of helping others, Soccer elucidated further,

I don't like saying 'no' to people. I like saying 'yes.' But if it's . . . something I could do really quickly, or, if not, I'll get bad consequence or something, I'll just have to say, "No, sorry. I'll help on it . . . after I'm done that." (Soccer Star)

This, among his other accounts, revealed Soccer as the archetypal student, happily assisting his peers, as long as doing so would not result in getting himself into trouble.

Sprinkles's accounts revealed, too, her interest in following the rules, so as to avoid upsetting Mrs. Hope. More particularly, if Mrs. Hope ever noted to Sprinkles that she was not doing an assignment correctly, she would not hesitate to follow her directive: "I would just do it again, 'cause . . . I don't wanna cause any issues. . . . Like, I don't wanna get her, like, mad or upset . . . 'cause I did something" (Sprinkles Candy). While her sentiments seem to suggest that her feelings of autonomy were thwarted, her stance appeared more prominently to suggest her interest in fostering her positive feelings of relatedness with Mrs. Hope. Sprinkles's archetypal student identity was highlighted further when she described feeling happy to help Crystal at the introduction of the arts-integrated assignment, explaining that she enjoyed showing her artwork to her peers.

Similar to Crystal's and Sacrena's sentiments, in Mrs. Faith's classroom John, Makeya, and Sequoia spoke about being inspired by their peers' work in the planning and creation of their social justice collage, while also ensuring not to copy them. Ultimately, their accounts revealed that they tried producing a product that they were proud of, which suggested that they identified with the archetypal student identity. As it pertained to assisting her classmates, Makeya, in particular, shared instances in which, as she and her seatmate worked alongside each other while planning and creating their respective collage, they assisted each other by sharing their ideas and providing feedback—which highlighted further the ways in which she lived out the archetypal student identity.

Overall, when exploring participants' stories of autonomy when learning through the arts—which involved instances that fostered their sense of freedom, decision-making capacity, positive emotional state, and ability to assert their individuality (Ryan & Deci, 2015)—the metanarrative of the good and proper student was uncovered. Their stories of competence, too, hinted towards the good student identity through expressions of their feelings of achievement, capability, cognitive engagement, and self-efficacy being fostered while learning through the arts. Furthermore, participants' stories of relatedness

revealed instances in which their compatibility and social interactions with their teachers and peers were fostered when engaged with arts integration—which appeared to play a role in facilitating their desire to live out the good student identity.

The emergence of this metanarrative can be contextualized when considering that arts-integrated learning environments can foster learners' willingness to share their work with others and to garner their feedback (Randle, 2010). These types of environments can also foster within learners their empathic behaviours and social skills (Robinson, 2013). Indeed, participants' accounts revealed their arts-integrated, regular classroom landscape to be one that fostered within them such characteristics. Within their socially-supportive learning environment, most participants' stories of autonomy, competence, and relatedness revealed that the metanarrative was at the crux of their storied experiences with arts integration: that of being the archetypal student who was interested in doing his or her best, assisting classmates, participating in class, and following the rules.

### **6.3 Extended Understandings: Research Puzzle 2**

The second research puzzle that I explored in my inquiry was, *What do learners' stories reveal about their quality of motivation when learning through the arts in their inclusive classrooms?* Within the context of the four qualities of motivation identified by the Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A; Ryan & Deci, 2015), participants' stories revealed that their quality of motivation when learning through the arts within their regular classroom landscape fluctuated like the current of a river—both among each other's lived experiences and within their own. Accordingly, exploring participants' stories through these four qualities of motivation revealed four types of journeys by which to describe participants' overall experiences with arts integration. From least to most self-determined, they are: (a) The Roaming River of External Regulation (Michael), characterized by actions that have an external perceived locus of causality (PLOC) and that are externally motivated by peripheral controls or constraints (Ryan & Deci, 2000b); (b) The Rolling River of Introjected Regulation (Crystal, Josh, Jessica-Marie), characterized by actions that have a somewhat external PLOC and that are externally motivated by such things as ego or guilt-avoidance (Ryan & Deci, 2000b); (c) The Running River of Identified Regulation (Soccer, Sprinkles, John), characterized by actions that have a somewhat internal PLOC and deemed personally valuable (Ryan &

Deci, 2000b); and (d) The Roaring River of Intrinsic Regulation (Sacrena, Makeya, Sequoia), characterized by actions that have an internal PLOC and that are internally-motivated by the inherent satisfactions that they incite (Ryan & Deci, 2000b).

If we consider that SDT conceptualizes motivation in a way that integrates “both needs and social-cognitive constructs” (Pintrich, 2003, p. 670), then we can appreciate the intertwining role that the three basic psychological needs and “social-cognitive constructs such as perceived competence, control beliefs, and regulatory styles (R. M. Ryan & Deci, 2000)” (p. 670) can play in understanding learners’ quality of motivation. So while participants’ accounts of their lived experiences with arts integration revealed that they played a role in facilitating expressions of their identity (autonomy), nurturing their flexible thinking (competence), and fostering their classroom relationships (relatedness), participants’ actions (and, by extension, their experiences) were mediated by unseen factors; that is, participants’ perceptions of self-competence, their beliefs about being able to control external outcomes and their behaviours, and the extent to which their regulatory style was internalized (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Accordingly, the focus of this section is on these social-cognitive constructs that had such a mediating effect on participants’ experiences with arts integration within their regular classroom landscape.

I note, too, that causality orientations theory (COT)—one of six mini-theories derived from SDT—allows us to recognize the role of individual personality in affecting causality of actions (Ryan & Deci, 2017). According to COT, three orientations (at varying degrees) exist within individuals: autonomy, controlled, and impersonal. One orientation, however, can become more prominent than another depending on how the individual perceives environmental factors. Within the context of my inquiry, it appeared that the participants in the two most self-determined journey types (namely, The Roaring River, The Running River) had an autonomy orientation. Within their arts-integrated, regular classroom landscape, many participants’ actions were intrinsically motivated (Sacrena, Sprinkles, Makeya, Sequoia) or were motivated by challenges (Sacrena, Soccer, John, Makeya, Sequoia) and receiving feedback (Soccer, Sprinkles, John, Makeya). Participants in the two least self-determined journey types (namely, The Roaming River, The Rolling River) had a controlled orientation. In this orientation, several participants’ actions were extrinsically motivated by grades (Crystal, Josh,

Michael, Jessica-Marie), deadlines (Josh, Jessica-Marie), and their teacher's directives (Crystal, Josh, Michael).

Throughout their journey towards the learning destination, participants' quality of motivation fluctuated to varying degrees—although this was not the case for participants whose journey was characterized as being the most self-determined (namely, The Roaring River). Previous research studies, both non-SDT and those informed by SDT, have shed light on this variance of participants' quality of motivation within the other three journey types. More particularly, researchers have found that elementary learners' quality of motivation not only varies across subject areas (Guay et al., 2010), but also within any given subject area (Gao, Lee, Xiang, & Kosma, 2011; Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2006; Tsai, Kunter, Lüdtke, Trautwein, & Ryan, 2008). Referred to in the research literature as *situational interest*, or *situation-specific motivation*, this type of interest is psychological and is exhibited by learners with non-intrinsic motivation towards a situation, causing their interest to change according to their perceptions of external stimuli (Hidi, 1990; Hidi & Anderson, 1992; Pintrich, 2003; Schiefele, Krapp, & Winteler, 1992; Schraw & Lehman, 2001).

As opposed to personal (or individual) interest—which is “a more stable individual difference variable that represents an individual's relatively enduring disposition to be attracted to, to enjoy, or to like to be engaged in a particular activity or topic” (Pintrich, 2003, p. 674)—situational interest is “assumed to be a psychological state of being interested in a task or activity that is generated by the interestingness of the task or context” (Pintrich, 2003, p. 674). With this in mind, for participants whose journey was described found to be the most self-determined (namely, The Roaring River; Sacrena, Makeya, Sequoia), it appeared that their personal interest motivated them intrinsically to engage with their arts-integrated assignment. For participants, however, whose journeys were characterized by the second most self-determined journey (namely, The Running River; Soccer, Sprinkles, John), the periodic activation of their personal and situational interest motivated them with their assignment, and, in so doing, facilitated within them a sense of learning engagement and achievement. This understanding appears to corroborate the findings of another study in which researchers found that when learners' personal and situational interest for a task and/or topic are fostered, they can



experience an increased level of cognitive engagement, learning, and achievement (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). For Soccer, his personal and situational interest appeared to be piqued upon receiving feedback from Mrs. Hope on how to improve upon a draft of his Norval Morrisseau artwork; for Sprinkles, her personal and situational interest appeared to be fostered as she worked on adding more animals to her artwork; and for John, his personal and situation interest appeared to be activated after selecting a topic that he liked, so that he could focus his efforts on creatively expressing his message through his social justice collage.

If it is that “implicit attitudes, stereotypes, and identity . . . can interact to produce evaluative and affective reactions to a variety of tasks, including academic tasks” (Pintrich, 2003, p. 678), then we can presume that the identities that participants tried carving out for themselves and the culturally- and socially-constructed beliefs and values that shaped their attitudes and actions each played a role in facilitating their situational interest for their arts-integrated assignment. It is worth noting, too, that the fluctuating nature of participants’ quality of motivation—as well as their varying situational interest in the arts-integrated task—is showcased prominently when considering that participants experienced varying journey types irrespective of their teacher and the nature of the arts-integrated assignment that they engaged in. For instance, the journey type, the Rolling River of Introjected Regulation, described the journeys of one participant from Mrs. Hope’s classroom and two from Mrs. Faith’s classroom, and the Running River of Identified Regulation described the journeys of two participants from Mrs. Hope’s classroom and one from Mrs. Faith’s classroom.

For participants whose journey was described as the two most self-determined (Sacrena, Sprinkles, Soccer, John, Makeya, Sequoia), their accounts and actions revealed an internal PLOC (that is, actions perceived to originate from within the self) and an internalization of the value of their actions and goals. Their lived experiences revealed that they embodied one of the unique ways of thinking that an education in the arts can foster: an awareness that intrinsic satisfaction is an important part of the learning process (Eisner, 2002a). According to cognitive evaluation theory (CET), a mini-theory derived from SDT, the needs of self-determination and competence underlie intrinsic motivation (Deci et al., 2001). With this understanding in mind, participants’ feelings of self-

determination and competence suggested that their intrinsic motivation for the arts-integrated assignment was fostered. More particularly, they spoke about putting in the necessary effort to do their best and, as a result of their efforts, expecting to do well on their arts-integrated assignment. Moreover, their internalized PLOC and sense of self-efficacy appeared to facilitate their willingness to persist amidst the challenges that they faced, so as to produce work that they were happy with. This understanding seems to corroborate the findings of other studies that have concluded that individuals who believe to be in control of their actions and believe in their ability to do well exhibit increased cognitive engagement (Pintrich, 1999), effort, perseverance, and higher-level achievement (Perry, Hladkyj, Pekrun, & Pelletier, 2001; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002).

It is important to note that inaccurate self-perceptions of ability and skill can negatively impact learners' willingness to accept feedback to better themselves in weak areas (Bandura, 1997)—or, in the case of learners with LD, inaccurate self-perceptions of ability and skill can negatively impact their self-awareness of weaknesses and acceptance of feedback (Klassen, 2007). It appears, however, that the self-efficacy and competency beliefs of participants did not result in a resistance towards feedback; quite the contrary, participants accepted willingly any feedback that they felt would allow them to improve upon their arts-integrated products. Referring to the eight studio habits of mind that a quality education in the visual arts can foster (Winner et al., 2006), this understanding speaks to participants' arts-integrated assignment fostering their willingness to reflect (evaluating one's own and others' work to assist with creative development) and to stretch and explore (broadening skills beyond comfort zones and perceiving mistakes as opportunities).

For participants whose journey was described as one of the two least self-determined (Crystal, Josh, Jessica-Marie, Michael), their accounts and actions revealed an external PLOC and external motives for their actions and goals (e.g., feeling constrained, avoiding consequences, guilt-avoidance). The SDT-related research literature has revealed that learners who are externally motivated can lack long-term persistence (Deci et al., 1999) and can exhibit negative coping strategies in the face of challenges, such as blaming challenges on situational factors and/or denying the existence of problems (Ryan & Connell, 1989). Indeed, several participants whose journey was

least self-determined exhibited and/or spoke about lacking persistence (Michael) and blaming challenges on situational factors (Crystal, Josh, Michael).

While the majority of participants spoke about instances in which they felt in control of their actions—which the research literature has revealed can lead to various positive gains, such as cognitive engagement (Pintrich, 1999), effort, perseverance, and achievement (Perry et al., 2001; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002)—several participants were observed and/or spoke about engaging with their arts-integrated assignment through actions that were not self-determined. Such instances included when Crystal spoke about the adverse influence that negative peer relationships had on her ability to stay focused while working on her assignment; when Michael spoke about continually losing his newspaper clippings and how his friends sprinkled more glitter on his collage than he wanted on it; and when Josh, Michael, and Jessica-Marie appeared, at times, during their in-class work period to be more interested in conversing with their classmates than they were with working on their assignment. As such, although participants displayed instances and/or spoke about things that interested and/or challenged them when learning through the arts—such as participating in classroom discussions (Michael, Jessica-Marie), selecting a topic or message to communicate (Michael, Jessica-Marie), exploring ways to communicate their topic or message (Crystal, Jessica-Marie), and making aesthetic decisions pertaining to the design of their artwork (Crystal, Josh, Jessica-Marie)—their journey towards the learning destination appeared to be, largely, externally motivated by the influence of their teacher and by wanting to avoid feeling guilty (Crystal, Josh, Jessica-Marie) or to avoid negative consequences (Michael).

What is interesting to note is that, although more than one participant may have been identified within each journey type, each participant's lived experiences of arts integration unfolded differently. For instance in their respective journey identified as The Roaring River, Sacrena appeared outwardly to be more engaged than Sequoia, who, at times, appeared introverted and in her own world. It is in their accounts, however, that the quality of their motivation was brought to the forefront, each in different ways. That is, their journey towards the learning destination was revealed, largely, to be intrinsically motivated when exploring their accounts for the (a) socially- and culturally-constructed beliefs, interests, and/or values that they held within and (b) ways in which they

perceived and responded to the personal and social factors that shaped their regular classroom landscape.

This understanding—that of participants’ outwardly and inwardly different motivation-related lived experiences with arts integration—speaks to two points. First, it speaks to the potential of arts integration to facilitate inclusive educators’ efforts to provide their diverse learners with opportunities to engage with their learning meaningfully (i.e., inwardly), at their level of readiness, and in consideration of their interests. Second, it speaks to the importance of exploring such a complex phenomenon as learners’ motivation through various means that can be used to inform each other—such as through questionnaires, observations, and interviews. That is, in explorations involving learners’ motivation, their questionnaire responses can provide only a part of their story; through complementary qualitative means, the other part of learners’ story can be garnered. In this way, inquirers can be afforded a fuller picture of learners’ motivational experiences within their classroom landscapes.

By extending my understanding of the meanings gleaned through this second research puzzle, I have been able to highlight the ways in which my inquiry has addressed the gaps within the motivation-related and arts integration-related research literature, as identified in Chapter 2. The research literature pertaining to SDT is clear about the importance of paying attention to learners’ quality of motivation, as more self-determined types of motivation can foster their increased positive classroom experiences and learning outcomes (Deci et al., 1999; Froiland & Worrell, 2016; Grolnick & Ryan, 1987; Patall et al., 2008; Ryan & Connell, 1989; Ryan & Deci, 2002). Previous research findings involving arts integration tell a story of it being a mode of instruction that can support learners’ motivation within the regular classroom (DeMoss & Morris, 2005; Duma & Silverstein, 2014; Robinson, 2013) but speak little to this mode of instruction’s influence on learners’ quality of motivation. The meanings extended here deepen our understanding of this area of study by suggesting a more nuanced story regarding learners’ motivation when learning through the arts within their regular classroom landscape: much like the current of a river, each participant’s quality of motivation varied as they journeyed towards the learning destination and morphed in response to changing personal and social factors.

Moreover, while the majority of SDT-informed studies in education have been quantitative in nature (Ryan & Deci, 2009), the few that are qualitative in nature have afforded us a holistic understanding of such a complex, individualistic, and culturally- and socially-mediated construct (Bourgeois & Boberg, 2016; Dawes & Larson, 2011; Garn & Jolly, 2014; Hutman et al., 2012). None, however, have extended our understanding of what learners' quality of motivation looks like within arts-integrated, regular classroom landscapes. In this section, extending my understanding of the meanings gleaned helped to deepen our understanding of this area of inquiry by highlighting the rich and individualistic nature of diverse learners' experiences with quality of motivation when learning through the arts. For example, even learners identified as harbouring the same overall quality of motivation during their respective learning through the arts journey expressed different motives to engage initially with the introductory lesson, displayed different motivation-related actions while working on their assignment during the observation period, and experienced different personal and social factors that sustained or thwarted their autonomy, competence, and relatedness while journeying towards the learning destination.

#### **6.4 Extended Understandings: Research Puzzle 3**

The third research puzzle that I was interested in exploring was, *In what ways do the stories of learners with exceptionalities and their peers without exceptionalities differ from or relate to each other?* I reiterate that, although Crystal in Mrs. Hope's classroom and Josh in Mrs. Faith's classroom were on an IEP, they were not formally identified as having an exceptionality. Even so, Josh spent half the school day in Mrs. Faith's regular classroom (and the other half was spent in his HSP classroom, despite not having a formal identification), while Crystal spent the whole school day in Mrs. Faith's regular classroom. I note, however, that, because the participants in my inquiry were in a school board in which the discrepancy model was used to identify learning disabilities (LD), and because some have found this model to be inadequate at identifying learners as having a LD early on in their schooling careers (Hale et al., 2010), some learners with an IEP who are unidentified may have an undiagnosed LD. I call attention to this because the research literature on learners with LD appears to shed light upon my understanding of some of the meanings gleaned from Crystal's and Josh's motivation-related experiences with arts

integration; for this reason, I refer periodically to this research literature in order to assist me with extending my understanding of these meanings.

In comparison with the accounts of their peers without exceptionalities, an exploration of Crystal's and Josh's lived experiences with arts integration revealed some interesting insights. The two differences that came to light were that Crystal and Josh (a) experienced a slower current of motivation at the start of their respective arts-integrated journey and (b) approached the start of their arts-integrated assignment focused on the aesthetic details of it, rather than on selecting a topic or message to communicate through their work. Moreover, two similarities emerged between Crystal's and Josh's arts-integrated experiences and those of their peers without exceptionalities: All participants (a) were interested in the same learning destination of creating original products and (b) spoke about various elements of their arts-integrated products that they worked upon to improve and/or that they wished they could have improved upon when assessing their final products.

Regarding the first difference that came to light, Crystal's slower current of motivation at the start of her arts-integrated journey appeared to result from a negative peer interaction. According to SDT, learners' feelings of relatedness (such as a sense of belonging or connectedness) play a large role in setting "the groundwork for facilitating internalization" (Ryan & Deci, 2000b, p. 64), or facilitating actions that are perceived to originate from within the self. Relationships Motivation Theory (RMT), a mini-theory derived from SDT, posits that quality relationships are fostered through feeling respected and unconditionally accepted by others (Ryan & Deci, 2017). This mini-theory elucidates, too, that the extent to which feelings of relatedness are fostered is related to learners' efforts to internalize the values and practices of the social group (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Understanding this to be the case, Crystal's negative feelings of relatedness at the start of her learning through the arts journey may have influenced negatively her internalization of engaging with the arts-integrated assignment.

Moreover, although the research literature has revealed that learners with LD can experience increased social acceptance and friendships within regular classroom placements in comparison with contained classrooms (Wiener, 2004), learners with LD may lack interpersonal skills (Kravetz, Faust, Lipshitz, & Shalhav, 1999), may

experience more challenges with making and maintaining friendships (Nowicki, 2003; Wiener, 2004), and may be more sensitive about interactions they consider to be negative (Margalit, 2003). These factors can certainly influence their feelings of relatedness—and, hence, their quality of motivation—within or outside of their regular classroom landscape. With this in mind, our understanding is extended of Crystal's delayed engagement with her arts-integrated assignment and slower current of motivation at the start of her arts-integrated journey. More particularly, the meanings gleaned from Crystal's learning through the arts journey appear to suggest that feelings of relatedness may be more challenging to attain—and, hence, quality of motivation may be harder to foster—for learners with LD, regardless of their personal and/or situational interest for the learning task presented.

Another interesting thing to note is that, although feelings of anxiety can impact negatively one's efficient use of information processing skills (Eysenck, Derakshan, Santos, & Calvo, 2007) and the frequent use of metacognitive skills (Fisher, Allen, & Kose, 1996; Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, & Perry, 2002), it appears that Crystal's engagement with her arts-integrated products helped her overcome the negative cognitive effects that may have been brought on by her situation. That is, despite Crystal's slower motivational current at the start of her journey, engaging in drafting ideas for her artwork during the first in-class period allowed her to focus on the task at hand. Doing so appeared to facilitate her willingness to set aside her negative feelings of relatedness, resulting in her feeling better towards the end of the work period.

Regarding Josh's slower current of motivation at the start of his arts-integrated journey, it appeared to result from a misunderstanding on the assignment's pertinence to him. In light of what we understand about learners with LD, the misunderstanding that Josh experienced may have resulted from challenges that learners with LD can experience related to understanding and/or processing language (Torgesen, 1999). Although he experienced a delayed start on his learning through the arts journey, upon becoming aware of the need for him to work on the arts-integrated assignment alongside his classmates he did not hesitate to begin working on it or become discouraged; rather, the flow of his motivational current quickened as he engaged with exploring the aesthetic details of his collage. Even so, his lived experiences with arts integration revealed that his

learning journey was externally-motivated by his interest to complete the assignment and earn a grade for his efforts.

As it pertains to the second difference, Crystal and Josh began engaging with their respective arts-integrated assignment by making decisions based on various aesthetic features that they liked and, then, tried to come up with the meanings behind their creations. More particularly, Crystal indicated “I like swimming and I drew the sea,” while Josh indicated that he tried to make his collage burst with many different colours, which, as he pointed out, he accomplished by selecting a bright colour for the background, as well as bright-coloured feathers and glitter. The way in which Crystal and Josh approached the planning and creation of their arts-integrated products suggested that the assignment provided them with an entry point into their learning that they connected with. This creative freedom was, perhaps, facilitated by the non-linear quality of the creative process (Moore, 2015); that is, there was no right or wrong approach in planning and creating their arts-integrated products. As a result, despite their slow-to-start learning journeys, Crystal and Josh appeared willing to engage with their respective arts-integrated assignment at their own comfort level—an understanding that parallels the sentiments of other learners with LD when engaged with arts integration (Abedin, 2010).

While some have contended that those considered as “non-traditional” learners may think in “shapes, forms, sizes, and textures” (Smith, 2001, p. 4) or that they are doodlers who “love to draw” (Olshansky, 2014, p. 51), there is evidence to suggest that the strengths of these learners lie in the arts (Baum et al., 1997). For Crystal and Josh, in particular, this appeared to be the case, as each learner indicated an interest in designing, colouring, and using their imagination while bringing their arts-integrated products to life. Their respective assignment appeared to facilitate their decision-making pertaining to the creative details of their work which, later, helped to guide them on the thematic decisions that they made. This flexibility, then, appeared to allow Crystal and Josh to engage with their learning at their own level of readiness and in a way that tapped into their interests—which are two of the three elements that can allow educators to differentiate tasks for their diverse learners within the regular classroom.

Regarding the first similarity between Crystal’s and Josh’s learning through the arts experiences and those of their peers without exceptionalities, all participants



appeared interested in the same learning destination, which was to create original arts-integrated products. If it is that learning through the arts can facilitate learners' creative expressions of themselves through multi-literate means (Hartle, Pinciotti, & Gorton, 2015), then we can appreciate participants' interest in wanting their arts-integrated products to reflect something about who they were. Moreover, if we consider that arts-integrated tasks can nurture learners' task and learning engagement through their embodied participation (that is, through both body and mind; Abedin, 2010; Hartle et al., 2015), then we can appreciate that participants' respective learning through the arts journey involved embodied experiences that motivated them towards the task of creating original products that were unlike those of any of their classmates.

As it pertains to the second similarity, in their accounts of learning through the arts participants spoke about their efforts to improve upon their arts-integrated work and/or, upon assessing their final products, their wishes on what they wanted to improve upon. Recalling that the arts-integrated assignment provided participants with the opportunity to select and communicate a topic or message, participants' sense of autonomy and ownership were fostered while planning and creating their products. This level of investment in their products appeared to result in the manifestation of a common desire to improve upon the areas that they felt required improvement and/or to comment on the areas of their final products that they wished they could have improved upon. This finding illustrates the part of the creative process that involves reflecting on product results (Moore, 2015). Furthermore, if we consider that participants' arts-integrated products served as identity texts (which was one of the themes that came through when exploring the first research puzzle), then it would appear reasonable that they would desire to work on any areas that they were unhappy with or that they would identify those areas that were still unsatisfactory to them. In this way, participants' arts-integrated identity texts reflected not only their beliefs, interests, and/or values, but also their self-efficacy to produce work that satisfied their aesthetic sentiments and that reflected the artistic abilities that they believed themselves to have.

#### **6.5 Extended Understandings: Research Puzzle 4**

For the fourth and final research puzzle, I asked, *In what ways do learners' stories differ from or relate to each other when considering the style of arts integration that they*

*are exposed to?* I reiterate that although participants in Mrs. Hope and Mrs. Faith classrooms were exposed to the co-equal style of arts integration (Bresler, 1995)—which involved integrating Language Arts and Visual Arts, while also addressing both curricular areas—the nature of the arts-integrated assignment that participants in each classroom engaged with differed. With this in mind, three differences came to light between the stories of participants in Mrs. Hope’s classroom and those of the participants in Mrs. Faith’s classroom. Namely, the participants in Mrs. Hope’s classroom (a) selected a topic or message more quickly than participants in Mrs. Faith’s classroom and began working on their arts-integrated assignment soon thereafter, (b) felt more compelled to be meticulous about the details of their artwork, and (c) were more thoughtful about the message that they wanted to communicate. The two similarities found in the accounts of participants were that several, if not all, participants (a) felt a sense of freedom and ownership in selecting a topic or message and deciding how to communicate it creatively and (b) expressed an interest in producing unique and creative work, unlike that of any of their classmates.

As it pertains to the first difference, perhaps it was the specificity of the topic instructions that allowed participants in Mrs. Hope’s classroom to select their topic more quickly than those in Mrs. Faith’s classroom. Asked to select and draw animals in the style of Norval Morrisseau, the participants in Mrs. Hope’s classroom appeared to select, within a short time frame, animals that they liked (Crystal, Sacrena, Sprinkles) and/or that were related to their prior lived experiences (Sacrena, Soccer). In contrast, the participants in Mrs. Faith’s classroom took longer to select a topic or message to communicate through their social justice collage. Perhaps it was due to having been asked to select a social justice topic and to communicate what it meant to them—a rather broad (and personal) task that resulted in several participants experiencing difficulty with narrowing down their topic to one (Josh, Michael, Sequoia). Perhaps, too, this delay was due to having been given a work period in the library computer lab to conduct online research that could assist them with selecting a social justice topic or message. Either way, and regardless of how long it took participants in Mrs. Faith’s classroom to select a topic or message to work with, all participants drew upon their identities and/or prior lived experiences to make their thematic decisions. This speaks to participants’ arts-

integrated assignment affording them the opportunity to connect their interests with their learning. Considering that activating an individual's intrinsic interests can motivate them to act in self-determined ways (Deci, 1992), we can say that the opportunity to express their beliefs, interests, and/or values through their arts-integrated products facilitated participants' self-determined actions (by allowing them to make decisions pertaining to the topic, message, and design of their products).

The second difference involved participants in Mrs. Hope's classroom feeling compelled to be more meticulous about the details of their artwork. Extending our understanding of this involves taking a closer look at the differences between the artistic medium of each arts-integrated assignment. In Mrs. Hope's classroom, participants were asked to draw pencil drafts of their ideas for their Norval Morriseau-inspired artwork and colour in their final copy using oil pastels. The participants in Mrs. Faith's classroom were asked to use mixed media newspaper collage as the medium through which to communicate their chosen social justice topic or message. A comparison of the two mediums reveals that collaging can allow for an aesthetic messiness that is acceptable and, in some cases, desirable, while drawing is less forgiving; to create their Norval Morriseau-inspired artwork, learners were required to display a certain level of precision in the lines that they drew, so as to facilitate their ability to colour in their creations using oil pastels. With that said, John and Sequoia were the only two participants in Mrs. Faith's classroom who chose to add a drawn or painted element, respectively, to their social justice collage. While engaged with these elements, both John and Sequoia appeared to be focused on ensuring that the details of their drawing or painting were to their liking—paralleling in many ways the type of focus that was observed and described by participants in Mrs. Hope's classroom. Certainly, the notion that learners' experiences can differ in relation to the artistic media that they are exposed to (e.g., photography, drawing, collaging, sculpting) is understandable considering the influential nature of contextual factors (both personal and social) on learners' situational interest.

Regarding the third difference, for participants in Mrs. Hope's classroom, the act of writing an artist statement to accompany their Norval Morriseau-inspired artwork appeared to facilitate their thoughtfulness in selecting a topic or message and how they wished to communicate it—not only through their artist statement, but also through their

artwork. In this way, their artwork appeared to serve as a pre-writing strategy, which prior research findings have suggested can serve as an effective means through which to facilitate the written expression of elementary students (Andrzejczak et al., 2005) and their peers considered at-risk (Olshansky, 2007). In contrast, the participants in Mrs. Faith's classroom were tasked with creating a mixed media newspaper collage on a social justice topic or message, and their assignment did not involve a written element; even so, participants were encouraged to cut out letters, words, or phrases that could be used in their collages to communicate their chosen topic or messages. Without the focusing effect of having to write about their topic or message, several participants chose more than one to communicate (Josh, Michael, Sequoia), which resulted in a bricolage of social justice topics or messages that appeared to lack unification.

The two similarities between the stories of participants in Mrs. Hope's and Mrs. Faith's classroom speak primarily to the discussion related to the stories of autonomy that were gleaned from participants' accounts (see section 6.2.1 of this chapter). Participants in both classrooms spoke about feeling a sense of freedom and ownership as a result of being given the opportunity to select a topic or message for their work and deciding how to communicate it creatively. They also spoke about their interest in creating unique products that were unlike those of any of their classmates. If it is that arts integration can facilitate learners' sense of creative and cognitive freedom (Gamwell, 2005; Hartle et al., 2015), then such a learning environment appeared to foster within participants a desire to assert their individual diversity. With this in mind, we can begin to appreciate the importance of this common narrative of experience among participants: arts integration facilitated a sense of connectedness among diverse learners through their desire to express and live out their identities and through their appreciation of the unique identities that were expressed and lived out by their peers.

## **6.6 Implications for Classroom Practice**

In consideration of the meanings gleaned from participants' accounts, as well as the extended understandings of these meanings afforded by the research literature, educators may find it useful to consider four things in their classroom practice as they strive to support the learning of their diverse learners within the regular classroom landscape. First, the research literature is clear that educational inclusion involves more

than just physical inclusion; it, also, involves supporting learners' academic and social-emotional inclusion (Crawford, 2004; Katz et al., 2012; Sokal & Katz, 2015). The accounts of participants involved in this inquiry appeared to suggest that educators can foster both types of inclusion through arts integration.

More particularly, with the freedom that they were provided to select a topic or message and decide how to communicate it, coupled with their interest in creating an original and creative product, their engagement with their arts-integrated assignment appeared to facilitate not only participants' competence, but also expressions of their in-school and out-of-school identities within their regular classroom landscape. Moreover, their willingness to provide feedback and help to their classmates, as well as their willingness to accept the same from their teachers and peers, suggested that their engagement with the arts-integrated assignment nurtured their positive classroom relationships. As an inclusive pedagogy, then, it appears that arts integration may support learners' social-emotional inclusion. Furthermore, participants' engagement with their arts-integrated assignment appeared to foster their flexible thinking and their desire to do their best on it (which speaks to their feelings of competence), effectively suggesting that arts integration assisted them to feel academically included within their regular classroom landscape.

Educators may, also, do well to keep in mind their learners' fluctuating situational interest for those who do not harbour an intrinsic quality of motivation to engage with any given topic area or task. The accounts of participants involved in this inquiry have revealed that regardless of the quality of their initial motivations at the start of their learning journeys, changing personal and social factors throughout their engagement in the arts-integrated assignment influenced their perceptions, perspectives, and lived realities—and, hence, their situational interest—in relation to engaging with their arts-integrated products as they progressed towards the learning destination. Keeping this in mind would certainly emphasize the importance of keeping in mind that while a topic or task may appear to motivate learners at the start, it may not necessarily do so towards the middle and/or the end of engaging with it. With this in mind, it is important for educators to keep in mind each learner's learning profile, so as to provide multiple entry points and ways through which they can engage with their learning throughout the duration of their

journeys. Moreover, the majority of participants' accounts appeared to suggest that arts integration may provide promise to educators to foster their diverse learners' situational interest throughout their learning journeys due, in part, to the wide range of possibilities that arts integration provides for educators to represent information, for learners to engage with their learning, and for learners to express their understanding through varying mediums, processes, and products. In this respect, arts integration may be a means for educators to realize universal design for learning (UDL) within their regular classrooms by providing learners multiple means of engagement, representation, and action and expression (Glass, Meyer, & Rose, 2013).

Educators may benefit, too, from keeping in mind the journeys of the two participants in my inquiry who were on an IEP. Their respective slow-to-start learning journey was indicative of the benefits that they may have gleaned had they and their classmates been provided with a set of instructions outlining suggested steps for completing their assignment. As a UDL strategy involving offering multiple means of representation, providing such a handout may have effectively provided a sense of independence for all learners, as they could have referenced the handout, as the need for it arose, throughout the course of their learning journeys.

Lastly, a comparison of the accounts of participants in Mrs. Hope's classroom (who created a Norval Morriseau-inspired artwork in oil pastels, accompanied by an artist statement) and in Mrs. Faith's classroom (who created a mixed media newspaper collage based on a social justice theme) revealed two noteworthy differences in the ways that each group of participants engaged cognitively with their arts-integrated assignment. First, the drawing element of their assignment seemed to compel participants in Mrs. Hope's classroom to labour over the details of their artwork, while the collaging element appeared to nurture within participants in Mrs. Faith's classroom a willingness to pursue an unrefined aesthetic, such as through rough, uneven, or torn edges of newspaper clippings. Second, creating an artist statement to accompany their artwork appeared to facilitate within the participants in Mrs. Hope's classroom an increased thoughtfulness about the message that they wanted to communicate. While several participants in Mrs. Faith's classroom were, also, thoughtful about their choice of social justice topic and/or message (as was expressed to me during their interview), having not had the opportunity

to write out their thoughts appeared to result in several participants' collages (Josh, Michael, Sequoia) reflecting more than one social justice theme. These two differences in participants' cognitive engagement with their arts-integrated products suggest that, even if the style of arts integration is ideal (namely, co-equal; Bresler, 1995), educators should keep in mind the potential variance in learners' cognitive experiences when learning through the arts, depending on the nature of the products that they are asked to produce.

### **6.7 Inquiry Limitations**

Despite my best attempts to mitigate any limitations through the design of my inquiry, I call attention to four that came to light as my inquiry unfolded. First, I note that, when designing my narrative inquiry, it was important for me to be in the presence of participants within each inquiry field for as long as possible, prior to inviting them to share their experiences with me during their individual interview. Doing so can facilitate participants' willingness to go beyond their cover stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Crites, 1971, as cited in Olson & Craig, 2005). In the end, the number of days during which I conducted my observations depended upon the classroom teacher's delivery schedule of the arts-integrated lessons. This resulted in seven observation periods over the course of four school days in Mrs. Faith's classroom and six observation periods over the course of three school days in Mrs. Hope's classroom.

Although participants' accounts led me to believe that, for the most part, they went beyond their cover stories, spending more time in each inquiry field (e.g., four weeks of observations, rather than two) would have allowed me to observe learners while engaged in several different types of arts-integrated assignments. In doing so, I could have been afforded a richer collection of field texts from which to explore each of my inquiry's four research puzzles. For example, an extended period of time with participants would have allowed me to explore the second research puzzle in more depth as it pertained to participants' situational interest and what their arts-integrated experiences revealed about their changing interest between differing arts-integrated assignments. Furthermore, the limited amount of time that I spent with participants during the two-week observation period provided me with only a sense, rather than a deeper understanding, of the challenges that participants faced outside of their classroom landscape that shaped their lived realities—both out-of-school and in-school. Being in the

presence of participants for a longer period of time would have assisted me with gaining a better understanding of the influence of their lived life words (i.e., those outside of their classroom) on the meanings that they held of their motivation-related experiences when learning through the arts within their regular classroom landscape.

Second, although 10 participants from two regular classrooms participated in my inquiry, I designed my inquiry with the hope of inviting 12 to 20 participants from up to five Grade 6, Grade 7, or Grade 8 regular classrooms. A larger participant population may have facilitated a more in-depth understanding of learners' arts-integrated experiences within their regular classroom landscape. Moreover, as it pertains to the field texts involving participants in Mrs. Faith's classroom, I note that due to the irretrievable damage sustained by my hard drive, I lost my reflexive journaling notes, audio recordings from participants' respective interview and member-checking session, and participants' textualized oral accounts. This resulted in me gleaning an understanding of participants' motivation-related experiences with arts integration using the materials that remained in my possession: my lived memories, hard copies of my field notes, hard copies of my initial interpretations of participants' accounts (which were shared with participants during their member-checking session), and pictures of the inquiry field and of participants' representational item and arts-integrated products. The meanings, therefore, that I was able to glean from the participants in Mrs. Faith's classroom are, at best, preliminary and not as in-depth as those that I was able to glean from the entirety of texts and materials collected from the participants in Mrs. Hope's classroom.

Third, in the case of a few participants from Mrs. Hope's and Mrs. Faith's classrooms, their arts-integrated products were incomplete by the time their interview session had taken place. Considering that participants' work was shown to them during their interview to assist them with sharing their arts-integrated experiences, their incomplete work limited the extent to which they were able to talk about their experiences. With that said, after having had more time to work on (and, in several cases, to complete) their arts-integrated products in between their interview and member-checking session, participants had the chance to revisit their responses and share any of their additional lived experiences with arts integration that resulted while working on their products' completion. For the purposes of facilitating their ability to recall their



lived experiences with greater accuracy, it would have been beneficial for participants to have had completed products to share and talk about during their interview. A longer observation period (as per the first limitation noted in this section) may have helped to facilitate participants' completion of their products in time for their individual interview.

Fourth, the lack of participants with an identified exceptionality and the lack of variety in the type of arts integration offered to participants (as both inquiry fields used the co-equal type of arts integration; Bresler, 1995) influenced the extent to which I could explore meaningfully the third and fourth research puzzles, respectively. Had the opportunity been available to me to include in my inquiry several more learners with an identified exceptionality and/or an additional inquiry field offering a different type of arts-integrated environment to participants, I could have been able to explore more meaningfully these latter two research puzzles. Without these opportunities, the meanings gleaned from my exploration of these research puzzles were limited in these respects.

## **6.8 Future Research Directions**

In light of the scope and limitations of my inquiry, it may be useful for researchers of future studies to consider three ways in which they could extend our understanding of participants' motivation-related experiences when learning through the arts within their regular classroom landscape. First, with the understanding that learners' situational interest can cause their quality of motivation to fluctuate within the same subject (Gao et al., 2011; Guthrie et al., 2006; Tsai et al., 2008), it may be useful for researchers of future studies to ask participants to complete the SRQ-A immediately after each observation period, so as to gauge the quality of motivation that participants experience when learning through the arts during that particular time frame. In so doing, it would be interesting to explore if participants' quality of motivation when learning through the arts differs from lesson to lesson, as suggested by prior research (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002), and, if so, to explore qualitatively the personal and social factors that may play a role in influencing their changing situational interest.

Second, it would be interesting to explore the quality of motivation of participants exposed to arts integration within the context of arts-integrated schools. Such curricula provide learners with regular opportunities to learn through the arts in most, if not all, subject areas, and could result in more frequent opportunities to observe participants

within those classroom landscapes. With this in mind, it would be interesting to garner the accounts of participants from arts-integrated schools, so as to explore their motivation-related experiences with arts integration and to see how they relate to the meanings gleaned from the lived experiences of the participants involved in my inquiry.

Third, to deepen our understanding of participants' motivation-related experiences with learning through the arts, it may be beneficial to conduct a longitudinal inquiry that involves extended periods of observation, as well as the opportunity to interview participants at various intervals throughout. Such an inquiry would be useful in exploring the ways in which participants' motivation-related experiences in these learning contexts persist and/or change over time. Moreover, participants' accounts garnered from these types of longitudinal inquiries may, also, shed light on any long-term factors (that is, personal and social) influencing their motivation-related experiences with arts integration within their regular classroom landscape.

## **6.9 Chapter Summary and Concluding Thoughts**

As I near my journey's end, I am reminded of McCombs's (1995) findings that illuminate students' thoughts on what makes school a great place to learn: being provided with choice-making opportunities, engaging in relevant and fun tasks, and discussing personal meanings and values. In relation to my inquiry, the meanings that participants held of their motivation-related experiences with arts integration appeared to parallel these factors that make school an enjoyable place to learn; that is, the opportunity to decide on a topic or message to communicate allowed learners to connect with their work on a personal level and to enjoy the process of seeing their arts-integrated products come to life, subsequently facilitating their classroom relationships and expressions of their identity. These meanings were illuminated not only by the field texts collected, but, perhaps more importantly, by the willingness of each participant to share with me their lived experiences within those contexts.

The meanings that were gleaned resulted from exploring the field and interim inquiry texts through each of my inquiry's four research puzzles. First, participants' learning through the arts experiences allowed them to express their in-school and out-of-school identities (i.e., which spoke to their feelings of autonomy), foster their flexible thinking (i.e., which spoke to their feelings of competence), and facilitate their classroom

relationships (i.e., which spoke to their feelings of relatedness). Second, the majority of participants experienced a fluctuating quality of motivation, variable as the current of a river, as they journeyed towards the learning destination.

Third, in comparison with their peers without exceptionalities, the journeys of the two participants in my inquiry who had an IEP involved a slower current of motivation at the start of their learning through the arts journey and involved a focus (at least initially) on the aesthetic details—rather than the thematic details—of their arts-integrated products. Their journeys, however, were similar to their peers without exceptionalities in that they (a) focused on the same learning destination of creating original products and (b) worked on improving parts of their arts-integrated work throughout its planning and creation and/or spoke about the parts that required further improvement upon their work's completion. Lastly, when comparing the stories of participants in Mrs. Hope's and Mrs. Faith's classroom, the participants in Mrs. Hope's classroom selected a topic or message to communicate more quickly, felt more compelled to labour over their artwork details, and were more thoughtful about the message that they wanted to communicate. A comparison of their stories revealed, too, that all participants felt a sense of freedom in selecting their topic or message and deciding how to communicate it, and they were interested in creating original work that was unlike that of any of their classmates.

As a naturally inclusive and equitable means of expression (Henderson & Lasley, 2014), advocates have suggested that the arts can facilitate educators' efforts to realize the promise of inclusive education. The meanings gleaned from the accounts of participants appear to suggest that, as a pedagogy, arts integration allowed them to engage with their learning at their level of readiness and in a way that honoured their interests and learning profile, effectively making the assignment's learning opportunities accessible to all. This suggests that, through arts integration, educators may be able to differentiate instruction for their diverse learners within the regular classroom. The meanings gleaned from participants' accounts appear, also, to indicate that their arts-integrated experiences can provide them with multiple entry points—effectively suggesting that arts integration may assist educators with realizing the principles of UDL by providing their learners with multiple means of engagement, representation, and action and expression (Glass et al., 2013).

Although I came into my inquiry with a beginning narrative (Clandinin, 2013) involving my own personal and professional experiences with the arts and arts integration, I walk away with a greater appreciation for the diversity of experiences that shaped each participant's arts-integrated journey towards the learning destination. I, also, walk away with an understanding of some of the unmeasurable skills and benefits (Winner & Cooper, 2000) that the arts can foster within learners, such as the opportunity to express their identities, to exercise flexible thinking, and to develop positive classroom relationships—all of which parallel various 21st century competencies, such as effective self-expression skills, creativity, and positive social skills, respectively (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2015).

For me, this journey has been one of insightful discovery, and I sincerely hope that it has been as insightful for you, the reader. I say this with an appreciation that, after being read, narratives can evolve within the reader's mind (Squire et al., 2014) and that “the social effects . . . of narrative-as-heard or as read may be as or more important than the life story *per se*” (p. 80; emphasis in original). In other words, the act of reading the narratives herein may have resulted, within the reader's mind, in a restorying of those narratives in ways that relate and have relevance to the reader's personal narratives and lived experiences with learners' motivation, inclusive education, and/or arts integration.

As a final reflection, the opportunity to relive my inquiry through writing about it here, as well as the privilege that I enjoyed in restorying participants' accounts of their lived and storied lives, has reminded me of Clandinin's (2013) insightful assertion that “for narrative inquirers, exit is never a final exit. We continue to carry long-term relational responsibilities for participants, for ourselves, and for the work we have done together” (p. 43). I would add that, for me, these relational responsibilities have made the journey all the more meaningful and worthwhile in the undertaking. With this appreciation in mind, I conclude this phase of my inquiry and move forward with an open mind towards the next phase; that is, sharing with others my understanding of participants' motivation-related experiences with arts integration within their regular classroom landscape that they have so graciously entrusted to me.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### Glossary of Key Terms and Phrases

**(The) Arts.** The term (*the*) *arts* broadly includes the artistic disciplines of dancing (or movement) arts, dramatic arts, literary arts, media arts, musical arts, and visual arts (Burnaford et al., 2001).

**Arts Integration.** While many definitions and purposes exist pertaining to arts integration (Mishook & Kornhaber, 2006), within the context of my inquiry *arts integration* is defined as “teaching and learning in and through the arts” (Loughlin & Anderson, 2015). As a method of teaching, arts integration involves incorporating one (or more) of the artistic disciplines with at least one other (typically non-arts) subject area. Examples of this might include using drama in history class (e.g., asking students to act out a historical event) or using visual arts in science class (e.g., asking students to create a sculpture related to a scientific concept, such as electricity). Within the research literature, various synonyms of arts integration exist—though their definitions and operationalizations have varied slightly (Loughlin & Anderson, 2015). Such synonyms include *arts-based education/instruction*; *arts-centred education/instruction*; *arts-immersed education/instruction*; *arts-infused education/instruction* (Cornett, 2006); *arts-focused education/instruction*; *cross-disciplinary arts education/instruction* (Eckerd College, n.d.); *education/instruction through the arts* (Dickson, 2011); *interdisciplinary arts education/instruction* (Eckerd College, n.d.; Lorimer, 2011); *learning through the arts*; and *learning with the arts* (Burnaford et al., 2007). With that said, scholars have suggested that there are differences between the terms arts-based, arts-integrated, and arts infused. For instance, scholars have argued that arts-based refers to “the arts supply the content for what is learned, serve as a model for teaching, learning, and assessment, and provide a window through which non-arts subjects are explored” (Davis, 2008, p. 14), while arts-integrated indicates that “the arts are intertwined with non-arts subjects, included as equal partners with the objective of improving teaching and learning within subjects and across the general curriculum” (Davis, 2008, p. 16).

**Direct Arts Instruction.** Within the context of education, the phrase, *direct arts instruction*, is used to refer to the arts disciplines that are taught independently of other

subjects (Aprill, 2010). While some believe that direct arts instruction is optimally delivered by educators who “have a hybrid education, schooled in studio-based arts as well as art education pedagogy” (Smilan & Miraglia, 2009, p. 40), it might be delivered by educators whose positions require them to, such generalist teachers in elementary schools. Direct arts instruction does not necessarily have to be delivered by teachers; it can, also, be delivered by visiting artists (Aprill, 2010; Campbell & Townshend, 1997). Direct arts instruction is also referred to as *direct instruction* or *discrete instruction* (CREATE CA coalition, 2015).

**Extrinsic Motivation.** *Extrinsic motivation* is behaving or acting in a certain way that is driven by some “instrumentality between the activity [or action] and some separable such as tangible or verbal rewards” (Gagné & Deci, 2005, p. 331). Put another way, the drive to engage in the activity or behaviour is derived from a consequence that is outside of the activity or behaviour itself.

**Intrinsic Motivation.** *Intrinsic motivation* is the drive to behave or act in a certain way due to the interest in and satisfaction derived from engaging with the behaviour or action in and of itself (Gagné & Deci, 2005).

**(Learning) Motivation.** While motivation can pertain to specific types of activities, behaviours, or goals (such as exercising, overeating, achievement, respectively), within the context of this inquiry, *learning motivation* or *motivation* refers to the drive to engage in the process of meaning-making (Brophy, 2004). Some scholars point out that motivation is related to engagement (Martin, 2008) and have argued that motivation is an indicator of engagement (Greene et al., 2004) or, conversely, that engagement is an indicator of motivation (Dunleavy & Milton, 2009). It is also referred to as *academic motivation* (Vallerand et al., 1992).

**Learners (or Students) With Exceptionalities.** While categorizations of exceptionalities differ from country to country (Meijer, Soriano, & Watkins, 2003), the term *learners with exceptionalities* generally refers to learners with special learning needs. Various other *person-first terminology* (Patterson & Witten, 1987)—terminology that puts the person first before the exceptionality—have been used synonymously in the education research literature, many of which use the term student in place of the term learner; the latter term is used exclusively as it pertains to my inquiry. Such synonymous

terms include *students with special education needs*, *students with special learning needs*, *students with special needs*, and *students with disabilities*. Other education researchers have used terms that do not reflect the person-first ideology—most of whom published their work after the ideology’s introduction to disability discourse in the 1970s (Manus, 1975)—such as *handicapped students*, *disabled students*, *mentally-retarded students*, and *retarded students*.

**Quality of (Learning) Motivation.** Within the context of this inquiry, *quality of motivation* is defined within the context of self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985) and refers to the “kind of motivation that underlies learning behavior. . . . distinguished from the quantity, level, or amount of motivation that learners display for a particular learning activity” (Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Deci, 2006, p. 19). Influenced by the degree of autonomy (or regulation) that an activity fosters, there are six types of motivation that lie on the SDT continuum. From least to most self-determined, there are (a) amotivation, (b) external regulation, (c) introjected regulation, (d) identified regulation, (e) integrated regulation, and (f) intrinsic motivation.

**Regular Classroom:** The phrase, *regular classroom*, took on new meaning around the same time that the medical model of disability was advancing (Clough & Corbett, 2006)—a model which attributed students’ inability to learn to internal defects (Mitchell, 2005). During this time, a regular classroom was one in which age-appropriate curricula were delivered to students without exceptionalities, in contrast to segregated classrooms wherein modified curricular programming was delivered to students with special educational needs. The phrase, regular classroom, then, is intimately connected with the medical model of disabilities. It is also referred to as *general classroom*, *general education classroom*, and *mainstream(ed) classroom*.

## Appendix B Research Ethics Approval From My Institution



Research Ethics

Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board  
NMREB Full Board Initial Approval Notice

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Jacqueline Specht  
**Department & Institution:** Education/Faculty of Education, Western University

**NMREB File Number:** 107365  
**Study Title:** Students' Stories of Their Learning Motivation in Inclusive, Arts-Integrated Learning Environments  
**Sponsor:**

**NMREB Initial Approval Date:** December 21, 2015  
**NMREB Expiry Date:** December 21, 2016

**Documents Approved and/or Received for Information:**

Document Name	Comments	Version Date
Recruitment Items	Appendix H: E-mail/Text for Recruitment of Teachers	2015/10/28
Instruments	Appendix G: Observational Chart to Gather Information on Students' Non-Verbal Behaviours During Interview (phase two)	2015/10/28
Data Collection Form/Case Report Form	Appendix F: Demographic Questionnaire for Parents	2015/10/28
Other	Appendix E: Data Collection Schedule	2015/10/28
Instruments	Appendix C: Observational Field Notes Chart to Gather Information on Students' Motivation (phase two)	2015/10/28
Western University Protocol		2015/11/24
Letter of Information & Consent	Appendix I: Teachers	2015/11/24
Other	Appendix J: Revised Contact Information Form for Teachers	2015/11/24
Revised Letter of Information & Consent	Appendix K: Revised Letter of Information for School Administrators	2015/11/24
Other	Appendix L: Revised Contact Information Form for School Administrators	2015/11/24
Letter of Information & Consent	Appendix M: Parents/Legal Guardians/Substitute Decision Makers	2015/11/24
Other	Appendix N: Revised Contact Information Form for Parents/Legal Guardians/Substitute Decision Makers	2015/11/24
Other	Appendix O: Revised Photographic Release Form for Parents/Legal Guardians/Substitute Decision Makers	2015/11/24
Revised Letter of Information & Consent	Appendix P: Students	2015/11/24
Instruments	Appendix A: 17-Item Questionnaire for Students (phase one)	2015/10/28
Instruments	Appendix B: Observational Field Notes Chart to Gather Information on Learning Environment (phase two)	2015/10/28
Instruments	Appendix D: Semi-Structured Interview Questions (phase two)	2015/10/28

The Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the above named study, as of the NMREB Initial Approval Date noted above.

NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the NMREB Expiry Date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of NMREB Continuing Ethics Review.

The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario.

Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB.

The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.

Ethics Officer, on behalf of Riley Hinson, NMREB Chair

Ethics Officer to Contact for Further Information: Erika Basile \_\_\_ Nicole Kaniki \_\_\_ Grace Kelly \_\_\_  Mina Mekhail \_\_\_ Vikki Tran \_\_\_

*This is an official document. Please retain the original in your files*

Appendix C  
**Recruitment Message Posted on CSEA's Facebook Page**

Hello fellow CSEA members! As a visual arts educator and graduate student studying students' motivation when learning through the arts, I would like to invite Grade 6, 7, and 8 teachers from the Coolidge [pseudonym] School Board to participate in my study. :) If you integrate the arts with any of your non-arts subjects, please kindly consider becoming involved in this study. Your and your students' involvement would play a large role in deepening the understanding we have on the ways in which learning through the arts supports students' motivation to learn. For more information on this study, please view the attachment or feel free to contact me! Thank you, in advance, for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you!

Appendix D  
**Letter of Information and Invitation for Educators**

**Principal Investigator**

Dr. Jacqueline Specht, PhD, Education  
Western University  
[REDACTED]

**Additional Research Staff**

Irene Melabiotis, PhD Candidate, Education  
Western University  
[REDACTED]

**1. Information about this study**

Thank you for expressing an interest in learning more about this research study. You are being provided this letter of information about this research study on learning motivation because you have indicated to Irene Melabiotis ('the researcher') that you periodically deliver arts-integrated lessons to your students. Even though this study has been approved by the Coolidge [pseudonym] District School Board (see the attached approval letter), if you agree for this study to take place in your classroom, the researcher invites you to provide her your verbal agreement.

**2. Why is this study being done?**

The purpose of this study is to learn more about how learning through the arts supports students' motivation to learn. This study is important because motivation is an important element in fostering students' engagement with their learning.

**3. How long will participants be in the study?**

This study is designed to involve and collect information only from student participants and their parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers. While I will not focus my observations on you (the teacher) or any other student in your class who is not a part of the study, my observation notes on student participants' arts-integrated learning environments and their quality of motivation may require me to note things related to you, such as classroom rules/structures or emotional/instructional supports provided to student participants during observation periods. It is expected that your students will participate in the study for approximately eight weeks. The study consists of two phases. Participation in phase one is open to all students who assent and whose parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers have consented to their participation. Up to six students from your classroom who participate in phase one of the study will be invited to participate in phase two. Whether or not a student is invited to participate in phase two will depend on how many students meet the selection criteria outlined below. There will be up to 20 visits to your classroom during your involvement in this study, and each visit may take up to three hours.

**4. What are the study procedures?**

You will be asked to distribute to your students an envelope to take home to their

parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers with information about the researcher's study and consent forms. You will also be asked to provide the researcher any returned study consent forms, which will include a demographic questionnaire that participating parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers will be asked to complete about their children. During phase one, you will be asked to set aside 25 minutes of class time in order for participating students to answer a 17-item questionnaire about their motivation when learning through the arts. The responses provided in these two questionnaires will be used by the researcher to identify which students to invite to participate in phase two of the study.

For phase two, up to six students from phase one who meet the selection criteria will be invited to participate. Because the researchers are interested in gaining a wide perspective on students' learning motivation, one selection criterion is students whose questionnaire results in phase one reveal that they have a different type of learning motivation when learning through the arts (e.g., extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation, etc.). Also, because the research to date supports arts integration as a teaching strategy for including diverse learners in regular classrooms, another selection criterion involves students characterized as diverse learners. For this reason, in their demographic questionnaires, parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers will be asked to identify whether or not their children have any exceptionalities. Students with multiple exceptionalities are welcome to participate in the study as long as their exceptionalities do not impede their abilities to willingly and willfully assent to participate, to complete the questionnaire (individually or with a scribe), and to express verbally their thoughts on the interview questions. If several students meet a combination of selection criteria (e.g., no exceptionality and intrinsically motivated to learn through the arts), those students' names will be placed in a hat and chosen at random.

Students in phase two will be involved in (a) in-class observations of their arts-integrated learning environments and of their learning motivation in arts-integrated lessons (during week one and week two of the study; up to three hours each classroom visit), (b) an individual interview (during week three of the study; up to 30 minutes), and (c) an individual, audio-recorded follow-up session (during week eight of the study; up to 30 minutes), where the researcher will share her preliminary interpretations of their interview responses and give them the opportunity to add to, correct, and/or verify their initial interview responses and the researcher's preliminary interpretations. The researcher will need to audio-record both the interview and follow-up session to assist with transcribing students' interview responses. For this reason, it will be necessary for parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers to consent to the audio-recording of these sessions in order for their children to be considered for participation in this study. Even if they provide their consent to audio-record these sessions, they and their children have the right to request an audio-recording is stopped.

For their interviews, students will be asked to bring an item that represents what it feels like to learn through the arts, which will help them respond to some interview questions. Also, right before each student's interview, the researcher will collect samples of any non-identifiable arts-integrated work that the student completed or worked on during the

researcher's observation period, which will be shown during the interview to help him or her respond to some interview questions. Students' work samples will be returned to them after they complete their interviews, which will be no later than the end of week three of the study. The researcher will need to take pictures of the students' non-identifiable work samples and the representational items that they bring to their interviews, which will assist the researcher to contextualize students' interview responses. For this reason, it will be necessary for parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers to consent to the researcher photographing these items in order for their children to be considered for participation in this study. Both the interview and follow-up session will be held at your school in a public room with the door open and will take place outside of class time at a day and time that is most convenient for every individual involved.

**5. What are the risks and harms of participating in the study?**

While there are no known discomforts or economic, physical, psychological, or social risks to student participants associated with participating in this study, there is always the possibility that an interview question might trigger an emotional response. To support student participants, they will be reminded at the start of their interviews that they are free to skip a question that they do not feel comfortable answering and that a school staff member known to the students is available to speak with them (during and after their interview) should they require this support.

**6. What are the benefits?**

You or your students may not directly benefit from your students' participation in the study but the information gathered may provide benefits to society as a whole which include growing our understanding of the ways in which arts-integrated learning environments foster students' motivation to learn.

**7. Can participants choose to leave the study?**

Yes. At any time, student participants and their parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers have the right to withdraw from the study. You and your school administrators also have the right to withdraw student participants from the study. If your students are withdrawn from the study, you have the right to request the withdrawal of information collected about the students who are no longer participating in the study. If you wish to have this information removed, please let the researcher know.

**8. How will participants' information be kept confidential?**

Questionnaire responses, the researcher's observation notes, and students' interview responses will be kept confidential to the extent possible. Student participants will be asked to provide a pseudonym, instead of their real name, on their 17-item questionnaire. This fictitious name will be used throughout the duration of the study to identify student participants in documents. Moreover, your identity as well as that of your school's will be concealed through the use of codes. A master list linking codes and pseudonyms with real names and identities will be kept by the researcher in a secure place, separate from the study file. If the results of the study are published, your name as well as the name of your school and your students and their parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers will



not be used, but only pseudonyms. While we do our best to protect all study information, there is no guarantee that we will be able to do so. If data is collected during the study which we may be required to report by law, we have a duty to report the data.

**9. Are participants compensated to be in the study?**

There is no compensation for participation in the study.

**10. What are the rights of participants?**

Participation in the study is voluntary. Your students and their parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers may decide not to be involved in the study. If your students and their parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers decide to participate in this study, they are free to skip questions in their respective questionnaires, and students are free to skip questions in their interview and follow-up session. Parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers and their children also have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, with no effect on students' academic standing.

**11. Whom do participants contact for questions?**

If you have questions about this research study, please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Jacqueline Specht, via phone at [REDACTED], or via e-mail at [REDACTED]. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact The Office of Research Ethics at Western University via phone at [REDACTED], or via e-mail at [REDACTED].

**This letter is for you to keep for future reference.**

Appendix E  
**Contact Information Form for Educators**

I understand that throughout the duration of the study, the researcher may need to maintain communication with me while not on the school site. Accordingly, here is my contact information to facilitate this communication:

**Name (please print):**

---

**Telephone number:**

---

**E-mail address:**

---

Moreover, I understand that, should my students become involved in this study, I am entitled to a copy of the researcher's findings:

**YES, thank you.** Please use the e-mail noted above to send me a copy of the findings upon the completion of the researcher's thesis defense (please provide an address that will be valid for at least the next two years).

**NO, thank you.** I would not like a copy of the researcher's findings.

**Signature:**

---

**Date:**

---

Appendix F  
**Letter of Information and Invitation for School Administrators**

**Principal Investigator**

Dr. Jacqueline Specht, PhD, Education  
Western University  
[REDACTED]

**Additional Research Staff**

Irene Melabiotis, PhD Candidate, Education  
Western University  
[REDACTED]

**1. Information about this study**

Thank you, in advance, for considering this research study. You are being provided this letter of information about this study on learning motivation because at least one of your teachers has indicated to Irene Melabiotis ('the researcher') that he or she periodically delivers arts-integrated lessons to students. Even though this study has been approved by the Coolidge [pseudonym] District School Board (see the attached approval letter), if you agree for this study to take place in your school, the researcher invites you to provide her your verbal agreement.

**2. Why is this study being done?**

The purpose of this study is to learn more about how learning through the arts supports students' motivation to learn. This study is important because motivation is an important element in fostering students' engagement with their learning.

**3. How long will participants be in the study?**

This study is designed to involve and collect information only from student participants and their parents. While I will not focus my observations on your teachers or any other students in their classes who are not a part of the study, my observation notes on student participants' arts-integrated learning environments and their quality of motivation may require me to note things related to your teachers, such as their classroom rules/structures or emotional/instructional supports provided to student participants during observation periods. It is expected that the study will involve each of your teachers for approximately eight weeks. The study consists of two phases. Participation in phase one is open to all students who assent and whose parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers have consented to their participation. Up to six students (from each participating classroom) who participate in phase one of the study will be invited to participate in phase two. Whether or not a student gets invited to participate in phase two will depend on how many students meet the selection criteria outlined below. For each teacher involved, there will be up to 20 visits to his or her classroom over the course of this eight-week study, and each visit may take up to three hours.

**4. What are the study procedures?**

Your teachers will be asked to distribute to their students an envelope to take home to

their parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers with information about the study and consent forms. They will also be asked to provide the researcher any returned study consent forms, which will include a demographic questionnaire that parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers will be asked to complete about their children. During phase one, your teachers will be asked to set aside 25 minutes of class time in order for participating students to answer a 17-item questionnaire about their motivation when learning through the arts. The responses provided in these two questionnaires will be used by the researcher to identify which students to invite to participate in phase two of the study.

For phase two, up to six students from phase one (from each participating classroom) who meet the selection criteria will be invited to participate. Because the researchers are interested in gaining a wide perspective on students' learning motivation, one selection criterion is students whose questionnaire results in phase one reveal that they have a different type of learning motivation when learning through the arts (e.g., extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation, etc.). Also, because the research to date supports arts integration as a teaching strategy for including diverse learners in regular classrooms, another selection criterion involves students characterized as diverse learners. For this reason, in their demographic questionnaires, parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers will be asked to identify whether or not their children have any exceptionalities. Students with multiple exceptionalities are welcome to participate in the study as long as their exceptionalities do not impede their abilities to willingly and willfully assent to participate, to complete the questionnaire (individually or with a scribe), and to express verbally their thoughts on the interview questions. If several students meet a combination of selection criteria (e.g., no exceptionality and intrinsically motivated to learn through the arts), those students' names will be placed in a hat and chosen at random.

Students in phase two will be involved in (a) in-class observations of their arts-integrated learning environments and of their learning motivation in arts-integrated lessons (during week one and week two of the study; up to three hours each classroom visit), (b) an individual interview (during week three of the study; up to 30 minutes), and (c) an individual, audio-recorded follow-up session (during week eight of the study; up to 30 minutes), where the researcher will share her preliminary interpretations of their interview responses and give them the opportunity to add to, correct, and/or verify their initial interview responses and the researcher's preliminary interpretations. The researcher will need to audio-record both the interview and follow-up session to assist with transcribing students' interview responses. For this reason, parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers will be informed that it is necessary that they consent to the audio-recording of these sessions in order for their children to be considered for participation in this study. Even if they provide their consent to audio-record these sessions, they and their children have the right to request an audio-recording is stopped.

For their interviews, students will be asked to bring an item that represents what it feels like to learn through the arts, which will help them to respond to some interview questions. Also, right before each student's interview, the researcher will collect samples

of any non-identifiable arts-integrated work that the student completed or worked on during the researcher's observation period, which will be shown during the interview to help him or her respond to some interview questions. Students' work samples will be returned to them upon the completion of their respective interviews, which will be no later than the end of week three of the study. The researcher will need to take pictures of the students' non-identifiable work samples and the representational items they bring to their interviews, which will assist the researcher to contextualize students' interview responses. For this reason, it will be necessary for parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers to consent to the researcher photographing these items in order for their children to be considered for participation in this study. Both the interview and follow-up session will be held at your school in a public room with the door open and will take place outside of class time at a day and time that is most convenient for every individual involved.

**5. What are the risks and harms of participating in the study?**

While there are no known discomforts or risks to student participants associated with their participation in this study, there is always the possibility that an interview question might trigger an emotional response. To support student participants, they will be reminded at the start of their interviews that they are free to skip a question that they do not feel comfortable answering and that a school staff member known to the students is available to speak with them (during and after their interview) should they require this support.

**6. What are the benefits?**

Your teachers and their students may not directly benefit from students' participation in the study but the information gathered may provide benefits to society as a whole which include growing our understanding of the ways in which arts-integrated learning environments foster students' motivation to learn.

**7. Can participants choose to leave the study?**

Yes. At any time, student participants and their parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers have the right to withdraw from the study. You and your teachers also have the right to withdraw any students from this study. If students are withdrawn from the study, you have the right to request the withdrawal of information collected about the students who are no longer participating in the study. If you wish to have this information removed, please let the researcher know.

**8. How will participants' information be kept confidential?**

Questionnaire responses, the researcher's observation notes, and students' interview responses will be kept confidential to the extent possible. Student participants will be asked to provide a pseudonym, instead of their real name, on their 17-item questionnaire. This fictitious name will be used throughout the duration of the study to identify student participants in documents. Moreover, your teachers' and school's identities will be concealed through the use of codes. A master list linking codes and pseudonyms with real names and identities will be kept by the researcher in a secure place, separate from the study file. If the results of the study are published, the names of your school and your

teachers, as well as the names of students and their parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers, will not be used, but only pseudonyms. While we do our best to protect all study information, there is no guarantee that we will be able to do so. If data is collected during the study which we may be required to report by law, we have a duty to report the data.

**9. Are participants compensated to be in the study?**

There is no compensation for participation in the study.

**10. What are the rights of participants?**

Participation in the study is voluntary. Students and their parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers may decide not to be involved in the study. If your students and their parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers decide to participate in this study, they are free to skip questions in their respective questionnaires, and students are free to skip questions in their interview and follow-up session. Parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers and their children also have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, with no effect on students' academic standing.

**11. Whom do participants contact for questions?**

If you have questions about this research study, please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Jacqueline Specht, via phone at [REDACTED], or via e-mail at [REDACTED]. If you have any questions about your teachers' and your students' rights as research participants or the conduct of this study, you may contact The Office of Research Ethics at Western University via phone at [REDACTED], or via e-mail at [REDACTED].

**This letter is for you to keep for future reference.**

Appendix G  
**Contact Information Form for School Administrators**

I understand that throughout the duration of the study, the researcher may need to maintain communication with me while not on the school site. Accordingly, here is my contact information to facilitate this communication:

**Name (please print):**

---

**Telephone number:**

---

**E-mail address:**

---

Moreover, I understand that, should one of my students participate in the study, I am entitled to a copy of the researcher's findings:

**YES, thank you.** Please use the e-mail noted above to send me a copy of the findings upon the completion of the researcher's thesis defense (please provide an address that will be valid for at least the next two years).

**NO, thank you.** I would not like a copy of the researcher's findings.

**Signature:**

---

**Date:**

---

Appendix H  
**Letter of Information and Consent for Parents/  
 Legal Guardians/Substitute Decision Makers**

**Principal Investigator**

Dr. Jacqueline Specht, PhD, Education  
 Western University  
 [REDACTED]

**Additional Research Staff**

Irene Melabiotis, PhD Candidate, Education  
 Western University  
 [REDACTED]

**1. Invitation to participate**

Thank you, in advance, for your and your child's consideration of this research study. You and your child are being invited to participate in this study about learning motivation, because your child's teacher has indicated to Irene Melabiotis ('the researcher') that he or she periodically delivers arts-integrated lessons to his or her students. Even though this study has been approved by the Coolidge [pseudonym] District School Board and your child's school principal (see the attached approval letter), if you and your child want to participate in this study, the researcher invites you and your child to complete, sign, and return the attached forms using the blank envelope included in this package.

**2. Why is this study being done?**

The purpose of this study is to learn more about how learning through the arts supports students' motivation to learn. This study is important because motivation is an important element in fostering students' engagement with their learning.

**3. How long will participants be in the study?**

This study is designed to involve and collect information only from student participants and their parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers (through the attached demographic questionnaire). While I will not focus my observations on your child's teacher or any other student who is not a part of the study, my observation notes on student participants' arts-integrated learning environment and their quality of motivation may require me to note things related to the teacher, such as classroom rules/structures or emotional/instructional supports provided to student participants during observation periods. If your child participates in the study, your child may be involved in this study for up to eight weeks. The study consists of two phases. Participation in phase one is open to all students who assent and whose parents/legal guardians/substitute decision makers have consented to their participation and have completed the attached demographic questionnaire. Up to six students from your child's classroom who participate in phase one of the study will be invited to participate in phase two. Whether or not a student is invited to participate in phase two will depend on how many students



meet the selection criteria outlined below. There will be up to 20 visits to your child's classroom during the study, and each visit may take up to three hours.

#### **4. What are the study procedures?**

If you agree for you and your child to participate in the study, you will be asked to complete the attached demographic questionnaire. During phase one your child will be asked to answer a 17-item questionnaire (up to 25 minutes) which will assist the researchers to gain a better understanding of your child's motivation when learning through the arts. The responses provided in these two questionnaires will be used by the researcher to identify which students to invite to participate in phase two of the study.

For phase two, up to six students from phase one who meet the selection criteria will be invited to participate. Because the researchers are interested in gaining a wide perspective on students' learning motivation, one selection criterion is students whose questionnaire results reveal that they have a different type of learning motivation when learning through the arts (e.g., extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation, etc.). Also, because the research to date supports arts integration as a teaching strategy for including diverse learners in regular classrooms, another selection criterion involves students characterized as diverse learners. For this reason, in the attached demographic questionnaire, you will be asked to identify whether or not your child has any exceptionalities. Students with multiple exceptionalities are welcome to participate in the study as long as their exceptionalities do not impede their abilities to willingly and willfully assent to participate, to complete the questionnaire (individually or with a scribe), and to express verbally their thoughts on the interview questions. If several students meet a combination of selection criteria (e.g., no exceptionality and intrinsically motivated to learn through the arts), those students' names will be placed in a hat and chosen at random.

Students in phase two will be involved in (a) in-class observations of their arts-integrated learning environment and of their learning motivation in arts-integrated lessons (during week one and week two of the study; up to three hours each classroom visit), (b) an individual interview (during week three of the study; up to 30 minutes), and (c) an individual follow-up session with student participants (during week eight of the study; up to 30 minutes), where the researcher will share her preliminary interpretations of their interview responses and give them the opportunity to add to, correct, and/or verify their initial interview responses and the researcher's preliminary interpretations. The researcher will need to audio-record both the interview and follow-up session to assist with transcribing students' interview responses. For this reason, it will be necessary for you to consent to the audio-recording of these sessions in order for your child to be considered for participation in this study. Even if you consent to audio-recording these sessions, you and your child have the right to request that an audio-recording is stopped.

For their interviews, students will be asked to bring an item that represents what it feels like to learn through the arts, which will help them to respond to some interview questions, such as, *Why did you choose to bring this particular item?* Also, right before each student's interview, the researcher will collect samples of any non-identifiable arts-integrated work that the student completed or worked on during the researcher's

observation period, which will be shown during the interview to help him or her respond to some interview questions, such as, *Tell me what it was like to learn through the arts for this particular lesson/assignment that you worked on.* Students' work samples will be returned to them after they complete their interviews, which will be no later than the end of week three of the study. The researcher will need to take pictures of your child's non-identifiable work samples and the representational items that he or she brings to the interview, which will assist the researcher to contextualize students' interview responses. For this reason, it will be necessary for you to consent to the researcher photographing these items in order for your child to be considered for participation in this study. Both the interview and follow-up session will be held at your child's school in a public room with the door open and will take place outside of class time at a day and time that is most convenient for every individual involved.

**5. What are the risks and harms of participating in the study?**

While there are no known discomforts or risks to your child associated with participating in this study, there is always the possibility that an interview question might trigger an emotional response. To support student participants, they will be reminded at the start of their interviews that they are free to skip a question that they do not feel comfortable answering and that a school staff member known to the students is available to speak with them (during and after their interview) should they require this support.

**6. What are the benefits?**

You or your child may not directly benefit from your and your child's participation in the study but the information gathered may provide benefits to society as a whole which include growing our understanding of the ways in which arts-integrated learning environments foster students' motivation to learn.

**7. Can participants choose to leave the study?**

Yes. At any time, you and your child have the right to withdraw from the study at and to request the withdrawal of information collected about your child. If you wish to have your child's information removed, please let the researcher know.

**8. How will participants' information be kept confidential?**

Questionnaire responses, the researcher's observation notes, and students' interview responses will be kept confidential to the extent possible. Student participants will be asked to provide a pseudonym, instead of their real name, on their 17-item questionnaire. This fictitious name will be used throughout the duration of the study to identify student participants in documents. Moreover, the identities of your child's teacher and your child's school will be concealed through the use of codes. A master list linking codes and pseudonyms with their real names and identities will be kept by the researcher in a secure place, separate from the study file. If the results of the study are published, your name as well as the name of your child, your child's teacher, and school will not be used, but only pseudonyms. While we do our best to protect all study information, there is no guarantee that we will be able to do so. If data is collected during the study which we may be required to report by law, we have a duty to report the data.

**9. Are participants compensated to be in the study?**

There is no compensation for participation in the study.

**10. What are the rights of participants?**

Your and your child's participation in the study is voluntary. You may decide that you and your child will not participate in the study. After providing consent, you and your child are free to skip questions in your respective questionnaires, and your child is free to skip questions in the interview and follow-up session. You and/or your child may decide to withdraw from the study at any time. Your and/or your child's decision will have no effect on your child's academic standing. During the study, we will provide you and your child with new information that is learned that might affect your and/or your child's decision for you and your child to participate in this study. You do not waive any legal rights by agreeing for you and your child to participate in this study and by signing the attached study consent form and study assent form.

**11. Whom do participants contact for questions?**

If you have questions about this research study, please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Jacqueline Specht, via phone at [REDACTED], or via e-mail at [REDACTED]. If you have any questions about your child's rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact The Office of Research Ethics at Western University via phone at [REDACTED], or via e-mail at [REDACTED].

**This letter is for you to keep for future reference.**

**Letter of Information and Consent for Parents/  
Legal Guardians/Substitute Decision Makers**

**Principal Investigator**

Dr. Jacqueline Specht, PhD, Education  
Western University

\_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Research Staff**

Irene Melabiotis, PhD Candidate, Education  
Western University

\_\_\_\_\_

**Written consent**

(1) I have read the Letter of Information, I have had the nature of the study explained to me, and all questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in the study by completing the attached demographic questionnaire.  YES  NO

(2) I agree for my child to participate in **PHASE ONE OF THE STUDY** (the in-class questionnaire) **AND TO BE CONSIDERED FOR PHASE TWO OF THE STUDY** (several in-class observations, an interview, and a follow-up session).  YES  NO

(3) If selected to participate, I agree for my child to be audio-recorded during his or her interview and follow-up session in this research (please note, the researcher will audio-record interviews for the purpose of transcribing and analyzing students' responses, and a 'no' response will mean that your child cannot participate in the study):  YES  NO

(4) If selected to participate, I consent to the use of unidentified quotes obtained from my child's interview and follow-up session responses in the dissemination of this research:  YES  NO

**Name of child participant (please print):**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Name of parent/legal guardian/substitute decision maker (please print):**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of parent/legal guardian/substitute decision maker:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Name of person obtaining consent (please print):**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of person obtaining consent:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Appendix I  
**Letter of Information and Assent Form for Learners**

**Principal Investigator**

Dr. Jacqueline Specht, PhD, Education  
 Western University



**Additional Research Staff**

Irene Melabiotis, PhD Candidate, Education  
 Western University



**1. Why are we here?**

Mrs. Melabiotis would like to learn more about the reason you do things (or your motivation) when you learn through the arts (e.g., drama, music, visual arts). An example of learning through the arts is a lesson in history class where students use drama to act out a historical event to learn more about that event in history.

**2. Why are we doing the study?**

Because motivation is an important part of your learning, Mrs. Melabiotis wants to understand how learning through the arts supports your motivation to learn.

**3. What will happen to participants?**

If you want to be a part of the study, there are two phases you can participate in:

- (1) **PHASE ONE:** Your parents will be asked to fill out a questionnaire about how you learn. Then, you will fill out a questionnaire with 17 questions, which will take up to 25 minutes to complete. The questionnaire will help Mrs. Melabiotis learn more about your learning motivation when you learn through the arts. Both of these questionnaires will be used to help Mrs. Melabiotis find which students to invite to participate in phase two of the study. For the 17-item questionnaire that you complete, you are allowed to skip any questions that you do not want to answer. At the top of the questionnaire, you will be asked to write a made-up name instead of your real name, which will be used in the study to help keep your identity secret. Only Mrs. Melabiotis will be able to connect your made-up name with your real name.
- (2) **PHASE TWO:** If you are one of the students who are invited to participate in phase two, Mrs. Melabiotis will be observing you for two weeks in lessons when you are learning through the arts (up to three hours each school day). Then, you will be invited to participate in an audio-recorded interview, which will take up to 30 minutes to complete. At the interview, you will be asked to bring an item to talk about that represents what it feels like for you to learn through the arts. Mrs. Melabiotis will also show you some of the things that you made or worked on when learning through the arts, and she will ask you some questions about your

experiences when working on them. She will make sure to show you some of the things that you worked on that others will not be able to tell were made by you. Four weeks later, you will meet with Mrs. Melabiotis again at a follow-up session. Like your interview, this session will also be audio-recorded and will take up to 30 minutes to complete. At the follow-up session, Mrs. Melabiotis will share with you some of her thoughts on the experiences that you shared with her during your interview and give you the chance to add to, correct, or agree with your interview answers and her thoughts about them. For both the interview and follow-up session you can skip any questions that you do not want to answer. Both sessions will be audio-recorded to help Mrs. Melabiotis type out your answers later on, so that she does not miss anything you say. Also, your arts-integrated work that you talk about and the item that you bring to the interview will be photographed to help Mrs. Melabiotis understand your interview answers. For this reason, it will be necessary for your parents to agree to have your sessions audio-recorded and to have your work and item be photographed in order for you to participate in this study. Even if your parents agree to audio-recording these sessions, you and your parents can ask to stop an audio-recording.

**4. Will there be any tests?**

There will not be any tests or marks on your report card that show that you were a part of the study.

**5. Will the study help participants?**

The study might not help you and other student participants directly, but in the future, it might help other students, because the study will help Mrs. Melabiotis and other researchers to learn more about the different ways that teachers can support students' motivation to learn in the classroom.

**6. Do I have to be in the study?**

You do not have to be in the study. No one will be upset at you if you do not want to participate. If you do not want to be a part of the study, please tell your teacher, your family, or Mrs. Melabiotis. Even if you say yes, you can change your mind later. It is up to you.

**7. What if participants have any questions?**

You can ask questions at any time, now or later. You can talk to your teacher, your family, or Mrs. Melabiotis.

**This letter is for you to keep for future reference.**

**Assent Form**

(1) I want to participate in **PHASE ONE OF THE STUDY** (which includes the questionnaire) **AND TO BE CONSIDERED FOR PHASE TWO OF THE STUDY** (which, if selected, will include several in-class observations, an interview, and a follow-up session):  YES  NO

(2) If selected to participate, I give my permission for the researchers to use anonymous quotes from my interview and follow-up session responses to help share this study with others:

YES  NO

**Name of child participant (please print):**

---

**Date:**

---

**Name of person obtaining child's consent (please print):**

---

**Signature of person obtaining child's consent:**

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Appendix J  
Demographic Questionnaire

In phase two of this study, I am interested in learning more about the quality of learning motivation of students with exceptionalities and students without exceptionalities. For this reason, please kindly complete the following questionnaire, which will assist me with making sure that I invite students from each of these two groups to participate in phase two of this study.

Students with multiple exceptionalities are welcome to participate in phase one and phase two of the study as long as their exceptionalities do not impede their abilities to willingly and willfully assent to participate in the study, to complete the questionnaire (individually or with a scribe), and to express verbally their thoughts on the interview questions. If several students meet a combination of selection criteria (e.g., no exceptionality and intrinsically motivated to learn through the arts, exceptionality and extrinsically-motivated to learn, etc.), those students' names will be placed in a hat and chosen at random so that each student invited to phase two meets a different combination of selection criteria.

**Name of child participant (please print):**

---

**Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Age:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Gender:** \_\_\_\_\_

**My child has formally-identified exceptionalities:**  YES  NO

If 'YES,' please indicate all of your child's identified exceptionalities (e.g., attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, behaviour, giftedness, learning disability, mild intellectual disability, mobility impairment, visual impairment, etc.):

**Formally identified exceptionalities:**

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**My child has exceptionalities that have not yet been formally identified:**

YES  NO

**Not yet formally identified exceptionalities:**

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---



**Is there any other information that you would like for me to know about how your child learns in the classroom (e.g., things that support or prevent your child's learning)?**

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**Name of parent/legal guardian/substitute decision maker (please print):**

---

**Signature of parent/legal guardian/substitute decision maker:**

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**Date:**

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Appendix K  
**Contact Information Form for Parents/  
Legal Guardians/Substitute Decision Makers**

I understand that throughout the duration of the study, the researcher may need to maintain communication with me and my child while not on the school site. Accordingly, here is my contact information to facilitate this communication:

**Name of child participant (please print):**

---

**Name of parent/legal guardian/substitute decision maker (please print):**

---

**Telephone number:**

---

**E-mail address:**

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Moreover, I understand that, should my child participate in phase two of the study, my child and I are entitled to a copy of the researcher's findings:

**YES, thank you.** Please use the e-mail noted above to send me a copy of the findings upon the completion of the researcher's thesis defense (please provide an address that will be valid for at least the next two years).

**NO, thank you.** I would not like a copy of the researcher's findings.

**Signature:**

---

**Date:**

---

Appendix L  
**Photographic Release Form**

I agree to have photographs taken of my child's non-identifiable arts-integrated school work and choice of representational items that my child brings to the interview (please note, the researcher will take pictures of students' arts-integrated school work and representational items for the purpose of contextualizing students' interview responses, and a 'no' response will mean that your child cannot participate in the study):

YES  NO

**I agree to have these photographs used in the following ways (please check all that apply):**

(i) In academic articles  YES  NO

(ii) In print, digital, and slide form  YES  NO

(iii) In academic presentations  YES  NO

(iv) In media  YES  NO

(v) In thesis materials  YES  NO

**Name of child participant (please print):**

---

**Signature of child participant:**

---

**Name of person obtaining consent (please print):**

---

**Signature of person obtaining consent:**

---

**Date:**

---

Appendix M  
17-Item Questionnaire

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Alias: \_\_\_\_\_

**The Reason Why I Do My Classwork When I Learn Through the Arts  
Based on the Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A; Ryan & Deci, 2015)**

My name is Irene Melabiotis, and I am a student at Western University in London, Ontario. The reason you are here is because I would like to learn more about the reason you do things (or your motivation) when you learn through the arts. Please try to answer all 17 questions as honestly as you can. If you don't understand a question, please let me know so I can explain it to you better.

To answer these questions, please think of a lesson or assignment that you recently had where you were learning through the arts. Learning through the arts means you're learning about a topic in a non-arts subject (such as history, math, or science) using the arts (such as drama, music, or visual arts). An example of a lesson where students learn through the arts is using drama in history class to act out a historical event to learn more about what happened, or using visual arts in science class to make a sculpture of a plant to learn more about the parts of a plant.

Your answers to these questions are very important. They will help me understand your motivation when you learn through the arts. Thank you for taking the time to share with me your answers to this questionnaire! I appreciate it!

Please **circle** ONE answer that best describes how you feel about each statement.

<b>1. When I learn through the arts, I do my classwork so that the teacher won't get upset at me.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
<b>2. When I learn through the arts, I do my classwork because I want the teacher to think I'm a good student.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
<b>3. When I learn through the arts, I do my classwork because I want to learn new things.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
<b>4. When I learn through the arts, I do my classwork because I'll feel bad about myself if it doesn't get done.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
<b>5. When I learn through the arts, I do my classwork because it's fun.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never

<b>6. When I learn through the arts, I do my classwork because that's the rule.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
<b>7. When I learn through the arts, I enjoy doing my classwork.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
<b>8. When I learn through the arts, I try to answer hard questions because I want the other kids to think I'm smart.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
<b>9. When I learn through the arts, I try to answer hard questions because I'll feel bad about myself if I don't try.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
<b>10. When I learn through the arts, I try to answer hard questions because it's fun to answer hard questions.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
<b>11. When I learn through the arts, I try to answer hard questions because that's what I am supposed to do.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
<b>12. When I learn through the arts, I try to answer hard questions to find out if I'm right or wrong.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
<b>13. When I learn through the arts, I try to do well because that's what I'm supposed to do.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
<b>14. When I learn through the arts, I try to do well so my teachers will think I'm a good student.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
<b>15. When I learn through the arts, I try to do well because I like doing a good job on my classwork.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
<b>16. When I learn through the arts, I try to do well because I will get in trouble if I don't.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never
<b>17. When I learn through the arts, I try to do well because I'll feel really bad about myself if I don't do well.</b>			
Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never

**You have reached the end of the questionnaire!  
Thank you for sharing your thoughts with me!**

Appendix N  
**Excerpt of Sacrena Rully's Textualized Oral Account**

<p>I-IM28: Yeah? Okay. So, okay, so for now I'm gonna set this aside, because as interesting as this is, I do have some questions to ask you. First thing is, tell me what it was like to work on this drawing, <i>[pointing to artwork inspired by Norval Morrisseau]</i> as well as the artist statement, together, so that you can try to explain what you're drawing through the words in Language Arts</p>		
	<p>I-SR28: Umm, how did I feel?</p>	
<p>I-IM29: Yeah, tell me, tell me how it felt for you.</p>		
	<p>I-SR29: It felt– at first when I was drawing it, I felt, like, umm, it was getting really hard, because I couldn't–</p>	
<p>I-IM30: Mmhmm.</p>		
	<p>I-SR30: draw the tail properly. <i>[ended in high pitch, as if asking a question]</i></p>	<p>made eye contact; pointed to artwork on sketchpad</p>
<p>I-IM31: Mmhmm.</p>		
	<p>I-SR31: And, then, I was getting frustrated, but, then, umm, I kept trying and, then, I helped my friends draw theirs, so, then, they helped me try to draw mine. <i>[ended in high pitch, as if asking a question]</i> So, and, then, my artist statement, umm, it was, it was pretty easy after, like, after I'd, like, you know, umm, looked at my notes, and, then, I just, I just wrote down the sentence that describes it. It's like, it's not really like describes it, it's, like, what motivated you to do it.</p>	<p>pointed to artwork on sketchpad</p>
<p>I-IM32: Mmhmm. Okay. Good. So you started working on this first,</p>		

<p><i>[flipped to first drawing in sketchpad]</i> and, then, you went through to the next sketch, which you called, ‘Under the Sea.’ And how about this, was this one of the drawings? <i>[pointing to backside of first page]</i></p>		
	I-SR32: No, I was– <i>[chuckled briefly]</i>	
I-IM33: No?		
	I-SR33: We were just, like, doodling, me and my brother on the paper.	
I-IM34: Oh, okay, okay, so that’s at home.		
	I-SR34: Yeah. Here–	
I-IM35: That’s another time.		
	I-SR35: it’s right here. <i>[flipping to next sketches]</i>	got up to show me sketches
I-IM36: Okay. So, good. <i>[flipping pages]</i>		
	I-SR36: It had to show some, an idea– <i>[ended in high pitch, as if asking a question]</i>	
I-IM37: Okay.		
	I-SR37: that you think. Like, I was talking about in, like, how sometimes, uh, the fish, the fishermen, they, instead of catching fish, they catch dolphins, <i>[ended in high pitch, as if asking a question]</i> and other animals, <i>[ended in high pitch, as if asking a question]</i> and it’s dangerous.	
I-IM38: Oh, wow. So, did you work mostly on this in class or at home? <i>[pointing to last, most recent sketch in sketchpad]</i>		
	I-SR38: In class.	
I-IM39: In class. Okay, so, tell me an experience or story of working on this, something that happened to you while you were doing this.		
	I-SR39: Uh. <i>[thinking about response]</i> Something that happened	quietly thought about

	to me was, I think, every time, every time I didn't erase it— my pencil's eraser, it, like, fell off, and, then, I couldn't find it. So, that, every time I, I needed an eraser, I had to— well, I secretly switched my friend's pencil with mine, and then I just erased it, and put it back. <i>[chuckled]</i>	response before responding
I-IM40: Okay. <i>[said chuckling]</i> That's funny. So, that is interesting. Tell me, when you were drawing this, how did you feel inspired? Like, what was it that gave you the idea, like, "Oh, this is what I'm gonna do!" <i>[said in altered voice]</i>		
	I-SR40: Because, my favourite animal is a dolphin, <i>[ended in high pitch, as if asking a question]</i> so, then, I really wanted to draw one. <i>[ended in high pitch, as if asking a question]</i>	
I-IM41: Okay.		
	I-SR41: And, then, I had to think of an idea of that, umm, <i>[inaudible]</i> that, uh, that inspired me. <i>[ended in high pitch, as if asking a question]</i> So, then, I read a books, I read a book about dolphins—	looked at artwork; had hands on lap
I-IM42: Mmhmm.		
	I-SR42: and, then, I learned about how the fishermen catch the dolphins instead of the fish, and other— and turtles and things like that.	
I-IM43: And why did you choose that topic to draw about?		
	I-SR43: Because, umm, there, 'cause, like, dolphins are very, they're like en— they're endangered, some species— <i>[ended in high pitch, as if asking a question]</i>	
I-IM44: Mmhmm.		
	I-SR44: and, then, if you, if they don't stop, then they might become extinct. So, then, that's why I chose	



	it.	
I-IM45: Okay.		
	I-SR45: 'Cause I really like dolphins, and I don't want them to be extinct.	
I-IM46: Okay. Very interesting. Okay. So I have some questions to ask you on the things that I saw you do during class for the six periods, but there were three different visits that I observed you and your classmates. So, I'm gonna tell you, like, you know, what I saw, and then I'm gonna ask you a question based on that.		
	I-SR46: Okay.	
I-IM47: Okay? So, I just wanna know what's going on in your head. So, if I say, "Oh, I saw you do this. Why do you think you did that?" it's not trying to be, like, mean or anything like that. I won't tell anybody else. I just wanna know, what was, if you can go back to that moment, what were you thinking and what were you feeling. Okay? So, the first time that I observed you and your classmates, Mrs. Hope started the lesson about Norval Morriseau's artwork. Umm, that's the lesson where she was showing the slideshow, right?		
	I-SR47: Yup.	
I-IM48: Umm, and she was talking about, first about, what did we read in the morning, because you had read something about Norval Morriseau and his life and his artwork. Umm, and it looked like you were listening to her quietly, and you had your hand up a few times to answer some of the questions that Ms. Hope asked, umm, to help everybody in the classroom remember the information that you talked about. What were		

you thinking when Mrs. Hope was talking about Norval Morrisseau and–		
	I-SR48: I was, I was, like, thinking about what kind, like, why did he change his name, because it said his name was Norval Morrisseau, I think. <i>[ended in high pitch, as if asking a question]</i>	
I-IM49: Right.		
	I-SR49: And, then, he changed– he had to change his name to, like, Copper Thunderbird–	
I-IM50: Okay.		
	I-SR50: ‘cause he got sick. I was wondering why he had to change his name.	
I-IM51: Okay. And you didn’t put up your hand to ask the question?		
	I-SR51: Mmmm, no, because I think they answered after.	
I-IM52: Okay.		
	I-SR52: Yeah, it was, like, umm, if they get sick, then they have to change their name because that name was, like, a bad name, or something– <i>[ended in high pitch, as if asking a question]</i>	
I-IM53: Okay.		
	I-SR53: so they have to change it.	
I-IM54: Okay, but, that was when, in the morning, when you were learning about it. That’s probably what you were thinking. But how about during the class when she was just reminding people what they were ta–, what they learned about in the morning. What were you thinking then?		
	I-SR54: Umm, I was thinking <i>[whispered, “what was I thinking about this?”]</i> I was, like, looking at his art and, like, there were, like, umm, these, like, the– it was like a bird and then it went, like, into a fish– <i>[ended in high pitch, as if</i>	

	<i>asking a question]</i>	
I-IM55: Mmhmm.		
	I-SR55: and I wondered why he would, like, draw something like that– <i>[ended in high pitch, as if asking a question]</i>	
I-IM56: Okay.		
	I-SR56: because I never seen it before.	
I-IM57: Okay. And what were you thinking about before you even saw his artwork? Like, when it was just Mrs. Hope talking, because for the first few minutes, it was just her talking.		
	I-SR57: I thought, I thought his, like, his art was, like, realistic animals, <i>[ended in high pitch, as if asking a question]</i> and they had, like, like they were, like sketchy animals and then they had, like, skeletons and things in them. <i>[ended in high pitch, as if asking a question]</i>	
I-IM58: Okay.		
	I-SR58: But, then, it was actually just, like, an, like, his own interpretation–	
I-IM59: Mmhmm.		
	I-SR59: of the animals.	
I-IM60: Okay. And what were you feeling like when the lesson had just started? Were you, like, tired? Were you like, “Ugh, another lesson,” or “Ooh, I can’t wait! I’m excited!”? What was your feeling inside?		
	I-SR60: I was just, I was, like, wondering, like, what, what Norval Morrisseau’s art was like. I was– I wanted to know.	

Appendix O  
**Excerpt of Sprinkles Candy's Interim Inquiry Text**

PERIODS 1, 2

FEELINGS OF AUTONOMY

When looking at the slideshow, “[you were] thinking, what was I gonna draw,” even though you didn’t know yet where the lesson would go and what the assignment would be about. Thinking about what to draw made you felt “kinda excited.”

What this tells me is that you really like art, and you were happy with the idea of creating something of your own, and it kind of made you interested to see the slideshow to see Norval Morrisseau’s work, but also kind of impatient to start drawing your own artwork.

During the work period, at first you thought about drawing a cat, but after some more thinking, you decided not to draw a cat “‘cause [you] didn’t know how to draw it in . . . the style of . . . how [you were] supposed to do it, like the Aboriginal type of style of artwork.” And you mentioned that not being able to draw a cat for this assignment made you feel a bit sad.

What this tells me is that you were flexible and felt free to draw whatever you wanted. You liked that you could draw any animal you wanted, but then when you realized that you didn’t know how to draw it in the Aboriginal style of Norval Morrisseau, you decided to think of something else to draw, which made you feel kind of sad that you couldn’t draw your favourite animal. What this also tells me is that maybe there weren’t a lot of supports to help you draw your favourite animal.

You also felt free to chat with your friends, which you did, sometimes, “to get . . . ideas” on what to draw.

What this tells me is that you were comfortable in the classroom environment and that, even though you value your individuality (i.e., doing your own thing), you also wanted to hear the ideas of other classmates to get your own ideas on what to do for your artwork.

FEELINGS OF COMPETENCE

You mentioned that you “really, really, really like art. I draw a lot.” So when Mrs. Hope started the lesson (and you didn’t know yet what the assignment was going to be about), it made you feel “kinda awkward.”

What this tells me is that, because you like art, you felt confident that you could do well on whatever assignment Mrs. Hope gave, even though you didn’t know what the assignment might be.

You were confident in class when Mrs. Hope mentioned that you’ll be using oil pastels,

because you have used them “three or four times” in your previous grades, and you like using them “‘cause they’re bright colours.”

What this tells me is that you felt confident using oil pastels for your artwork, which made you sure that you could do well on whatever assignment Mrs. Hope gave an interested to hear from Mrs. Hope what the assignment was going to be.

You mentioned that sometimes during the slideshow, “[you] kinda got confused at some parts when she was talking about” some explanations. You also mentioned that you noticed the things that Mrs. Hope was pointing out during the slideshow, and you also noticed something Mrs. Hope didn’t point out, which was “all the bright colours and the different shapes of lines” that Norval Morrissette used in his artwork.

What this tells me is that you were interested in the slideshow to see where the lesson would lead, and that, even though you were confused at some parts with some of the explanations, you still didn’t let that stop you from paying attention to the slideshow and noticing some interesting details about the artwork (like the bright colours and different shapes of the lines).

#### FEELINGS OF RELATEDNESS

You said that you felt free to chat with your friends, which you did, sometimes, “to get . . . ideas” on what to draw.

What this tells me is that you value your friendships and getting along with your seatmates. What this, also, tells me is that you don’t mind getting ideas from your friends.

You also mentioned that you liked showing your artwork to your classmates seating near you, but “[you] don’t really care what . . . they say.” But, when one of your classmates made the comment, “Oh, she draws really good,” you felt happy because you tried your best.

What this tells me is that you don’t value your classmates’ negative opinions on your artwork, only the positive opinions, because you’re confident in how it looks and you don’t want to hear any negative comments.

You felt happy showing your drawing to Crystal because “[you] just like showing people [you] artwork.” You mentioned that when you looked at your other classmates’ artwork, who were sitting near your desk, you gave them your opinion on what you thought of their work (“Hey, that looks like a chicken wing.”), and you encouraged other classmates by clapping your hands for those whose work you thought they did a good job on.

What this tells me is that you care about giving nice compliments to your classmates on their work, to encourage them and to have a positive relationship with them.



Appendix Q  
**Observational Field Notes Chart to Gather Information  
 on Arts-Integrated, Regular Classroom Landscape**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School ID Code: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Core Subject</b>		<b>Teacher ID Code</b>	
<b>Arts Area</b>		<b>Unit, Topic</b>	
<b>Start Time</b>		<b>End Time</b>	

Environment	Description	
<b>Physical</b> (Mashburn, 2008)	<b>space</b>	<b>furnishings</b>
	<b>learning resources</b>	<b>learning materials</b>
<b>Social</b> (Hamre & Pianta, 2007; Yen & Syme, 1999)	<b>peer relationships</b>	<b>teacher relationships</b>
	<b>emotional supports</b>	<b>instructional supports</b>
	<b>classroom rules</b>	<b>school rules</b>
	<b>organizational structure</b>	







Appendix T  
Field Texts Collection Schedule

**Collection Schedule for Grade 6 Participants in Mrs. Hope's Classroom**

Data	Week									
	1	2 <sup>a</sup>	3	4	5 <sup>b</sup>	6	7	8	9	10
<b>17-item questionnaire</b>	X	-			-					
<b>In-class observations</b>		-	X	X	-	X				
<b>Collection and return of participants' arts-integrated work</b>		-			-		X			
<b>Individual interview with each participant</b> (at the end of which I took pictures of their arts-integrated work, representational item)		-			-		X			
<b>Individual member-checking session with each participant</b> (at the end of which I took pictures of their updated arts-integrated work)		-			-					X

*Note:* <sup>a</sup>Dash marks (-) in week 2 indicate that no field texts were collected due to participants returning their consent/assent forms later than the due date. <sup>b</sup>Dash marks (-) in week 5 indicate that no field texts were collected, due to absence of classroom teacher.

**Collection Schedule for Grade 7 and Grade 8 Participants in Mrs. Faith's Classroom**

Data	Week								
	1	2	3	4 <sup>a</sup>	5	6	7	8	9
<b>17-item questionnaire</b>	X	X		-					
<b>In-class observations</b>		X	X	-	X				
<b>Collection and return of participants' arts-integrated work</b>				-		X			
<b>Individual interview with each participant</b> (at the end of which I took pictures of their arts-integrated work, representational item)				-		X			
<b>Individual member-checking session with each participant</b> (at the end of which I took pictures of their updated arts-integrated work)				-			X	X	X

*Note:* <sup>a</sup>Dash marks (-) in week 4 indicate that no field texts were collected, due to absence of classroom teacher.

## Appendix U Interview Preamble and Semi-Structured Interview Prompts

### **Preamble to be Read to Participants by the Researcher**

My name is Irene Melabiotis, and I am a student at Western University in London, Ontario. The reason you are here is because I would like to learn more about the reason you do things (or your motivation) when you are learning through the arts (like through drama, music, or visual arts) in non-arts subjects (like in language, math, or science). Because motivation is an important part of your learning, I want to hear about your experiences on how learning through the arts helps or doesn't help you become motivated to learn.

Please remember that there is no right or wrong answer to each question, so try to answer as honestly as you can. Your answers to these questions might help other students in the future, because the study will help us learn more about the different ways that teachers can support students' motivation to learn.

Before we start the interview, I want you to let you know that if you don't want to answer a question, just say 'skip.' Also, if you ever change your mind and you don't want to be in this study anymore, you can tell your teacher, your family, or me. No one will be upset at you if you don't want to participate and there will be no effect on your marks or grades in school.

### **Main Interview Questions**

#### **→ Pertaining to Chosen Representational Item**

- Please describe your item to me.
- Why did you choose to bring this particular item?
- Tell me a story about your item that will help me understand what it's like for you to learn through the arts.

#### **→ Pertaining to Motivation when Learning Through the Arts**

- Tell me what it was like to learn through the arts for this particular lesson/assignment that you worked on. (*show arts-integrated work*)
- Is there anything that I should have asked you, but didn't, which might help me understand your thoughts and feelings when you learn through the arts?

Appendix V  
**Narrative of Mrs. Hope's Introductory Lesson**

As I approached Mrs. Hope's Grade 5/6 classroom for my first day of observations, I saw learners in the hallways and in the classrooms during afternoon recess time. I knocked on the classroom door to get Mrs. Hope's attention. As she welcomed me in, she explained that, because it was raining outside, learners had an indoor recess. She also mentioned that, for this reason, learners may be a bit antsy. She introduced me to the student teacher who, she indicated, may be present in her classroom throughout the majority of the observation period. I placed my things at the back of the classroom, out of the way of learners, and I pulled out my clipboard to begin making observations of the classroom landscape. I noticed that Soccer, one of the participants involved in my inquiry, appeared excited when he saw me—when I noticed him glancing in my direction, he smiled at me and straightened his posture. The school bell soon rang, and I noticed that Crystal was not in class, even though Mrs. Hope had mentioned earlier that all participants involved in my inquiry were present at school that day. I hoped that she was okay.

I began noting my observations of the physical and social context of participants' regular classroom landscape, as Mrs. Hope readied her learners to begin the arts-integrated lesson. Learners' desks were arranged in three rows, in groups of two or three; the chair legs were covered in tennis balls. There appeared to be enough space for learners to walk freely among the aisles, as they maneuvered towards their desks to take their seats for the start of the lesson. The classroom layout and resources reminded me of a science lab with its sinks and eye wash station on one side of the classroom. Various large windows lined one side of the classroom. I imagined that, on a sunny day, they would brighten the whole room beautifully. Over one cupboard, learners' behavioural promises towards their teacher and classmates suggested a sense of care for their classroom environment and for each other; Mrs. Hope confided in me after the observation period, however, that, in her opinion, some of her learners required more sensitivity training to be more inclusive of their peers, both inside and outside of the classroom. Various learning resources were displayed along the walls of the classroom, which hinted towards past or current units of study, including chart paper that addressed

mathematical formulas, the features of narrative writing, and PSA success criteria, as well as posters on the carbon cycle, addition key words, and subtraction key words. Lining the shelves near the windows were books organized in baskets according to theme. The front of the room showcased a large whiteboard, with the day's schedule visible along the left-hand side. In terms of the social features of the landscape, I noted that learners had class jobs assigned, as indicated by a chart located at the back of the classroom.

Mrs. Hope began activating learners' prior knowledge from the lesson earlier on in the school day when they learned about the First Nations artist, Norval Morrisseau. The arts-integrated assignment that learners were about to be introduced to involved Norval Morrisseau, and although I would have wished to have had the opportunity to observe the morning's lesson, I did not find out about it until after it had occurred. Mrs. Hope asked learners several questions that prompted a classroom discussion on the information that they could recall on Norval Morrisseau's life and artistic style, as well as on how to use oil pastels properly. I was pleasantly surprised to see that Soccer and Sacrena, both participants in my inquiry, were engaged in the classroom discussion, asking and answering questions. I questioned, though, if they were acting normally, or if they were influenced by my presence. Mrs. Hope's calm demeanor during the introduction of the lesson appeared to provide learners the space to engage with their classroom learning on a level that they were prepared to. Her patience and willingness to listen during the lesson introduction exemplified, to me, her care for her learners, especially as she chose a variety of learners to respond to her varying discussion prompts. Then, Mrs. Hope asked learners to turn their chairs around and face the back of the room, where a projector was set up, ready to begin a slideshow presentation of Norval Morrisseau's artwork. Learners appeared interested to view the images that were splashed across the screen. Some were more vocal than others about their curiosities and questions about his artwork. At one point, I heard Sprinkles comment softly, but amusingly, to herself, "Looks like a fish-bird!"

Mrs. Hope guided learners to look at the features of Norval Morrisseau's artwork through such prompts as, "Notice the bird inside the bird." She also called attention to the black outlines that characterized his style, and asked learners to notice what animals they

could identify within each artwork. At one point, Sacrena got out of her seat to point at what she found interesting, asking “What’s the foot there for?” This signaled to me her engagement with the lesson. At the end of the slideshow, Mrs. Hope left one artwork image on the screen—which would remain for the remainder of the period—while she handed out sketchpads to learners and pencils for those who needed them. She tasked them with drafting ideas for their own Norval Morrisseau-inspired artwork that included the features that characterized his work but using their favourite animal(s) as the subject matter. Learners were given the remainder of the period to work on drafting ideas for their own artwork, and she encouraged them to be creative, stating, “You are your own creator and artist!”

Crystal, then, entered the classroom and sat at her assigned desk, about twenty minutes after the lesson had begun. She was wearing her jacket and I couldn’t help but notice that she appeared upset. She sat at her desk for a moment before getting up again to leave the classroom. Mrs. Hope buzzed the office to report her absence, but Crystal soon returned to class. Mrs. Hope asked her to sit at her desk to begin sketching ideas. At this moment, I felt tensions between my teacher identity and my inquirer identity; with the former, I wanted to go over to see if Crystal was okay, but with the latter, I did not want to interfere with Mrs. Hope’s role in the classroom, so I decided to continue my observations of Crystal’s and the other participants’ actions. Crystal’s seatmate, noticing Crystal’s saddened disposition, tried cheering her up by making her laugh. Sprinkles, seated in front of Crystal, appeared to notice that Crystal was away for the better part of the period. She turned around and showed Crystal her work—which, as Sprinkles explained in her interview, she did to give Crystal some ideas for what she could do for her own artwork. In my observation notes, I questioned whether or not Crystal knew what her classmates were working on, because I did not notice any one of her classmates explaining what the assignment was about. During her interview, however, Crystal explained that, although she didn’t know initially what her classmates were working on, they soon explained the assignment to her and she was able to begin sketching her ideas.

To provide learners a sense of how they might be able to start with the task, Mrs. Hope went up to the whiteboard and began drawing her own Norval Morrisseau-inspired artwork. While doing so, she also verbalized her thinking while engaged in the design

process. I noticed that Soccer's, Sacrena's, and Sprinkles's eyes were transfixed on their teacher as she modelled the process of brainstorming and creating a draft drawing. Upon completing her model of a draft, Mrs. Hope walked over to Crystal and gently asked to speak with her in the hallway. Crystal appeared willing to follow Mrs. Hope out of the classroom. Five minutes later, Crystal returned to the classroom and appeared to be in better spirits.

After some time had passed and Mrs. Hope noticed that Crystal appeared to be lost in her own world, Mrs. Hope said to her, "Sometimes when I do artwork when I'm upset, it gets me over it." Mrs. Hope's emotional and instructional support of learners was evident as she took the time to circulate the classroom to answer learners' questions during the work period and to give feedback on their progress. I periodically heard her exclaim, "That looks good!" For another learner, she drew attention to Norval Morrisseau's artwork that remained on the screen, encouraging him to "Look at the size of the bear and two fish. They're big in relation to the background, to give you space to draw things inside." Soon afterwards, I heard Soccer calling over Mrs. Hope excitedly, announcing, "I'm being creative!" while showing her what he had created so far for his first draft. Soccer remained transfixed for the remainder of the period working on creating an intricately-lined design for his artwork—one which, interestingly, appeared to combine several animals into one.

Sacrena was chatting with her seatmates while also working on developing her sketches. At one point I heard her and her seatmates singing the 'Pen Pineapple Apple Pen' song—which, as I would later learn, was a viral song on YouTube at that time. Although seated at the other side of the classroom, I noted Sprinkles, too, was singing the same song with her seatmates, suggesting to me that both Sacrena and Sprinkles felt comfortable in their classroom environment while brainstorming ideas for their sketches. Near the end of the period (which was also the end of the school day), Mrs. Hope asked learners to pack up their things and provided them with the option to take their work home to work on their drafts. The goal, as she reminded them, was to create at least two or three drafts before moving on to their final copy. My brief discussion with Mrs. Hope at the end of the first observation day revealed that she was a trained artist who used to teach in an arts-based school within the school board. Her use of arts integration in her

current classroom was periodic but purposeful, so as to facilitate her learners' engagement with their learning. I left the classroom inquiry field that day thinking about what future observation days would reveal about participants' actions as their arts-integrated experiences unfolded within their regular classroom landscape. (Inquiry text based on field texts and lived memory, April 2017)



Appendix W  
**Narrative of Mrs. Faith's Introductory Lesson**

On my first observation day, I walked into Mrs. Faith's Grade 7/8 classroom moments after learners arrived back from their lunch break. The sense of liveliness in the classroom was evident. Some learners were walking around chatting with their classmates, while others were engaged with working on independent activities, such as doing their homework or reading at their desks. I looked around and saw Mrs. Faith at the back of the classroom near her desk, speaking with a few learners. I knocked loudly on the door, so as to announce my arrival. Some learners looked up and announced my presence to Mrs. Faith. She motioned for me to come into the classroom, and I maneuvered carefully towards the back of the room. I placed my things on the floor, making sure that they were away from the walking path of learners. I took out my clipboard and readied myself for the start of the lesson. Mrs. Faith soon made her way towards me, welcoming me to her classroom, and I thanked her for allowing me to be present.

It was the first day that Mrs. Faith planned to introduce her learners to the new arts-integrated assignment, which was an extension of a Language Arts unit that they had recently completed, based on the book that they had just completed reading called 'I Am Malala.' The liveliness of the classroom environment suggested to me that learners felt a sense of comfortableness in their surroundings as they moved around the space to get to where they needed to go. With an assertive voice, Mrs. Faith asked learners to read silently for five minutes while she set up the lesson. Soon, the classroom was silent, signaling to me the respectful relationship that learners had with Mrs. Faith, as well as with their fellow classmates. I took this time to note the space that participants were in, which reminded me of some other middle school classrooms that I had the privilege of being in as an occasional teacher. There were clusters of two desks in three rows, all of which were free from graffiti, which so often adorned the desks of many young learners. The chair legs had tennis balls—one of the many strategies for meeting the tenets of Universal Design for Learning. A small whiteboard on wheels near the entrance of the classroom outlined the day's schedule, providing learners a visual reminder of the organizational structure of their school day.

The large windows on one side of the classroom, which brightened the classroom landscape considerably, were covered with writing. Mrs. Faith would explain to me later that she asked learners to use erasable window markers to express their thoughts and feelings about the school year that was soon coming to a close. For her Grade 8 learners, it would be their last year in a middle school before transitioning to high school in the fall. Some drew pictures, and some wrote their thoughts and advice for their fellow peers. ‘Class of 2016!’ wrote one learner. Several simply wrote their name followed by ‘was here,’ and others wrote their contact information, encouraging others to keep in touch. Their writing reminded me of what my Grade 8 yearbook looked like after I had passed it around for my classmates to sign, which suggested to me that the learners in Mrs. Faith’s classroom felt a sense of ownership of their learning space. Instructional supports, such as anchor charts and graphs, flanked the walls, as did some learning resources on effective learning skills, work habits, and the classroom agreements.

At the back of the classroom, large shelves housed several visual arts materials, as well as learners’ previous artworks. The counter space next to those shelves was taken up by learners’ impressive wire art creations, followed by several bins of crayons and markers. Learning materials lined the shelves under the counter space, such as thesauruses, dictionaries, manipulatives, and atlases. Other arts-integrated products of Grade 7 learners were gathered on the counter that lined the side of the classroom opposite the windows, which involved clay models illustrating their understanding of plate tectonics. Above those, learners’ ‘I AM FROM’ projects were showcased on a bulletin board. Learners’ Zentangles hung from the ceilings and swayed softly with the movement of those beneath them, each depicting something about the identity of its creator. A smart board was strategically placed at the front of the classroom, which would soon be used to showcase a slideshow presentation that introduced learners to their arts-integrated assignment.

The end of the reading period was signaled when Mrs. Faith’s voice cut through the silence, asking learners to put away their books. She began the lesson by inviting learners to recall the book, ‘I Am Malala,’ which they had recently completed reading as a class. She asked them to think about some of its big ideas. After a fruitful sharing of ideas—some talked about themes related to social stratification, although they did not

identify them as such—the idea of social justice was brought to light, allowing her to transition into asking learners, “What do you believe social justice means?” After a lively few minutes of think-pair-share, Mrs. Faith asked learners to think of some words that could be used to describe the concept of social justice, and she invited them to share their words during the classroom discussion. Mrs. Faith, then, brought learners’ attention to two pieces of chart paper that she had posted on the blackboard, each of which had several words listed as key terms related to social justice, including ‘democracy,’ ‘hierarchy,’ ‘discrimination,’ ‘prejudice,’ ‘equality,’ and ‘freedom/self-determination.’

Learners were, then, asked to take out their sketchbooks and draw a symbol of what they thought represented the topic of social justice. Without missing a beat, I noticed each of the six participants in my inquiry take out their books to begin thinking about and sketching their ideas. I couldn’t help but notice that all appeared engaged in the task. Josh asked Mrs. Faith, “Can it be anything from past stuff, from movies?” Mrs. Faith answered, “It can be from Malala.” Michael stated loudly, but playfully, “It’s going to be stick people.” After asking someone nearest to the classroom lights to turn them off, Mrs. Faith’s slideshow presentation began, providing learners another resource from which to draw upon for their upcoming assignment. The images were of various artists’ collages that depicted social justice messages. Mrs. Faith encouraged learners to notice the various images and materials that the artists used. She, then, asked learners to think about what they thought the messages were that the artists were trying to convey through their work. This last prompt invited many questions and reactions from various learners in the classroom. I heard Sequoia exclaim loudly, “Eww,” as she looked up at one of the images while still absorbed by the earlier-assigned task of drawing her symbol of social justice. The participants in my inquiry appeared to be transfixed on the images of collage exemplars, many of whom periodically turned to their seatmates to share their initial reactions and thoughts of them.

Upon the completion of the slideshow presentation, Mrs. Faith handed out a sheet of paper with information on creating collages and presented exemplars of some mixed media collages that she and a fellow teacher colleague, Mrs. Hope, had individually created. This allowed learners to see some hardcopy samples of collages. As she shared them, she asked learners to think about some of the key features of mixed media collages,

effectively co-constructing the success criteria that she would later expect of learners' own arts-integrated work. Mrs. Faith, then, explained their next arts-integrated assignment, which would be assessed for Visual Arts and Language Arts. It involved creating a mixed media newspaper collage that represented either what social justice meant to them or one or more of the social justice-related key terms that they brainstormed in class. She indicated to learners that she wanted them to create the base of their collage from cardboard or Bristol board and to use mostly newspaper cuttings as their means of communicating their message to viewers. She directed learners to a bin of scrap materials that they were invited to explore and use. Learners were given the rest of the period to begin brainstorming ideas for their collage, and I couldn't help but look forward to seeing which social justice-related topics participants would choose and how they would communicate their messages through the assigned medium of collage. (Inquiry text based on field texts and lived memory, October 2016)

Appendix X  
**Narrative of Participants' Chosen Representational Item**

I looked on with a sense of anticipation and excitement as each participant at their individual interview revealed their chosen representational item and talked about it. As I began each interview in this way, I could sense that each participant became increasingly comfortable in the immediate environment and, later on, in the sharing of their accounts about their experiences within their arts-integrated, regular classroom landscape. Even more exciting for me was that each participant's account and chosen representational item was as unique as their identities—no two items and accounts were alike, suggesting to me that participants wished to share with me items that authentically represented something about who they were and what learning through the arts was like for them.

Crystal chose to share a jewelry box that she kept on her dresser, in which she stored her jewelry (see Figure 13). She received it as a birthday present from her mother's friend, and it required her to decorate it herself. When decorating it, her mother helped her by passing to her the colour of jewel that she wanted, especially on the "big and hard" butterfly located on the top of the box. She described her jewelry box as "pretty and shiny" and that she had nothing else like it at home, so it was special to her. As she described it, I could sense her pride and satisfaction in having taken part in its outward design. She confirmed that working on it was fun and made her happy because she got to decorate it herself and doing so made her feel "like a designer." She chose this item to share because she was happy and proud of its creation and how beautiful it turned out to be. These feelings paralleled the way that she sometimes felt when she learned through the arts—both allowed her to express her personality and individuality. The only difference between the two, however, was that she enjoyed the hands-on process of putting on the stickers and jewels on her jewelry box, whereas the arts-integrated assignment involved an element of writing, which was exciting, "but it was challenging," too, because it involved her having "to think about it and stuff."



Figure 13. Crystal's representational item, her self-decorated jewelry box.

Sacrena brought in her “Book of Drawings” to share (see Figure 14). As she took it out to show me, she appeared pleased with herself and excited to be sharing with me something that meant so much to her. While flipped through its pages, she explained enthusiastically that the book was a collection of her drawings “over the years” and, so, the subject matter varied, from “milkshakes, and . . . characters, and . . . Sponge Bob.” Her drawings reflected her use of a selection of artistic media, such a watercolour, marker, and pencil. Sacrena emphasized how much she loved to draw because whenever she was bored or didn’t want to do something, such as her homework, she looked through her book to “maybe draw something and add . . . to it.” Doing so helped her move beyond her boredom, allowing her to continue doing her homework, or whatever else she was doing before. Flipping through her book, she introduced me to some of the subject matter and characters of her drawings, and, then, she quickly flipped to the back to share with me her favourite drawing: a dragon (see Figure 15). She explained proudly that she drew it herself without “a tutorial” and without someone telling her “what I have to do exactly, so then I have some space to, umm, have some freedom.”

After sharing her dragon with me, Sacrena took the time to recount the story of how her book came to be. She had placed some drawings together to create a book that was “pretty thin.” Then, one day when she and her family were spring cleaning around the house, she was assigned to clean out a bin. At the bottom of it she found several of her earlier drawings that she had forgotten about. She placed them aside and they ended up going “everywhere,” and her mother advised her to do something or else she would “just lose them all.” That’s when she added them to her book, which, she explained, increased its thickness. She chose to share this item because looking at her collection of drawings over the years made her feel happy and proud, because it affirmed to her that

she knew “how to draw” when “most people can’t.” As she explained, her feelings of happiness and pride resembled, too, the way that she felt when working on her arts-integrated assignment.

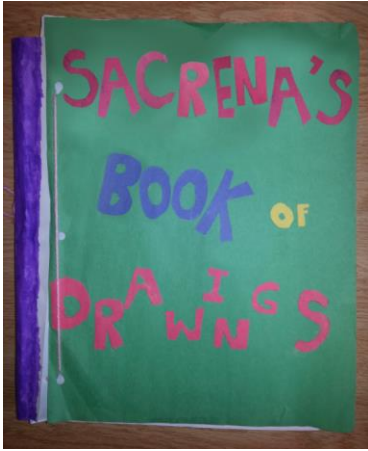


Figure 14. Sacrena’s representational item, Sacrena’s Book of Drawings. Photograph has been altered to replace the participant’s real name with her chosen pseudonym.



Figure 15. Sacrena’s favourite drawing from her Book of Drawings.

Soccer chose to share the book he was reading, called *Magnus Chase and the Gods of Asgard: The Hammer of Thor* (see Figure 16). Being his “favourite book,” I anticipated the enthusiasm that he displayed while sharing what it was about. He read it “every day, at night, at least twenty pages, ‘cause it’s interesting.” Reading the book made Soccer feel inspired because it had different words that he wanted to learn, which, he explained, would help him to get better grades at school. Whenever he read the book, he propped himself up with a couple of pillows, which made him feel calm and comfortable. He explained that he chose to share this item because when working on his arts-integrated assignment, he felt a similar sense of excitement.

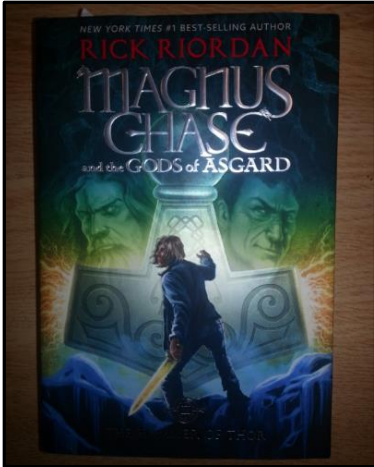


Figure 16. Soccer's representational item, his book titled *The Hammer of Thor*.

Sprinkles's chosen representational item was a musical recorder which she played periodically at home, so as to prepare her to play the flute—the musical instrument that she was assigned to play at school (see Figure 17). With a soft and gentle demeanor, she explained that the recorder had a nice and different sound, which paralleled the type of art that she enjoyed creating—that is, artwork that was nice and different. Playing the recorder made her feel “excited because . . . like, I wanted to play, like, something, and I finally learned it and all that.” I felt her sense of accomplishment as she described the feeling she felt practicing and successfully playing a difficult piece on the recorder. This sense of excitement and accomplishment was also what she felt whenever she wanted to draw something challenging and successfully completed it. For her, learning through the arts was challenging, too, when “my teacher, for example, says that, umm, we had to do something like that, and I don't do that, and I have to restart, and, yeah, that kinda makes me really upset and all that, 'cause I did my hardest.” The only difference between the two was that, with her recorder, she was “very shy” and didn't enjoy “playing in front of people,” such as her mom who came into her bedroom one time while she was practicing; when it came to drawing, however, she didn't “feel, like, ashamed to, like, start, like, drawing in front of people.” She chose to share her musical recorder because “when I play it, it makes me happy and art makes me happy.”





*Figure 17.* Sprinkles's representational item, her musical recorder.

As if apprehensively, John pulled out his 8" tablet on which he watched gaming matches on YouTube and Twitch, such as those involving the game, League of Legends (see Figure 18). He held the tablet in his hands as he explained that he liked using the characters from the gaming world as inspiration for his art, which ended up being the case for his arts-integrated work. Although my impression of him during the in-class observation periods was that he was introspective and soft-spoken, he spoke confidently and comfortably about how much he enjoyed watching League of Legends matches on his tablet while in his living room. Even if someone was watching television, he was still able to focus on the matches that unfolded on his tablet—which indicated to me the extent of his interest in watching them. Something he particularly enjoyed was commentating in his head what was happening during a match between the two opposing teams. To me, this illustrated the extent of his imagination and his ability to transport himself into another world—that of gaming. He explained that he chose to share his tablet because he felt the same sense of freedom, focus, and interest when learning through the arts.



*Figure 18.* John's representational item, his 8" tablet used for online gaming.

Although he could not locate it to bring it to his interview, Josh spoke about an image of Goku (a character from the cartoon series, *Dragon Ball Z*) that he had coloured in some time before (see Figure 19 for an idea of what the item looked like, as approved by Josh). I was pleased that he so confidently articulated information about his chosen item. He described that, in his coloured drawing, Goku had blue hair and was standing facing forward with his bare fists raised up and muscles flexed, as if ready to fight. Regarding Goku's character, Josh shared that his hair changed the stronger he got. I found this intriguing, as I knew very little about Goku as a cartoon character. Josh went on to explain that, from the least to strongest stages of strength, Goku's hair transformed from black hair to hair that looked like "electricity" to long hair to blue hair to blue hair "with red stuff all over him." Josh's enthusiasm for the topic was magnetic. Goku "is a person who gets stronger and stronger in every fight he does and keeps trying and never gives up." Later in his follow-up session, Josh shared that he felt that this particular characteristic of Goku—that of not giving up—also described him. Learning through the arts felt like when he engaged with colouring in his drawing of Goku because Josh felt happy doing both and felt free in each pursuit to express his imagination and the colours that he saw in his mind.



*Figure 19.* Josh's representational item, his favourite coloured-in drawing of Goku.

Makeya chose to describe her colour-changing pencil, which she had at home but could not locate (see Figure 20 for an idea of what the item looked like, as approved by Makeya). She had a gentle and happy demeanor as she explained that although it was a regular pencil, the outside of it was sensitive to temperature and changed colour when placed under running water, which she would do frequently to see it undergo its colour changes. Her pencil was not like any other that she had at home and, for this reason, it was special and unique to her. She chose this item to share because using the pencil made her happy and she enjoyed drawing with it to see what she could create. Makeya indicated that her feelings of happiness and enjoyment using her colour-changing pencil were similar to what she felt when learning through the arts.



*Figure 20.* Makeya's representational item, her colour-changing pencil.

Jessica-Marie spoke enthusiastically about a looping and winding rollercoaster being akin to learning through the arts (see Figure 21 for an idea of what the item looked

like, as approved by Jessica-Marie). With a happy demeanor, she shared eagerly that she found some rollercoasters scary and some others fun. Sometimes, learning through the arts was like going on a rollercoaster to her, because she would feel scared or nervous before beginning an assignment, but, then, after getting started, she would feel happy that she was adventurous and took the chance to engage with it. She added that she liked riding on rollercoasters that she did not have to wait very long to go on; sometimes, however, she went on ones that had a long wait to get on, but only if she felt that they were worth it. She likened this experience to learning through the arts because sometimes she enjoyed the experience of learning through the arts and sometimes found it worthwhile.



*Figure 21.* Jessica-Marie's representational item, a winding rollercoaster.

Out of his backpack, Michael quickly pulled out his charcoal pencil that he used periodically at home and at school (see Figure 22). With a sense of subdued excitement, he explained that he liked drawing with it and contrasted it with his experiences drawing with a regular pencil: “Once, when I was, like, bored, I was drawing stuff. So, like, I had two pencils, right? A regular one that’s light, and I was drawing, like, designs and stuff. So, then, when I drew it, like, it was like light and stuff. Like, now I can do it with just this [charcoal pencil], right? ‘Cause it’s light and dark.” Through this account, Michael expressed his fascination with the variety of lines that he could create with it, such as thick versus thin and light versus dark. With it, he felt that he could sketch anything, and he enjoyed seeing what he was able to draw using his creativity. He chose to share this item because he liked how it felt “nice and smooth” while using it. To him, his charcoal pencil represented comfort, freedom, flexibility, and fun—feelings that, according to Michael, were similar to those that he felt when learning through the arts.



*Figure 22.* Michael's representational item, his charcoal drawing pencil.

Sequoia spoke softly and thoughtfully about a handheld magnifying glass being akin to learning through the arts (see Figure 23 for an idea of what the item looked like, as approved by Sequoia). She recalled a time when she regularly used one such handheld magnifying glass at her grandmother's home to explore various types of leaves up close. She chose this item to share because the magnifying glass, to her, represented the idea of exploration. That is, it allowed her to expand her perception of the world around her and offered her a different perspective on things. It fostered her inspiration, curiosity, excitement, and wonder, which resembled the feelings that she experienced when learning through the arts.

*Figure 23.* Sequoia's representational item, a magnifying glass on a chain.



## Curriculum Vitae

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<b>Post-secondary Education and Degrees</b>	<p>The University of Western Ontario London, Ontario, Canada 2013–2018 Doctor of Philosophy (Education Studies)</p> <p>Queen’s University Kingston, Ontario, Canada 2011–2013 Masters of Education</p> <p>OISE/The University of Toronto Toronto, Ontario, Canada 2007–2008 Bachelor of Education (Visual Arts)</p> <p>Ryerson University Toronto, Ontario, Canada 1999–2003 Bachelor of Applied Arts (Fashion Design)</p>
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**Melabiotis, I.** (May 2017). *Learners' stories of their motivation in inclusive, arts-integrated learning environments*. Paper presentation at the *Thirteenth International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry*, Champaign-Urbana, United States of America.

Currie-Patterson, N., Dare, L., Hansen, K., **Melabiotis, I.**, Myers, P., & Nagle, J. (March 2016). *Threshold concepts: Reflections within a community of practice*. Poster presentation at the *2016 Western Research Forum*, London, Ontario, Canada.

**Melabiotis, I.** (May 2015). *Students' stories about their learning motivations in inclusive, arts-based classrooms*. Roundtable presentation at the *2015 Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE) Annual Conference*, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

**Melabiotis, I.** (May 2015). *Highlighting literate identities through arts-based tasks*. Paper presentation at the *Eleventh International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry*, Champaign-Urbana, United States of America.

**Melabiotis, I.** (May 2014). *Fostering learning flexibility through visual arts-based tasks: The case study of a student with learning*

*disabilities*. Paper presentation at the *Tenth International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry*, Champaign-Urbana, United States of America.

**Melabiotis, I.** (April 2014). *Fostering literate identities through visual arts-based tasks: The case study of a student with learning disabilities*. Paper presentation at the *2014 Robert Macmillan Graduate Research in Education Symposium*, London, Ontario, Canada.

**Melabiotis, I.** (April 2014). *The visual arts-based experiences of students with learning disabilities: Two multiple-perspective case studies*. Poster presentation at the *2014 Robert Macmillan Graduate Research in Education Symposium*, London, Ontario, Canada.

**Karagiorgakis, I.** (May 2012). *The visual arts-based learning experiences of students with exceptionalities*. Roundtable presentation at the *2012 Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE) Annual Conference*, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.

**Karagiorgakis, I.** (August 2012). *The visual arts-based experiences of students with exceptionalities*. Roundtable presentation at the *2012 Rosa Bruno-Jofré Symposium in Education*, Kingston, Ontario, Canada.

**Karagiorgakis, I.** (August 2012). *The visual arts-based experiences of an elementary school student with learning disabilities: A multiple-perspective case study*. Paper presentation at the *2012 International Conference on Learning*. London, United Kingdom.

**Other Presentations**

Sandieson, R., & **Melabiotis, I.** (2015). *Developing a thorough literature search using the Pearl Harvesting Information Retrieval Framework*. Canadian Committee of Graduate Students in Education (CCGSE) Workshop, 2015 Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE), Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

**Melabiotis, I.** (2013). *The visual arts-based experiences of students with learning disabilities*. Students Teaching Students, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada.

**Professional Activities**

Poster Sub-Committee Leader (2015–2017), Steering Committee, Robert Macmillan Graduate Research in Education Symposium, Faculty of Education, University of Western Ontario.



Moderator/Discussant (2016), Robert Macmillan Graduate Research in Education Symposium, Faculty of Education, University of Western Ontario.

Co-Coordinator, Co-Facilitator (2014–2015), Doctoral Series Seminar, Faculty of Education, University of Western Ontario.

Chair (2014–2015), Steering Committee, Robert Macmillan Graduate Research in Education Symposium, Faculty of Education, University of Western Ontario.

Reviewer (2013, 2015–2016), Canadian Society for Studies in Education, Conference Submissions.

Co-Chair (2013–2014), Steering Committee, Robert Macmillan Graduate Research in Education Symposium, Faculty of Education, University of Western Ontario.

Vice-President Graduate (2011–2012), Society of Graduate and Professional Students, Queen's University.