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Lynda C. Kerr

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LANDSCAPES OF IMAGINATION:
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF ART TEXTBOOKS

by

LYNDA C. KERR

(Under the Direction of Ming Fang He)

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study examined imagination in secondary art textbooks, both historically and in the current educational climate. An arts-based inquiry, as described by Barone & Eisner (Jaeger, 1988), investigated how imagination is manifested in some art books, how the standards movement has tended to limit imagination in art textbooks, and how art textbooks could expand students' imaginations. Using a framework based on the theories of Dewey (1934/1980), Greene (2001), and Eisner (2002), four art textbooks were analyzed for their qualities which expand students' imaginations. The study described a design for an imaginative art textbook. Analysis focused on the creative process, synthesis and higher level thinking processes, multiple representations of knowledge, and the aesthetic features of the textbooks. Four secondary art textbooks were analyzed, and a sample chapter was presented showing a design for a high school art textbook that was highly imaginative and offered many choices to the student and teacher.

The view of this study was that the art textbook can expand imagination through aesthetic satisfaction, synthesis, and multiple representations of knowledge; and that a textbook can model imaginative graphic design. With this research, I hope to enhance public awareness of imagination in textbooks, especially in art textbooks. Through this

awareness I would like to see more innovative textbooks become available, leading to more imaginative teaching and learning.

INDEX WORDS: Imagination, Art textbooks, Textbooks, Textbook design, Textbook adoption, Art education, Secondary education

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A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF ART TEXTBOOKS

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Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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DEDICATION

To my daughter, Caitlyn, my son, Andrew, and my husband, Robert with love.

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Figure 1-1. Lynda Kerr. *Riverview Park*. 2006. Watercolor and pencil on paper. 11" X 14." Collection of the artist.

SKETCHBOOK: A PROLOGUE

Imagination must be brought to life in contact with a world

(William Ayers, 2004, p. 106).

This inquiry is a lens through which to view art textbooks, and other textbooks as well. On a shelf of textbooks, the art textbook stands out as the most imaginative, stirring wonders in the mind's eye, inspiring sensory experiences, and inciting the expression of the clever, the zany, and the new. Some existing studies of art textbooks have been quantitative, focusing on the number of artworks by women artists in the books (Clark, Folgo, & Pichette, 2005), or on the number of school systems in one state that use art textbooks (Lampela, 1994). Using a qualitative approach, I investigate the influences that tend to force imagination out of art textbooks, how imagination is manifested in some art books, and how art textbooks could expand students' imaginations. The key research question is: *What kind of art textbook creates a landscape in which the student's imagination may expand?* Using a framework constructed from the theories of John Dewey, Maxine Greene, and Elliot Eisner, my inquiry examines how art textbooks can expand the student's imagination through emphasis on the creative process, synthesis, multiple representations of knowledge, and modeling aesthetics.

Arthur Efland (2002) defined imagination as "the act or power of forming mental images of what is not actually present to the senses or what has not actually been experienced. It is also the act or power of creating new ideas or images through the combination and reorganization of previous experiences" (p. 133). Discourse on imagination often explores the relationship of imagery to imagination. This inquiry relies on the premise that imagination creates images. Kosslyn (1994) described three ways the

imagination generates mental images: recalling previously seen objects; combining remembered objects in novel ways; and visualizing novel patterns that are not based on real components (p. 285). Imagination is a vital component of learning. Egan (2005) wrote, “Imagination is the heart of any truly educational experience; it is not something split off from ‘the basics’ or disciplined thought or rational inquiry, but is the quality that can give them life and meaning” (p. 212). Learning without imaginative activities would make school a lifeless experience—more like a prison!—for children.

Books can play a key role in developing imagination, bringing in a myriad of images and ideas. By their design, choice of artworks, organization and syntax of content, and by what is omitted, art textbooks communicate the value society places on imagination and innovation. Art textbooks might expand imagination through aesthetic satisfaction, open-ended learning, and multiple representations of knowledge. In addition, art books teach aesthetics by their design.

Context

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* has created an inhospitable environment for imaginative teaching and learning. Education once aspired to provide tools for thinking and understanding. Now, the major focus of school is teaching children how to pass standardized tests. Except for Iowa, all of the states have standard-setting and testing programs in place. States are forced to replace reflective, authentic assessments with standardized testing and rigid curricula. Knowledge that can be easily measured on a standardized test—the most trivial and determinate concepts—tends to be overemphasized. State mandated textbooks make the problem worse by limiting the materials available to teachers.

In this era of standardization, the outlook for the arts is dim. Media coverage of arts education has painted a dismal picture of the arts. A five-month analysis of media coverage on arts education conducted by the Education Commission of the States (2005) showed the arts were portrayed as lower priority than academic subjects when school budgets were tight. A second major theme in news stories was that the arts were taking time and resources away from the teaching of core classes which students need to pass standardized tests (p. 2). The general climate of standardization in education today pressures schools to spend their resources tightening standards, measuring learning in quantifiable ways, and preparing for testing. Originality and imagination are in danger of withering in a barren landscape of regimentation.

In this barren landscape, teachers and students can still plant the seeds of transformative learning. The unpredictable and indeterminate aspects of curriculum encourage transformative learning of the type valued by He & Phillion (2002), one that features “ambiguity, uncertainty, complexity, one that fosters new ways of thinking, one that values experiential, embodied learning in relationship to self, others, and the world, and one that engenders social change” (p. 4). This inquiry will investigate the kinds of art textbooks that expand imagination through transformative learning.

Focus

In exploring the question, *What kind of art textbook creates a landscape in which the student's imagination may expand?* I used a framework that emphasizes open-ended conceptualizations of learning. My framework draws on the work of John Dewey, Maxine Greene, and Elliot Eisner. In Dewey's definition, imagination is a unifying force. Imagination is, he wrote,

a quality that animates and pervades all processes of making and observation...It is a way of seeing and feeling things as they compose an integral whole. It is the large and generous blending of interests at the point where the mind comes in contact with the world. ..There is always some measure of adventure in the meeting of mind and universe, and this adventure is, in its measure, imagination (1934/1980, p. 267).

In art class, the book is a point of contact for the student's mind with the world. A good art textbook is written in the spirit of "adventure in the meeting of mind and universe." Such a book could communicate the features of an adventure in its lessons: the excitement of beginning, the enjoyment of the process, and the intrigue of not knowing the precise outcome.

No change can happen unless we first imagine it, Greene believed. She defined imagination as "a means through which we can assemble a coherent world...[which] permits us to give credence to alternative realities" (1995, p. 3). Greene acknowledged that the social and economic problems of contemporary life cannot be imagined away. She pointed out that people can become bogged down in their everyday problems and cannot act to bring about change. Imagination begins the process of change by pulling us out of the rut. Like Dewey, Greene saw imagination as a unifying force, but she rejected closed-end purposes for imagination: "The role of imagination is not to resolve, not to point the way, not to improve. It is to awaken, to disclose the ordinarily unseen, unheard, and unexpected" (p. 28).

Eisner maintained that humans formulate understanding through a variety of means, and the forms through which knowledge is represented, are crucially important.

Art textbooks are a representation of knowledge; therefore, Eisner's theories are important to this inquiry. His definition of imagination emphasizes the importance of imagination to the advancement of culture: "The power to imagine is central to our culture's development. It not only provides for cultural development, it provides for own development; because, through culture, our own development occurs" (Eisner, 1998, p. 25-26). Rather than seeking new images, much in education today is concerned with the correct replication of what already exists. Standards, "teacher-proof" materials, and standardized tests provide a false sense of predictability. Eisner called such materials "anti-convivial tools" because they define and limit what people should do. "Convivial tools," on the other hand, expand the options and offer more choices. They do not restrict communication. They "stimulate ingenuity." (2002a, pp. 372-373). Using questions derived from Eisner's work, this inquiry will examine art textbooks as convivial tools that expand students' imaginations.

The work of many other authors supports the inquiry. Among them are Paul Harris, who studied the relationship between reading and imagination; Gianni Rodari, who discussed the role of the teacher in the imaginative classroom; William Ayers, who argued for imagination in curriculum, and Gilbert Clark and Enid Zimmerman, who advocated imaginative teaching for art students.

Methodology

My inquiry will examine the role of the imaginative and the indeterminate in art textbooks. A watercolor of a public park provides a metaphor to guide the reader through the inquiry. In both an imaginative art textbook and in watercolor painting, the process is highlighted. Watercolor is often an unpredictable medium. Pleasure comes from allowing

the colors to flow and blend; surprises may result. Both the park and an imaginative art textbook stimulate aesthetic responses; both are given meaning by the participant; and both offer opportunities for multifaceted, open-ended experiences.

In evaluating art textbooks, I have synthesized a framework of questions that come from the imagination theories of Dewey, Greene, and Eisner. In many ways, their theories overlapped, like the colors in a watercolor. From Dewey's work, the framework emphasizes interaction with the environment: somatic knowledge, sensory experience, and taking time to relish the process. From Greene's work, the framework highlights the value of experimentation and open-ended thought. Eisner's theories provide the focus on multiple perspectives, forms of representation, and synthesis of knowledge. All three valued the use of both formative and summative assessment.

The first criterion for art textbooks, then, is: *How does the book expand imagination through enjoyment of the creative process?* This theory comes alive in the books by the encouragement of experimentation, the valuation of process as much as product. Dewey (1934/1980) defended the process of expression. Emotion and material combine to create art. As Dewey wrote: "To be set on fire by a thought or scene is to be inspired. What is kindled must either burn itself out, turning to ashes, or must press itself out in material that changes the latter from crude material into a refined product" (p. 65). Process was further valued in extensions of the artwork and delayed closure of the project. Pre-determined answers close off inquiry too soon, stunting the imaginative opportunities. So, too, does a rush to produce an art product. Efficient production is the goal of factories, not artists. In an imaginative textbook, the process will be as important as the product. Greene (2001) described the value of the process: "Like the artists, we are

always in process, always exploring our texts, our raw materials, always seeking ways of reaching others and moving others to come alive, to think about their thinking, to create meanings, to transform their lived worlds” (p. 70).

Eisner believed the arts encourage improvisation. “Problem solving objectives are objectives in which the criteria to be met are specified, but the form the solution is to take is not” (Eisner, 2002b, p. 160). Open-ended, emergent learning is highly valued in the arts. Therefore, the second criterion is: *How does the book expand imagination through synthesis?* In the books this will show up in the form of open-ended questions, higher level thinking activities, and writing projects that deepen understanding of art. Eisner described the importance of being “flexibly purposive” in arts work. In his view, “artistic activity is opportunistic. When new openings emerge, they are exploited.” Goals may shift during the process; an inquiry process is underway; “individuals are immersed in tasks in which they are trying to bring something to a resolution but who are not rigidly pinned to aims that initiated the inquiry” (p. 206). Writing activities in art textbooks are opportunities to go beyond listing and labeling. As Greene (1995) wrote, “It is never enough to simply to label, categorize, or recognize certain phenomena or events. There has to be a live, aware, reflective transaction if what presents itself to consciousness is to be realized” (p. 30). Writing in an art textbook is an opportunity to lead to deepening the student’s understanding of art.

Eisner’s work encompasses all of the criteria, but he clearly expressed the need for schools to promote multiple solutions, and teach many ways of representing knowledge. “The meaning that representation carries is both constrained and made possible by the form of representation we employ. Not everything can be ‘said’ with

anything” (1998, p. 121). Therefore the third criteria for examining art textbooks is: *How does the book expand imagination through multiple representations of knowledge?*

Dewey explained that, in assessing knowledge of the arts, the goal is not to measure or make comparisons, but to promote inquiry. For this, criteria are more suitable than standards:

Criteria are not rules or prescriptions. They are the result of an endeavor to find out what a work of art is as an experience: the kind of experience which constitutes it... [B]etter criteria are to be set forth by an improved examination of the nature of works of art in general as a mode of human experience. (p. 309)

Eisner (2002b) elaborated that the function of criteria is “to deepen experience with the individual work: What is this work as a work of art? What are its qualities? What are its features? How does it ‘feel’? ...What do I do to promote further growth?” (p. 170).

The art book will meet the criterion well if it encourages multiple solutions and open-ended assessments based upon inquiry rather than standards.

Art textbooks are teaching aesthetic beliefs and principles not only by their content but by the way they model design. So the fourth criterion for judging art textbooks is *How does the book expand imagination by teaching aesthetic principles?*

Eisner believed the way something is formed matters. If form matters, then the design of a page is important to learning. The design of the book has a bearing on its instructional utility. The book’s design performs four functions that influence learning: (1) it captures attention; (2) it communicates concepts; (3) it sparks imagination by showing alternative solutions; and (4) it invites participation. In examining art textbooks, I have applied these four criteria not only to the books, but also to my analysis. The criteria allow multiple

perspectives. The books can, and often do, meet the criteria through process and experimentation, open-ended activities, use of more than one solution, and modeling imaginative design.

In the scenery of art textbooks, I have brought four books to the foreground where we may examine the details and put them into perspective. Three of the books stand out for their ways of engaging students' imaginations. They are: *Arttalk* (Ragans, 2005), a basic level high school text published by Glencoe McGraw-Hill; *Art: Of Wonder and a World* (Morman, 1978), a middle school text published by Art Education, Inc.; and *Launching the Imagination* (Stewart, 2006), a high school text used in advanced placement art classes, published by McGraw-Hill. *Arttalk* balances art history, basic aesthetic concepts, and studio activities. The concepts are illustrated by artworks from many cultures, as well as many women artists. The book clearly explains many basic art techniques and media. *Arttalk* is a solid foundation for high school students beginning the study of art. *Art: Of Wonder and a World* stands out for its open-ended, imaginative activities and outlook. In *Launching the Imagination* the author created a structure for students to use their imaginations to extend their own artworks. A wide variety of creative works are included in the term "art." These authors have shown us many ways an art textbook can leave the beaten path and venture into the indeterminate and the imaginative.

A fourth book adds contrast with a more pedestrian approach to art education. *Art* (Turner, 2005), a middle school text published by Scott Foresman, represents missed opportunities for imaginative learning. *Arttalk*, *Launching the Imagination*, and *Art* are currently in use in schools, so it is appropriate to study them. *Art: Of Wonder and a*

World is no longer on the market. It is, however, one of the most imaginative and aesthetically stimulating of all of the textbooks I have studied. I believe it has much to teach us about the future design of art textbooks.

In my inquiry I have applied each of the four criteria to the books in the following order: *Arttalk*, *Art*, *Art: Of Wonder & A World*, and *Launching the Imagination*. My reasoning for examining the books in this order follows. *Arttalk* is first because it is a basic, all-purpose book used in the first year of high school. The book covers art history, aesthetics, artmaking, and art criticism clearly, and is therefore a good basis for comparisons to the other books. *Art* represents a missed opportunity for a similar basic book, and is therefore placed second. *Art: Of Wonder & A World* is very imaginative and at the far end of the scale in open-ended activities, and so is placed third to highlight the contrast with the newer books. *Launching the Imagination* takes a specialized approach to imagination in its extensions to projects, so it is placed last. For each criterion I have described one or more representative examples from the books. Throughout the analysis I look for the open-ended and indeterminate learning opportunities provided by the books. “A sure thing does not arouse us emotionally,” Dewey wrote (p. 66). Closed-end learning activities, similarly, are not likely to expand imagination. My evaluation of each book is based upon its ability to create a landscape in which the young artist’s imagination can expand, explore, and have a new experience each time the book is used.

The qualitative researcher locates herself in the study by bringing to it a set of understandings developed from her own experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p.10). My experiences as an art educator, a graphic designer, and a contributing writer in art textbooks help me to bring out the less obvious aspects of imagination in art books. Tom

Barone and Elliot Eisner (Jaeger, 1988) defined arts-based research as featuring “certain aesthetic qualities or design elements that infuse the inquiry and its writing” (p. 73). I use aesthetic qualities and design elements to describe my experiences and to guide the analysis of the art textbooks. One such quality is *the creation of a virtual reality*. My inquiry is based on the metaphor of a watercolor in a public park. Descriptions of the park’s features—playgrounds, wildflowers, park benches, fountains, meadows—introduce content on imagination and art textbooks. As a landscape painter, I feel keenly the “personality” of the place I am painting. The sounds, the smells, the air movement and temperature, the weight of the brush in my hand, the colors on the paper, as well as the sights in front of me all blend into a synesthetic experience in *plein air* painting. In the inquiry I use words and paintings to communicate the experience. A watercolor landscape makes an appropriate metaphor for exploring imagination in art textbooks. Rather than looking only at the surface, the viewer is invited to probe the details, and then to step back and see the big picture. By examining the parts of an art textbook, the viewer can go beyond surface impressions to notice details that make an imaginative book.

Another aesthetic quality is *the use of expressive language* that calls on the reader’s “imaginative faculties,” in which “the reader is brought to experience certain qualities within the setting” (Jaeger, 1988, pp. 75-76). The use of contextualized and vernacular language “grounds the writing in particular context so that the complexities adhering to a unique event, character, and/or setting may be adequately rendered” (Jaeger, 1988, p. 76). When I told the stories of my experiences in Illinois and Indiana, I used Midwestern colloquial language. In my narrative I described incidents in which I encountered anti-imagination currents. My K-12 years were spent in school environments

that overtly stifled art and imagination. When I was a beginning teacher in the early seventies, my geographic location brought me into contact with a cultural pocket that disapproved of teaching imagination. The challenge continues today as the standards movement in U.S. public education threatens the existence of the arts in the curriculum and smothers imagination in textbooks. As chair of the Fine Arts Department in a large suburban high school, I find myself too often defending open-ended, imaginative learning against the forces in education that would close down inquiry and limit every assessment to “one right answer.” I described my experiences through stories, that are, as Barone and Eisner conveyed, “accessible to nonresearcher readers (or ‘onlookers’) who can easily participate in making meaning from the text” (Jaeger, 1988, p. 77).

Finally, arts-based inquiry bears *the personal signature* of the researcher/writer. The author’s thesis “serves as a mediator for choosing what to include or exclude from the text” (Jaeger, 1988, p. 78). My inquiry developed out of a strong belief that imagination belongs in school, and that art textbooks are catalysts for expanding imagination. My careers in graphic design and art education, coupled with the experience of placing my teaching under the microscope of National Board Certification, enabled me to view an art textbook through a unique lens. Working for sixteen years in health care advertising design taught me that graphic design is not impersonal, but is communication among people. Further, I believe the design of a page is important to learning. A page design is always in process; the viewer may always mediate it, change it, or add to it. So, too, an arts-based inquiry is in process. Barone and Eisner noted that a literary thesis is “a personal statement arising out of the negotiations between an author and the phenomena under scrutiny, [therefore] no two will ever be quite the same” (Jaeger, 1988, p. 78).

Landscapes of Imagination: A Critical Analysis of Art Textbooks offers one perspective on imagination and art textbooks; it may be an impetus for far-reaching conversations about imagination in education.

I hope my inquiry will find an audience among teachers, artists, administrators, teacher educators, authors, parents, publishers, curriculum researchers, and policymakers. This inquiry encourages each of you to remember how you perceived the world when you were a young, highly imaginative human being; to understand how imagination and innovation are important to the future of America's children; and to value imagination in your own work today.

Overview of the Chapters

This inquiry consists of a prologue, seven chapters, and an epilogue. Throughout the book, images of the park and the process of painting it carry the reader along through an examination of imagination, forces that shape imagination in art textbooks, and the design of art textbooks.

Chapter 1 is a sketchbook showing the scenes I passed through on the way to becoming an art teacher. Pivotal experiences formed the way I view imagination, teaching, and art textbooks. This chapter also sketches the landscape in which art textbooks work. The social and cultural contexts of imagination affect the art textbook's impact on students. The students sitting in front of us today will be likely to pursue careers in fields where imagination is integral to the job. Unlike previous generations, our students—and their imaginations—are influenced by television, computers, and electronic games. The political and economic atmosphere in which art textbooks are developed influence the imaginative qualities of the book.

Chapter 2 is a historical review of art textbooks, with emphasis on how they regarded imagination, from 1895 to the present. In this chapter I trace the purposes of the textbooks from preparing students for careers, to developing appreciation for beauty, to self-expression, to promoting academic subjects.

An autobiographical sketch showing how I came to study imagination opens chapter 3. This chapter outlines the cognitive process of imagination and explains theories of imagination developed from the work of John Dewey, Maxine Greene, and Elliot Eisner.

The process of textbook adoption and its impact upon the design of art textbooks is the focus of chapter 4. The necessity of meeting the requirements of the large adoption states has caused publishers to produce books that are uniform and shallow in coverage, making them less imaginative.

Another force that tends to force imagination out of art textbooks is the current focus on standards in education. Chapter 5 examines the trend toward quantitative education, testing, and the increase in non-art activities that show up in art textbooks as a result of the standards movement.

In chapter 6 I use a framework synthesized from the theories of Dewey, Greene, and Eisner to look at how the books expand imagination through aesthetic satisfaction (valuation of the process as well as the product); through synthesis (higher level thinking; being “flexibly purposive” in our work); and through promoting multiple perspectives (teaching children that solutions need not be identical; language and quantification are not the only means of representing human understanding). Art textbooks teach aesthetics through their appearance, and can, therefore, expand imagination by their design.

The theories and analyses in this book are synthesized in Chapter 7, where I describe what I advocate in secondary art textbooks. Such a book includes images and words that start discussions or inspire artworks. Activities can be used over and over, but with different results each time. An imaginative art textbook has multiple openings for students to express their life experiences through art forms. The student's personal signature is valued; the process of discovering ways to communicate one's experience in many ways is important. An imaginative art textbook goes beyond listing and describing art careers. Hands-on lessons give students a glimpse of thought processes used in art careers. An imaginative art textbook, rather than "telling the answers," opens the door and asks questions that lead to thoughtful explorations.

The epilogue puts the inquiry into a perspective. The current educational environment presents many challenges to the arts. The media often portrays the arts as lower priority than academic subjects, or indicates the arts sap time and resources from the teaching of core classes which students need to pass standardized tests. In the epilogue, I discuss what I learned about the future of textbooks, and possibilities for art textbooks to become more imaginative. Reasons why it is important to educate the imagination of students through the arts are discussed. I present some paths for possible future research. Although the current picture looks dim for the arts in some ways, there are reasons to be hopeful. Just as the park changes from season to season, so, too, can the landscape of curriculum.

CHAPTER 1

A PANORAMIC VIEW:

CONTEXTS AND OVERVIEW

A painting is never finished. It simply stops in interesting places
(Paul Gardner in Hume, 1998, p. 104).

Imagine a landscape that has elements of adventure in it; that allows a child freedom to create and control the sequence of events, and builds a child's confidence. When I was a little girl, my playground was hundreds of acres of woods and fields along the banks of the Mississippi River in west central Illinois. The sky there is a big blue bowl in the summer; the fields are flat and wide. Only the most determined can farm there, though, because every few years the Mississippi tries to reclaim the fertile bottom land. To hold back the river, humans build a long embankment of sand and dense soil called a levee. The landscape provided a rich environment for our imaginations. Our sandbox was the rich black humus at the edge of my mother and father's soybean fields, where my brothers and sisters and I built roads for our toy trucks. We sketched elaborate treasure maps of the woods, staining the paper with tea bags to make it look like old parchment. From my mom's castoff cocktail dress I fashioned a sparkling red cape. I wore it flying behind me as I cantered my horse across the fields, imagining myself a daring knight or a regal queen, depending on my mood. My brother and I drew plans and built a tree house in a tall cottonwood tree. From that vantage point, we could see far down the levee along the river. I imagined the levee to be a chain of mountains, and I was the cowgirl who owned the ranch that stretched as far as the eye could see.

An art textbook could be like such a landscape, providing adventure, enjoyment of imagination, and many paths to learning. Freedom to explore a variety of spaces allows the student's imagination to expand. In this inquiry, a watercolor of a public park provides a metaphor to guide the reader through the study of art textbooks. A park is a place where the human-made world and the natural world overlap. In a park, we might enjoy both a fountain and a creek. A park may feature both manicured flower beds and a field of wildflowers. Perhaps that is why parks attract artists—they love the interplay of determinate and indeterminate areas. This inquiry will examine the role of the imaginative and the indeterminate in art textbooks. A watercolor of a park is an appropriate metaphor for an art textbook. A watercolor, a park, and an art textbook may all stimulate aesthetic responses; all three can be given meaning by the participant; and all may offer opportunities for multifaceted, open-ended experiences.

Two childhood events were milestones on my road to becoming a student of imagination and art textbooks. In one, I was shamed for using my imagination; in the other, I was lifted up and propelled on my way. At home, we enjoyed plenty of time and space for imagination. I walked through the school doors with a burning desire to learn to write and draw, ready to express my imagination in new forms. My brand new parochial school opened in 1957, but it was already overcrowded. I started school in a first grade classroom with fifty-five other boys and girls. Our teacher, Sister Mary Bernadette, also served as the principal of the school. I was an enthusiastic student and a fast learner. I worked hard to finish my worksheets accurately every day. Sister Bernadette told us that if we finished our arithmetic worksheet and did well, we could draw a picture on the back of it. How exciting! I had a brilliant idea in mind for a Halloween picture of a witch

flying on her broom! So I finished my arithmetic with care and showed Sister Bernadette. She gave me another worksheet to do. I finished that one and brought it to her. I asked about drawing the picture. She said, "Finish your work and we'll see." October wore on. Day after day, the reward for a good worksheet was another worksheet. First grade stretched out ahead, a prison sentence of a hundred miles of white worksheets, endlessly expanding into the distance.

The wonderful witch in my imagination wasn't going to wait forever to make her debut on paper. She was alive and itching to become real. So one morning I flipped worksheet number one hundred and eighty-seven over, and letting the math problems go to the devil, I pulled out my crayons and began my Halloween masterpiece. I was deeply "in the zone" coloring the black witch's hat when Sister Bernadette spied my enterprise. She demanded I bring the drawing to her desk. In front of the class she called me "a lazy worker" and berated me for "*wasting time drawing*" when I should have been doing my arithmetic. I thought it couldn't have gotten any worse, when the door opened. In walked Sister Mary Jerome, my favorite nun, who taught eighth grade and whom I considered my friend on the playground. Sister Bernadette pointed at me, saying, "Look at this, Sister Jerome! This is a lazy worker!" and waved my artwork in front of Sister Jerome as if it were a rotten banana. Sister Jerome looked sorrowful, but said nothing. My mouth went dry. I felt one inch tall. Sister Bernadette crumpled up my witch and threw her into the waste basket. Then she hissed to Sister Jerome, "It's because her mother isn't Catholic!" Turning to me, Sister Bernadette blurted out, "*Your mother isn't going to heaven* because she isn't Catholic!" I was left standing there, my humiliation turning to abject horror. Now I had a problem bigger than worksheets and witches. After two

months of brainwashing, I fully believed all the nuns had taught about heaven and hell. I was in total shock. Somehow I made it through the rest of the day like a robot, finally falling into bed and crying myself to sleep. I knew my mother was a good person, but how could nuns lie? I couldn't reconcile these conflicting ideas. Normally, I would have asked my mother, but not this time. I just couldn't tell her she wasn't going to heaven! I was worried sick. Many nights later as I was lying in bed sobbing about it, my mother came in and asked me what was wrong. I burst into more tears and told her everything. First, she surprised me by chuckling about "not going to heaven." Then she calmly said, "Listen, Lynda, the nuns mean well; but remember, adults are very often wrong." That was a thought so revolutionary it stopped my tears instantly. I lay awake pondering it for a long time. After that incident, my mom and dad talked with me about questioning everything. My parents taught me to question authority; to read; and to examine what is happening under the surface of things, like the roots of the soybean plants are at work under the soil. *Investigate*, they said. I looked at the way my parents operated their farm and their positions as leaders in the community. Then, as now, they were bibliophiles, reading voraciously on a wide range of subjects. They are both curious, constantly learning and delving into *why?*, whether the topic is poetry, agronomy, history, or the levee commissioner election. From that day forward I learned to be a critical thinker, not from my schooling, but from my parents' words and example.

A public park was the scene of the second milestone. The memory is one of my happiest because, years later, when I declared myself a landscape artist, this was where the seed was planted. The summer I was nine years old, my mother enrolled me in a weekly art class which met in town at Riverview Park. The two women artists who taught

the class focused on landscape drawing and painting techniques. This was very exciting for several reasons. My mom bought me real artist's supplies for the class—my introduction to high quality papers, chalk pastels, brushes, and watercolors. The kindly instructors suggested ways to experiment with these treasures. There were other serious artists my own age with which I could discuss weighty aesthetic issues. We wrestled with such monumental questions as whether to include an ugly smokestack in our landscapes just because it was there, or whether an artist had license to create her own realities on the page.

My imagination was further stimulated by the landscape in which the class took place. To me, the park was an intriguing environment. It had many of the features of my woods and fields at home, only tamed and miniaturized. In many ways, it was like a small city. The swing set and jungle gym became buildings. The pavilion was city hall. The flower beds were miniature parks for the city. The sidewalks were roads. Kids on bikes were traffic. Bordering the developed area, there was a grove of trees with a path leading to a creek. The woods held all kinds of possibilities, from an enchanted forest to Paul Bunyan's stomping ground. After the class ended, my mother took me to the public library where I checked out art books from the adult shelves. Library books became my teachers for art history and techniques; even more, they were powerful stimuli for my imagination. In parochial school, the lower grades offered me only meager art experiences, mostly consisting of coercion to color inside the lines. In the upper grades, art had disappeared from the curriculum. When I entered the public high school, I found a desiccated art program and an apathetic art teacher. Clearly, school was not going to be the source for my art education, so art books were my lifeline.

My experiences reveal how important art books can be to students. Even children in good art programs benefit from the stimulation and breadth of ideas that books can bring into their world. Art textbooks work in a landscape of educational and social forces. In this inquiry of art textbooks, the context acts as the background in a painting, showing us the location of the information in the larger education picture. The next sections provide sketches of the social, cultural, economic, and political contexts in which art textbooks work. The social context reviews the value placed upon imagination in the workplace, and why we need to expand our students' imaginations with a view to the future. The cultural context explores how electronic media may be narrowing students' imaginations, and their potential for widening imagination. The last two contexts survey the political and economic forces that narrow imagination in textbook design.

A Social Context: Imagination in the Workplace

General Electric Corporation ran a seven-page gatefold advertising spread in a recent issue of *Time* magazine entitled, "Here's to letting your imagination run wild" The spread featured seven innovative men and women working in scientific fields whose imaginative solutions have helped repair environmental problems. The layout began and ended with General Electric's current slogan, "Imagination at work." (General Electric Corporation, 2005, pp. 60). Economist Richard Florida has identified a new type of worker (Florida, 2002, p. 328). Dubbed "the creative class," they are working in fields where imagination is a major component of the job. At the core are people whose economic function is to create new ideas, new technology, or new creative content: those in computer and mathematical occupations; engineering; architecture; life sciences, physical sciences, social sciences; education, training, and library occupations; arts,

design, entertainment, and media occupations. Around the core group is a broader group of creative professionals in business and financial operations; management and legal occupations; health care practitioners and technical occupations; and high-end sales and sales management.

High levels of problem-solving, independent judgment and creativity are required in the daily work of these people. As a group, they have in common a creative culture that values freedom, diversity, and open-ended thinking (Florida, 2002, p. 79).

According to Florida, “Those in the Working Class and the Service Class are paid primarily to execute according to plan, while those in the Creative Class are primarily paid to create and have considerably more autonomy and flexibility than the other two classes to do so” (p. 8). Imagination and innovation are the stock in trade of these workers.

Imaginative play is paying off for some very successful companies. At Google’s corporate headquarters in Mountain View, California, employees take breaks to play with high tech toys (Ignatius, 2006, pp. 42-43). Google executives brainstorm during meetings while building with Lego bricks on the conference table (Ignatius, 2006, p.40). Google’s business plan specifies that employees are to spend 10% of their time developing “far-out ideas” (Ignatius, 2006, p.44). The investment in creativity yields innovations like search applications for cell phones and Google Earth, the company’s satellite photo imagery program.

Careers requiring imagination are expected to increase in the future. The creative class now makes up 30 percent of the entire U. S. workforce, or roughly 38.3 million Americans (Florida, 2002, p. 74). From 1900 until the 1950s, the creative class

comprised just 10 percent of the U.S. workforce. During the 1950s it began to increase slowly, holding steady at around 20 percent through the 1980s. Since the 1980s the creative class has flourished, increasing from 25 percent of the working population in 1991 to 30 percent by 1999 (Florida, 2002, p. 74). Creative workers now outnumber those in the traditional working class (in the manufacturing, construction, and transportation industries) (Florida, 2002, p. 9). The Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook forecasts significant growth for occupations in the creative categories for 2004-2014:

Professional and business services: 28%.

Employment in scientific and technical jobs: 28%.

Computer systems design and related services: 39%

Education and health care careers: 30%.

Arts and entertainment occupations: 25%. (Bureau of Labor Statistics

Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2006)

As the population grows, demand for education, health care, and entertainment will drive the increases in these creative professions.

Even if our students do not pursue a career among the creative professions, they will still need imagination, because imagination is not limited to one group of workers. In my parents' generation, there were more big companies to provide careers that lasted throughout their working lives. Now, many workers face times when they will, by necessity, have to create new occupations by combining several skills, or by launching businesses. Entrepreneurs must be innovative and flexible thinkers to survive.

Furthermore, the creative power of all workers must be utilized. Florida (2002, p. 10 and

p. 318) pointed out that factory workers and service workers at every level have always been creative in valuable ways within the parameters of their jobs. He cited trends like continuous improvement programs which tap into the creativity of front line workers in the service and manufacturing sectors.

Florida emphasized that creativity “has to be constantly fermented and reproduced in the firms, places, and societies that use it” (Florida, 2002, p. 318). One of the first places that creativity could be cultivated is school. Imaginative expression requires both visual and verbal dexterity. “The work force increasingly relies on the marriage of images and text,” noted Hollis Rudiger of the The Cooperative Children’s Book Center at the University of Wisconsin. “Internet information is entirely image and text” (“Graphic-Novel Idea”, 2006, p. 9). In 2006, most careers require proficiency with electronic media. The ability to express imaginative ideas using images and words is a key to economic advancement. More importantly, integrating imagination into our work is a way of increasing the richness and satisfaction of life.

A Cultural Context: Imagination and the Electronic Media Culture

Children around the world spend an average of three hours a day watching television, according to a study conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (Groebel, 1998). The major issues addressed by the study were the role of the media, especially that of television, in the lives of children; and issues relating to children and media violence. 5,000 twelve-year-old students in twenty-three countries participated in the study, which was the largest intercultural study ever to examine media violence. Participating countries were Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Egypt, Fiji, Germany, India, Japan,

Mauritius, the Netherlands, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, South Africa, Spain, Tajikistan, Togo, Trinidad & Tobago, and Ukraine. The UNESCO study revealed 93 percent of the world's children have access to a television. Nations in the North-Western hemisphere showed the highest access rate at 99 percent, and the African countries the lowest with 83 percent (Groebel, 1998). Adolescents in 2006 have grown up in a culture permeated by television, computers, and video games. How have electronic media influenced the imaginations of today's students?

In the 1980s Dorothy G. Singer and Jerome L. Singer conducted a series of studies, including a longitudinal study, at Yale University on the effects of television on the imaginations of preschool children (2005, p. 67). They measured imagination using several methods, including recording the children's answers to questions about kinds of play they preferred, observing the children at play, categorizing the types of play in which they engaged during free time in the classroom, and analyzing their drawings. The researchers also interviewed their parents about the family environment, including the children's television viewing habits. The Singers found that children who watched more than three hours of TV a day were less imaginative than children who watched one hour or less per day. They also found that the highly imaginative children watched more programs on the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) and had parents who encouraged imaginative play. The children who showed less imagination tended to watch more programs with action, adventure, and violent cartoons. The parents of the less imaginative children exerted less control over their children's television viewing habits.

Van Der Voort and Valkenburg (1994, p. 27) reviewed theories of imaginative play that indicate its value in the child's cognitive and social development. They found

that children who exhibit imagination in their play are better able to concentrate, more empathetic, and able to consider a subject from several perspectives. In addition, imaginative children are happier, more self-assured, more flexible in new situations, and more creative in the long term. Van Der Voort & Valkenburg identified contradictory views of the effects of television on imagination. In one view, television promotes imaginative play. In the other view, television hindered imagination.

In the first theory, which Van Der Voort and Valkenburg call the *stimulation hypothesis*, television stimulates imaginative play by providing a source of ideas for children's fantasies (Van Der Voort & Valkenburg, 1994, p. 28). A study of children aged eight to ten from Germany, Israel, South Korea, and the United States (Gotz, Lemish, Aidman, & Moon, 2003, <http://www.mediaculture-online.de>) supported the stimulation hypothesis. The study evaluated children's play fantasies and found that television contributed considerable material to the content. The researchers compared the children's fantasies of nature, animals, travel, supernatural powers, and other features of their pretend worlds. All of the boys and girls included conflict and fighting related to TV stories. Boys most often mentioned using magical powers to defeat their enemies. The children selected content from the televised stories and incorporated it into their play, along with elements from computer games and documentary films. Media narratives had supplanted the children's own imaginative elements in parts of their fantasy play.

In the opposing view, one with a larger following, television hinders imagination. This view is called *reduction hypothesis* (Van Der Voort & Valkenburg, 1994, pp. 28-29). Van Der Voort and Valkenburg described five types of reduction hypotheses. *Displacement hypothesis* argues that imagination is reduced by time spent watching TV,

a portion of which would have been spent in fantasy play. *Passivity hypothesis* contends that television requires so little mental effort that children become passive viewers, unwilling to use their imaginations. *Rapid pacing hypothesis* concludes that TV presents images so quickly that children have no time to process information or reflect on content. This leads to impulsive thinking and shortened attention spans, which reduces the likelihood of imaginative play. *Arousal hypothesis* attributes hyperactive and impulsive behavior not to the fast pace, but to action-oriented and violent program content. Finally, *anxiety hypothesis* argues that violent programs hinder imagination by producing anxiety, which leads to regressive behavior expressed as a reduction in imaginative play.

Valkenburg and Van Der Voort (1994, p. 326) reviewed several studies of children 10 to 16 years old. They found that children who were heavy TV viewers scored less well on divergent thinking tests, and were also rated as less creative by their teachers. In one of these studies, a village in Western Canada lay, for quite some time, outside of the television broadcast reception area. When television finally became available, researchers had an unusual opportunity to observe the effects of the introduction of television on a community. Television brought a number of life style changes to the adults and children of the village, including a reduction in outdoor physical activities and social interaction. Among the children, television had an adverse effect on creativity as measured by a verbal test.

In a West Australian study (Peterson, Peterson, & Carroll, 1986, p. 61), children were tested on their imaginative problem solving ability and the results compared to their weekly television viewing habits. Heavy viewers, who watched 50 or more hours a week, scored lower on the tests than light or moderate viewers. Surveyed on their attitudes

toward imagination, all of the school-age children held overwhelmingly positive attitudes toward imagination regardless of their viewing habits. Peterson, Peterson, and Carroll cautioned that the correlational nature of their data cannot conclusively prove that television viewing stunts imagination. It is possible, they warned, that children who are inherently deficient in imagination may become heavy TV viewers. They also suggested that television viewing may cause imagination to atrophy. Television provides more sensory stimuli than other media, and may therefore cause imaginative abilities to deteriorate from disuse (p. 66). This theory echoes the passivity hypothesis described by Van Der Voort and Valkenburg.

Singer and Singer asserted that, in countries where the government subsidizes educational programming for children such as Public Broadcasting System in the United States, the quality of children's television tends to be higher (2005, p. 76). In the United States, for example, the 1990 Children's Television Act required networks to broadcast a minimum of three hours per week of educational programming for children up to sixteen years of age. (p. 74). Many European countries broadcast educational programs similar to those on Public Broadcasting channels in the United States. Japan's Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK) televises eight programs to preschools and kindergartens (p. 76). In studies of children's programming, Van Der Voort and Valkenburg (1994, pp. 39-40) reported that "benign" programs such as nonviolent puppet films and *Sesame Street* did not affect fantasy play. Programs designed to promote imaginative play, such as *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood*, did increase fantasy play.

The television is on in homes all over the world, and the glow from its screen has the power to narrow or expand children's imaginations. The problem is not the

technology, however, but the quantity of viewing and the content (Singer, D. & Singer, J., 2005, p. 82). Television can bring us information about other people, places, cultures, and times. It can teach us about science, nature, and the universe. As Singer and Singer (p. 82) pointed out, if television is used in moderation, and combined with family discussions, reading, and critical thinking curricula, it can be a rich source of inspiration for imagination. Television has helped to teach students about the visual arts. Today's students know through television that

art has the power to convince, persuade, seduce, make what is fiction seem to be fact, and to make reality appear unreal...its images can collapse time and space, may be recycled from other media, and are enhanced toward some view of perfection. (Freedman, 2003, p. 143)

Television has a pervasive and powerful impact on the daily life of students. With guidance its influence might be used to expand the student's imagination.

The television set is not the only cathode ray tube casting its glow upon our students' faces for several hours each day. For both academic work and leisure pursuits, most adolescents include computer time as a part of their daily life. According to the Pew Internet & American Life Project (Lenhart, Madden, & Hitlin, 2005), 84% of American teens aged 12 to 17 own at least one media device: a desktop or laptop computer, cell phone, or personal digital assistant (PDA). 44% own two or more of these devices. Only 16% reported that they did not own any of these devices at all. 87% of all teens use the internet, and 51% of teenage internet users report that they go online daily. Hispanic teens were slightly more likely to use the internet at 89%, and African American teens

were less likely, with 77% using the internet. Instant messaging is popular, with 75% of teens using it.

Hours spent communicating with friends and finding information online present benefits, but also deprive adolescents of vital experiences. Computers can provide visual and auditory stimulation, but without the other sensory stimuli, the transactions are incomplete. The body is the basic aesthetic form, shaping our sense of reality through somatic knowledge. Dissanayake (1995, p. 166) speculated our aesthetic ideas about balance may have originated from our experience with the composition and proportion of the human form: the symmetry of eyes, ears, arms, breasts, and legs; the centeredness of the nose, mouth, and genitals. Singer and Singer (2005, p. 113) pointed out the importance of hands-on, sensory experiences as a counterbalance to children's fantasy worlds of stories and television. Although computers can be creative tools, they cannot replace the somatic knowledge gained through hands-on experiences and the resulting benefits to the imagination. Dorothy and Jerome Singer (2005, p. 113) asserted that touching, tasting, and exploring the environment, reflecting on the perceptions, storing and retrieving the information are all "critical processes for the richness and intensity of our memory system upon which imagination, whether in its retrospective, playful, or planful phases is drawn." The virtual world cannot teach a child to be competent—and confident—in the physical world. Neurologist Frank Wilson (1998, p. 309) argued that a computer cannot prepare children's minds for the demands of life. In *The Hand* Wilson discussed the importance of the sense of touch upon brain development. Wilson cautioned that we cannot

skip the “pointless” experiences of childhood during which they find out what a baseball, or a puppet, or a toy car, or swing can do to their body or vice versa. We have no idea what will happen to the child who watches eye-catching imitations of juggling over the internet if that child never gets around to trying a three-ball toss.

Elliot Eisner expressed the experience of creating in the arts as somatic knowledge. Artistic judgments depend on feel: “The body is engaged, the source of information is visceral, the sensibilities are employed to secure experience that makes it possible to render a judgment and to act upon it” (Eisner, 2002b, p. 201). Students who participate in this type of creation reap some of life’s most satisfying intrinsic rewards. The imagination and its attendant aesthetic experiences are not complete without the full sensory stimulation that comes with creating in the physical world. Creating on the computer is one type of creative experience, but it is a type that uses the senses in a limited way. In the late 1980s I was working in the graphic design industry when computers revolutionized the field. The most frustrating part of learning to use the computer was not the graphics programs, but the fact that suddenly I could not manipulate the work with my fingers. No longer could I pick up a strip of type and move it, feeling the weight of its waxed edges and judging the exact location by sight and “gut feeling.” One of the satisfactions of the design experience was gone forever when placing a headline became virtual rather than visceral.

Used in moderation, however, computers can be powerful creative tools, stimulating the imagination in new ways. When we examine an artwork, play a computer game, or watch a movie, commented art educator Kerry Freedman, we

engage with the creators as we seek to understand their creation while we create our own images and stories at their suggestion. Interacting with a visually complex computer game can be a powerful experience because it is suggestive of many possible stories and new images that spin away from the screen the player sees. (Freedman, 2003, p. 132)

Teens are using the internet creatively to express their ideas and display them for public view. Of teens who use the internet, 57% can be considered, in Lenhart and Madden's term, "Content Creators." They have created a blog or webpage, posted original artwork, photography, stories or videos online or remixed online content into their own new creations (Lenhart & Madden, 2005). Students using computers have been empowered imaginatively and communicate that their personal signature is important.

Computers have increasingly enabled teens to control the kinds of images they see on the monitor, even in video games. In an East Palo Alto, California, Boys and Girls Clubhouse, twelve-year-old Neilash Bhartu plays a video game in which he fires on floating skulls and corrupt soldiers (Nguyen, 2005, p.1). Violence in video games is sparking hot debate in the industry these days, but Neilash did not purchase the game he's playing. He designed it himself. At the Boys and Girls Clubhouse, technology director Alex Yamamoto teaches computer skills and imaginative design to boys and girls from impoverished homes. Yamamoto allows the kids to play store-bought games for research one night a week, but bans games with extreme street violence like "Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas." He believes promoting creativity is more important than eliminating all violence from the games. Creating a game and playing it, even one with some violence, is a learning experience, Yamamoto asserted.

The connection between media violence, imagination, and behavior has been studied for decades. Calvert, Jordan and Cocking (2002, p. 104) stated that children learn how to react to social events by observing real ones and by seeing them in the media. Children also learn “how to aggress, when to aggress, and the expected consequences of aggressing from media sources.” Representatives of the entertainment industry have often argued that watching violent movies or video games provides a catharsis for aggressive urges. Singer and Singer (2005, p. 94) pointed to a large body of social science research that does not support that claim. Rather than having a releasing effect, watching violence increases the likelihood that a child or an adult will commit an act of aggression. Singer and Singer assert that this fits in with the way our imagination organizes situations, “playing and replaying scenes so that these gradually are formed into schemas and scripts, those organized belief systems about how one deals with frustrations, denigrations, or insults” (p. 94). The range of responses becomes increasingly limited, until the imagination reproduces only the scenes of physical attack or violent revenge as methods of problem resolution. Violent video games focus the viewer’s imagination on physical attack as a way to resolve conflict. The game objective is to react quickly within the limited context provided by the game’s designer, which essentially trains the player to act without consideration of consequences or exploration of the context (p. 99). Further, the Singers warned of the numbing effects of incomplete experience:

Looking and listening alone without other sensory involvements can be misleading guides to action. The many physical attacks a child witnesses on television or in playing violent video games without the feel or smell or agonies of real violence can lead to desensitization. (Singer, D. & Singer, J., 2005, p. 113)

Other researchers point to U.S. military training experience that suggested the use of violent computer games made soldiers more willing to kill and less responsive to the suffering of victims (Calvert, Jordan, & Cocking, 2002, p. 26.) In studies of daydreaming, Valkenburg and Van Der Voort (1994, p. 318) discussed three daydreaming styles, including the *dysphoric-aggressive* style. In this style, children daydreamed about things they would like to do to someone they disliked. Studies based on the stimulation hypothesis showed that frequent viewing of violent actions on the screen increased daydreaming in the dysphoric-aggressive style.

Violent media, however, have not been proven to cause aggressive behavior. The Public Broadcasting System produced a series and a Web site on video games. The Web site included an essay by Henry Jenkins, Professor of Comparative Studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, that refuted studies indicating the games are harmful. Jenkins pointed out that the studies found a correlation, not a causal relationship between violent games and aggressive behavior. The research could simply indicate that aggressive people like aggressive entertainment (Jenkins, 2005).

Bruno Bettelheim addressed violence in fairy tales and the imagination in *The Uses of Enchantment*. Bettelheim believed it was wrong to try to protect children from exposure to troublesome content, allowing them to read only pleasant stories, or pretending that “the dark side of man does not exist” (Bettelheim, 1976, p. 7). He maintained that fairy tales, which often include violent events, serve a useful purpose in helping children confront existential dilemmas and come to terms with them: “‘Safe’ stories mention neither death nor aging, the limits to our existence, nor the wish for

eternal life. The fairy tale, by contrast, confronts the child squarely with the basic human predicaments” (Bettelheim, 1976, p. 8). Fairy tales give the child a structure in which to fit unconscious content into conscious fantasies, which then enable him to deal with that content. It is here that fairy tales have unequalled value, because they offer new dimensions to the child’s imagination which would be impossible for him to discover as truly on his own. (Bettelheim, 1976, p. 7)

In addition, the parent who reads fairy tales to a child is validating the child and the child’s imagination.

By telling fairy tales to his child, a parent gives the child an important demonstration that he or she considers the child’s inner experiences as embodied in fairy tales worthwhile, legitimate, in some fashion even ‘real.’ This gives the child the feeling that since his inner experience have been accepted by the parent as real and important, he—by implication—is real and important. (Bettelheim, 1976, p. 63-64)

After the age of approximately five, normal children are able to separate fairy tales from external reality (Bettelheim, 1976, p. 64). Fairy tales live on in children’s minds as symbols. Children remember the characters and events of fairy tales and take solace in them when life becomes difficult. Bettelheim asserted that true-to-life stories cannot “sustain one undaunted when meeting the hardships of life” as fairy tales can (Bettelheim, 1976, p. 64). The imaginative experiences of fairy tales help the child to distinguish reality from fantasy, and provide the child with strength when facing life’s challenges.

Comic artist Gerard Jones maintained that violent comics and video games are not interpreted by young people in the same way as they are by adults. In his book *Killing Monsters: Why Kids Need Fantasy, Super Heroes, and Make-Believe Violence* Jones argued that violent games are a way for adolescents to come to terms with frightening emotions and to help themselves feel powerful, serving the same purpose that fairy tales did when the teens were younger.

Jones pointed out how video games fulfill several purposes of imaginative play for adolescents. One is pretending to be the evil or destructive force—that which they know they will never be. “Trying on” the monster allows the child to master it:

Exploring, in a safe and controlled context, what is impossible or too dangerous or forbidden to them is a crucial tool in accepting the limits of reality. Playing with rage is a valuable way to reduce its power. Being evil and destructive in imagination is a vital compensation for the wildness we all have to surrender on the way to being good people. (Jones, 2002, p. 11)

Another function of video games and other violent games is helping children distinguish between fantasy and reality. “One of our most important tasks as adults is to help them make that distinction,” Jones explained. “The way to do that is to let them *have* their fantasies” (Jones, 2002, p. 116). When a parent allows a child to play with a plastic sword, the child hears the message: that’s a toy, it’s fantasy, there no *real* danger; you have complete power over it. The child feels safe and powerful. The problem occurs when the parent becomes upset about the plastic sword and tries to ban such toys, Jones argued. The child hears the parent saying, “That scares me, that’s more powerful than you are, that’s going to turn *you* into a killer!” (Jones, 2002, p. 116). Adult sensibilities to

violence are, in current times, heightened. It is difficult for some parents to allow children to play violently without expressing their own disapproval of the violence.

Jones considers video games to be among the least dangerous forms of entertainment violence. He refutes the argument that the games desensitize kids. Unlike soldiers using violent video games to enhance their killing capability, kids are playing and they know it. They do not experience the games as training for killing any more than they do when they play with plastic army men or chess pieces (Jones, 2002, p. 167).

Fantasy may be needed now more than ever to counteract the rational, left-brain forces of school. Marie-Louise van Franz saw the importance of fantasy in games and stories:

“Fantasy is not just whimsical ego-nonsense but comes really from the depths; it constellates symbolic situations which give life a deeper meaning and deeper realization” (von Franz, 1996, p. 103). To smother the unconscious with an overly rational outlook would be to deny the child a part of his or her childhood. The electronic media of today could be used in the same way as toys have always been used: as another way of creating symbols with which to play.

Without guidance, however, our students face a narrowing of their imaginations by the electronic media they use every day. Van der Voort and Valkenburg’s reduction hypothesis, *Displacement hypothesis* argued that imagination is reduced by time spent watching TV, a portion of which would have been spent in imaginative activity.

Similarly, the use of electronic media takes up so much of the adolescent’s day there is little time left for creative pursuits. Therefore, imaginative hands-on experiences in the art studio become even more important in secondary school. Students need teachers and

curriculum materials that help them create and interpret in the physical world as well as the virtual world.

A Political Context: Ideological Forces that Hinder Imaginative Textbook Design

“Texts are really messages to and about the future,” wrote Michael Apple and Linda K. Christian-Smith (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991, p. 4). Just as the painter selects essential features of the landscape to put into the watercolor, authors and publishers choose the content of textbooks. Both the painting and the textbook designate knowledge significant for the future. Textbooks could provide students with a wider view of the world. The panoramic view of the landscape is narrowed, however, when ideological forces limit the content. Two forces that make textbooks less imaginative are attacks by special interest groups and the trend toward teacher-proof instructional materials.

Textbooks represent what someone or some group believes to be legitimate knowledge and culture, knowledge worth passing on and extending based on their research findings and experience. As such, textbooks have long been contested ground. In 1939, for example, a progressive textbook series being used in social studies classrooms was attacked by the National Association of Manufacturers, the American Legion, the Advertising Federation, and other groups purported to be neutral. The textbook, *Man and His Changing World*, by Harold Rugg and his colleagues, was denounced as “socialist” in an organized attack by those groups. They called the books anti-American and anti-business. Rugg’s goal was to educate citizens to think about and participate in democracy, rather than to act without thought. The book did not whitewash failures and difficulties in American society. It also promoted racial tolerance and social justice, and

included discussions of unemployment, immigrants, and consumerism. Protests against the book were sparked when the Advertising Federation of America reacted to Rugg's negative statements about advertising. Although nearly half of the social studies students in the U.S. were using the book, school systems could not afford to be drawn into the controversy. The special interest groups were successful in forcing school districts to remove the books from schools and libraries. Book sales dropped from 289,000 copies in 1938 to approximately 21,000 by 1944 (Spring, 2002, p. 175-176). The incident demonstrates that even a book with a proven success record in the marketplace, already established in the schools, can be ruined by attacks from special interest groups (Spring, 2002, p. 175).

Fear of attack by special interest groups is to this day one of the forces that keep textbooks bland and unimaginative, making them what educator A. Graham Down called "Trojan horses—glossily covered blocks of paper whose words emerge to deaden the minds of our nation's youth, and make them enemies of learning" (Tyson-Bernstein, 1988, p. vii). The system that brings textbooks from the author's desk into the classroom is set up not to produce books that stimulate conversation and imagination, but to sidestep controversy. Profits are, of course, at the heart of the problem. The textbook market is volatile and highly competitive, as we will consider further in the next section. The textbook adoption system makes it possible for special interest groups to influence an entire state's textbook choices, not just those of a school system.

As the Thomas B. Fordham Institute (2004) outlined in its report, textbooks in the 1950s and 1960s were blandly patriotic. There were few references to women and immigrants, African Americans were mentioned only as slaves, and the unfair treatment

of Native Americans was glossed over by history textbooks. In the 1970s California instituted social content standards in an attempt to force publishers to remedy the stereotypes of earlier textbooks (pp. 7-8). While well-intentioned, the implementation of the law had the effect of placing so many restrictions on the content that the book became unimaginative in new ways. The books were required to portray multicultural tolerance, gender equality, and the protection of the environment. Ethnicity, and gender had to be portrayed in an “equitable way,” which resulted in various factions paging through the texts counting every reference to men, women, people with disabilities and ethnic groups. In addition, the books had to illustrate accurately the roles of labor and entrepreneurs, to encourage thrift, fire prevention, and the humane treatment of animals. (California State Board of Education, 2000, p. 13). Health food groups weighed in with a requirement that textbooks minimize the depiction and mention of foods with low nutritional value. (California State Board of Education, 2000, p.12). Going even farther, emotions had to be portrayed equitably (California State Board of Education, 2000, p. 4), which meant if women were shown crying, men had to be depicted weeping as well. Such stringent guidelines created textbooks that were downright silly in light of their audience. An illustration showing children at a birthday party was deleted from a book because it depicted a cake, which lacked nutritional value. In a junior high anthology, a story title had to be changed from “A Perfect Day for Ice Cream” to the insipid “A Perfect Day” to avoid a reference to junk food (Delfattore, 1992, p 130). Editors quickly deleted all references to chili burgers, pizza, and ice cream to comply with the law. Publishers scrambled to meet every requirement, or risk losing one of the largest textbook adoption states. One publisher’s bias guidelines filled 161 pages (The Thomas B. Fordham

Institute, 2004, p. 11). In an effort to placate all special interest groups, the company's bias guidelines included some bizarre requirements. For example, authors who wrote about the U.S. Constitution were required to mention the farfetched claim that it was fashioned after "the League of Five Nations—a union formed by five Iroquois nations" (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2004, p. 11). As a result of the social content standards, a reader or a social studies book might lack literary value or slant history, but if it included the right number of minorities or its gender balance was correct, it could be approved. Yet if it failed to meet the social content standards, no matter how high its educational quality, it faced rejection (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2004, p. 9). The California Social Content Standards approved over twenty years ago are still, for the most part, in effect today.

After the multicultural, liberal textbook criteria pioneered by the California Social Content Standards in the 1970s, the Christian fundamentalists counterattacked in the 1980s. Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority, Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum, and Focus on the Family were among the groups on the religious right who introduced lawsuits against local school systems, pressuring them to remove textbooks they called "immoral" (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2004, p. 12). These groups opposed books that promoted imagination and critical thinking. Plaintiffs in a 1983 Tennessee lawsuit, *Mozert vs. Hawkins County Public Schools*, objected to a Holt reader that included *The Wizard of Oz* because the characters tried to solve their own problems rather than praying to God for the power to change them. The Holt reading series in the lawsuit was also criticized as immoral and anti-Christian because, in the books, children who misbehaved were not always punished. Goldilocks, for example, "gets away scot-free after committing illegal

entry, petty larceny of porridge, and vandalism of Baby Bear's stool" (Delfattore, 1992, p. 50). Fundamentalists today use the same argument to attack books in the school libraries. In April, 2006, a Gwinnett County, Georgia, mother petitioned the board of the state's largest school system to have the Harry Potter series removed from all elementary school libraries. Laura Mallory, a missionary and mother of four, admitted she had not read any of the Harry Potter books, but stated she was offended by the books' descriptions of "demonic activity." Mallory asserted, "We need for our children to read things that teach good morals. Harry Potter lies, cheats and steals and there is no accountability" (Diamond, 2006, p. E8). Setting aside the inaccuracies—demons are not featured in the Harry Potter tales and Harry Potter is the hero, fighting to save his friends and his school from evil—there would be no story without conflict. Any imaginative creation—story, art, or drama—will have elements that go outside of conventions and break the rules. By the fundamentalists' standards, therefore, any imaginative creation will be deemed "immoral."

The plaintiffs in the Mozert case, who described themselves as born-again fundamentalist Christians, opposed the process of imagination on the grounds that it goes against "the Word of God." The imagination is a perilous thing, they believed, because it allows unfamiliar thoughts to enter, endangering one's soul. Furthermore, use of the imagination to solve problems encourages humans to use their own abilities rather than the "absolute reliance on God that is necessary for salvation" (Delfattore, 1992, p.44). The protesters objected to fairy tales and folk tales in textbooks because anything portraying magic, witches, unicorns, enchanted forests, spells, wizards, trolls, dragons or similar items encourages children to create fantasy worlds in their minds and promotes

witchcraft. In their belief, imaginative thinking is wrong per se because it causes people to “substitute their own ideas for God’s” (Delfattore, 1992, p. 48). The lead plaintiff in the case testified in a 1117-page deposition that children’s thoughts are “not to go outside the realm of scriptural authority” and that schools should confine themselves to “the domain of knowledge and facts” (Delfattore, 1992, p. 48). The protestors opposed not only imagination, but any knowledge that encouraged independent thinking and problem solving. In their philosophy, children should not be encouraged to develop their own identity, but to obey their parents and the will of God (Delfattore, 1992, p. 49).

The Mozert plaintiffs initially won the right to keep their children out of reading classes where the Holt readers were used, but finally lost their case in 1988. Even conservative columnists like George Will and James J. Kilpatrick scorned the protests of the fundamentalists in the textbook lawsuits, and virtually all of the plaintiffs lost in court (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2004, p. 14). The message was not lost on the publishers, however. Holt dropped a high quality series called *Impressions* in the 1990s because of complaints from the religious right. *Impressions* contained a small number of classic fairy tales with references to magic, monsters, and witches (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2004, p. 15). By the early 1990s publishers had already begun to head off problems from fundamentalists by self-censoring their textbooks. Publishers’ bias and sensitivity guidelines specified that books would only make references to the positive role of religion in history, omitting any suggestion that religion has been the cause of violence, conflict or warfare (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2004, p. 15). In an article on textbook censorship cases, People for the American Way noted on their Web site:

In recent years, some publishers have begun to exercise self-censorship, altering material that might be deemed offensive by a few very active right-wing groups in Texas. This year, the cover photo of a proposed high school economics textbook features several male sculptures from the front of the New York Stock Exchange building. The publisher drew in loincloths to cover up the normally naked statues, rather than risk a potential approval challenge. (People for the American Way, 2005)

The Fordham report compared publishers to puppies sent to obedience school, quickly developing their own bias guidelines to anticipate controversy and head off challenges from both the right and left before the choke collar is pulled (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2004, p. 18).

Both the attacks of the religious right and the attempts to remedy stereotyping by the left had the effect of making textbooks less imaginative. Textbooks are becoming farther removed from the real life of children, and therefore boring and irrelevant. As such they become less effective as instructional tools. As the Fordham report stated, “textbooks today are trapped in an ideological straitjacket that, in contrast to the surrounding popular culture, restricts content and sterilizes social realities” (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2004, p. 18). Both the right and left operate on the premise that children are sheep, unable to think and unduly influenced by everything they read (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2004, p 17). This view does not take into account the sophistication of children who are daily exposed to the media of movies, music, television, and the internet. As Michael Apple pointed out, “Students bring their own

classed, raced, religious, and gendered biographies with them as well. They, too, accept, reinterpret, and reject what counts as legitimate knowledge selectively” (Apple, 2000, p. 58).

If unimaginative textbooks assume children are unable to think for themselves, they also view teachers as thoughtless automatons. “Teacher-proof” instructional materials arrive pre-packaged with uniform learning objectives, pre-tests, post-tests, lesson plans, required reading, worksheets, and supplemental activities. The package is part of a trend toward de-skilling of teachers. Apple and Christian-Smith defined de-skilling as “the separation of thinking through the task from executing it. De-skilling occurs through the automation, routinization, and simplification of work tasks” (1991, p. 47). When promotion, retention, graduation, and federal funding are tied to standardized test performance, the stakes are high. Emphasis on standardized testing has excluded teachers from decisions about content, pacing, and about how they teach. They can no longer improvise, create, or expand on what they think is important. Teacher-proof materials prevent teachers from using skills they possess in their specialized areas. Teaching becomes “routinized and bureaucratized,” (deMarrais & LeCompte, 1999, p. 179). Additionally, the curriculum becomes uniform. An individual teacher’s life experiences or the unique viewpoints of the community are erased under a blanket of uniformity, all brought to a level of mediocrity determined by a committee in a publisher’s office far from the classroom.

Darling-Hammond explained how teacher-proof curriculums make the purposes of teachers and learners secondary to those of the materials:

School systems' ongoing search for a teacher-proof curriculum continues to be grounded in mistrust of teachers' capabilities to make sound decisions about how and what students should be taught. Unfortunately, a teacher-proof curriculum is also student-proof. It ignores the fact that students come to the classroom with different preconceptions, different styles of learning. Detailed curriculum prescriptions have to presume that learners are passive because the alternate presumption—that students are idea producers and problem structurers whose motivations and readiness matter—would defy the precise predetermination of learning tasks. Furthermore what can be easily scripted, sequenced, and tested in a standardized fashion tends to represent only the most trivial aspects of the underlying knowledge sought. (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 51)

Rigidly enforced, prescriptive curricula have often been forced upon high poverty, inner city school systems like those in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. The students who needed the most responsive, innovative kinds of teaching were given the most rigid, ineffective remedies (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 50). Teacher-proof curriculum materials do not allow time and space for imaginative explorations of any kind.

An Economic Context: Market Forces that Shape Textbook Design

“Books are not only cultural artifacts. They are economic commodities as well,” Apple & Christian-Smith pointed out (1991, p. 5). According to the Association of American Publishers industry report, 2005 sales of K-12 textbooks totaled \$6,570,175,000, up 10% from 2004 (Association of American Publishers, 2005). The market structure causes elementary through high school textbooks—known in the industry as the “el-hi” market—to show relatively low profit margins. Since production

costs are high, and it takes several years to write and produce a textbook, publishers want to ensure the book will sell when it comes off the press. In most of the Eastern, Midwestern, and Western states, publishers sell directly to school districts or to individual schools. These are called “open territory” states (Apple, 2000, p. 61). Twenty-one states—Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Texas, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon, New Mexico, and Utah—currently have statewide textbook adoption policies. California, Texas, and Florida account for almost one third of the American K-12 textbook market. These states represent high stakes for publishers. For example, California spent \$442 million on K-8 textbooks in 1998-1999, although budget woes have recently reduced that state’s book spending. A publisher can ill afford to spend millions of dollars developing a textbook series and miss its adoption in one of these high-volume states. (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2004, p. 19).

Therefore, the political and ideological atmospheres of these three states often determine the content and form of the books used by the entire nation (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991, p. 33). California adopts textbooks only for grades K-8, while Texas adopts for K-12. Texas, therefore, has a disproportionate influence on high school books across the nation (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2004, p. 20).

The adoption process seems simple at first glance. Textbook committee members review books and instructional materials to see if they meet state curriculum guidelines. The committee is a small committee of volunteers appointed by the governor or the state superintendent of education. They are teachers, lawyers, parents, or other concerned citizens (Loewen, 1995, p. 278). Publishers’ representatives present their products to the

committee, sometimes offering free trips, seminars, sample books, or ancillary materials. Public hearings follow, during which special interest groups are allowed to give testimony. The committee makes its recommendations to the state board of education, which usually consists of elected or appointed members who are not educators or experts in the subjects of the textbooks. The state board makes the final decision, either accepting or rejecting the textbook, or adopting a book based upon the publisher's making specific changes (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2004, p. 19).

The adoption system has been blamed for decreasing the quality of textbooks. Loewen cited the pressure it places on publishers to produce uniform textbooks. If a book is successful in several adoption states, other publishers hesitate to stray far from the proven formula (Loewen, 1995, p. 281). Publishers, in trying to satisfy the content requirements of so many state textbook committees, tend to include too many trivial facts and terms without explanation. Shallow coverage of the subject, termed "the mentioning problem" by researcher Dolores Durkin at the University of Illinois, results in books that fail to provide adequate context to the student (Tyson-Bernstein, 1988, p. 27-28). In its report critical of textbook adoption, The Thomas B. Fordham Institute suggested a correlation between adoption and low test scores. The report revealed that most of the adoption states scored lower on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests. The top-performing states were all open-territory states, where school systems select their own instructional materials (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2004, p. 20-22). The requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* have caused publishers to include more non-art, "academic" activities in art textbooks at the expense of creative activities. For example, in 2005 edition art textbooks published by McGraw-

Hill and Scott Foresman, creative activities have been deleted or abbreviated to make room for writing activities that are primarily grammar exercises. The writing activities may contribute little to the student's understanding of art, but they do make the book more attractive to textbook committee members considering how the book might help raise student test scores in writing.

In her thorough and sensible study of America's textbook adoption system, Harriet Tyson-Bernstein (1988, p. 11) explained why good textbooks are important.

Students, as well as adults, learn from what they read. Thus the character and quality of what students read strongly influence what they learn and whether they remember it. Children need to form the idea early in life that books open up worlds of delight and vicarious experience. If school officials purchase primers containing empty or pointless stories written in stilted, unnatural English, they have lost a major opportunity to convince children that reading is both joyful and satisfying.

Textbooks have become the backbone of the curriculum in most public schools. Some idealists advocate the use of trade books and original source materials, especially in history and literature. They would like to see reduced dependence on commercial textbooks, but that is unlikely to happen. Tyson-Bernstein (1988, p. 12) outlined the reasons textbooks are likely to remain in schools. Demands placed upon teachers leave little time for assembling original sources and trade book curriculum materials, as much as many teachers would like to do that. State and local administrators feel the need for textbooks that promise to meet standards and prepare students for standardized tests. Increasing shortages of well-trained teachers make tightly-scripted teacher guides more

attractive to school systems forced to hire uncertified or inexperienced staff. Finally, parents feel it is a necessary part of schooling for their children to have textbooks that look like the ones they remember from their own school days.

Because textbooks are likely to remain a critical feature of American education, Tyson-Bernstein (1988, p. 12) painted a clear picture of what a good textbook should look like. Textbooks should “stimulate rather than deaden students’ curiosity,” she wrote, and their accompanying teacher manuals should “encourage, rather than squelch teachers’ initiative and flexibility.” Further, textbooks should “set an example of the way our language should be written,” using “clear, coherent, powerful English.” A textbook should be “a unified and thoughtfully sequenced engagement with ideas and information” (p. 13). The good textbook for secondary students would have a clear theme or purpose supported by facts that do not distract from the theme. Complex topics would be explained in depth. Tyson-Bernstein continued:

Information about the lives and cultures of minorities, women, workers, or ordinary people would not be stuck on gaudily, but integrated into the text.

Controversy—so essential to both democracy and intellectual growth—would be embraced rather than avoided. Students would share in defeats as well as triumphs of those who shaped history or built bodies of knowledge. (p. 14)

Questions and exercises at the close of each chapter should encourage students to think instead of forcing students to look for minute details. Chapter summaries should “forge essential connections between ideas,” Tyson-Bernstein asserted. Most importantly, the book should help students remember what they have read (p. 15). While acknowledging that most textbooks today are beautifully designed and convenient for teachers, Tyson-

Bernstein lamented the fact that so few textbooks on the market today meet these criteria for excellence (p. 15-16). Many aspects of the adoption system that have had a negative effect on academic textbooks have operated on art textbooks to squeeze the imagination out of them. The “mentioning” problem, uniformity, focus on product rather than process, and substitution of standards-driven activities for creative activities have reduced the imaginative qualities of art textbooks.

Theoretical Concepts

This inquiry explores *what kind of art textbook creates a landscape in which the student’s imagination may expand?* In *Arts and the Creation of Mind*, Eisner discussed lessons the arts can teach education (Eisner, 2002b, pp.196-208). The lessons seemed to fall naturally into three concepts: imagination and aesthetic satisfaction, imagination and culture, and imagination and multiple perspectives. This inquiry will look for imaginative art textbooks in which these concepts come alive. The first concept embodies aesthetic satisfaction: How do art books teach that the way something is formed matters? *Form* may be a noun or a verb, referring to the product or the process. This inquiry will examine both aspects of form. The *form* (design) of the art textbook influences its effectiveness as a teaching tool. In addition, the art book teaches the student how to value the process, in other words, the way art is *formed*.

The second concept represents the formation of meaning and the development of culture: How do art books make imagination central to our cultural development? The culture Greene envisioned (2001, p. 68) is one that values imaginative possibilities: “We cannot predetermine what will happen, or package it, or test it for results. It is always an adventure, reaching toward the unpredictable, reaching toward possibility.” Art textbooks

can help create spaces for open-ended thought. Students begin to envision their place in a culture that values innovation. They understand how to interpret and create symbols and myths; visual humor and games. Instead of becoming statistics on a standardized test score chart, they are empowered individuals when they put their mark on their work. They learn that innovation and higher level thinking is valued in their school and in their society.

The development of multiple perspectives is the third concept: How do art books teach that solutions need not be identical? Art textbooks can teach that language and quantification are not the only means through which human understanding is secured or represented. Multiple viewpoints counter the push toward standardization found in education today. Rather than “one right answer,” Dewey valued multiple viewpoints:

There is no art in which there is only a single tradition. The critic who is not intimately aware of a variety of a variety of traditions is of necessity limited and his criticisms will be one-sided to the point of distortion...In the field of art, there are many mansions; artists have built them. (Dewey, 1934/1980, p. 311)

Garrison (1997, p. 15) summarized Dewey’s view of multiple perspectives. Garrison wrote that humans “can only grow wiser if they share perspectives, for seeing things from the standpoint of others also allows us to multiply perspectives.” Art textbooks can broadcast the idea that human understandings can be represented in more ways than words and numbers.

Methodological Sketches

The title of the study, *Landscapes of Imagination*, refers to the metaphor that will guide our exploration, an abstract watercolor landscape of a public park. Nineteenth

century landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted was an advocate of natural landscapes in park design. His ideas are undergoing a revival today. A recent article in a trade magazine on landscape architecture described new designs for public parks that combine traditional areas with natural habitats (Greco, 2005, pp. 70-74). In these landscapes, beds of exotic flowers flourish near meadows of prairie wildflowers. Neatly trimmed “golf-course” turf co-exists with natural areas of wetland grasses. Walkers can choose concrete sidewalks or hiking trails. In this metaphor, the manicured areas in the landscape represent traditional, determinate features of textbooks. The unpredictable and evolving natural habitats represent imaginative features. The indeterminate aspects encourage the transformative learning valued by He & Phillion (2002, p. 4), that is, learning featuring “ambiguity, uncertainty, complexity, one that fosters new ways of thinking, one that values experiential, embodied learning in relationship to self, others, and the world, and one that engenders social change.” This inquiry will investigate the kinds of art textbooks that expand imagination through transformative learning.

In looking at art textbooks, I see them through three lenses: the lenses of graphic designer, National Board Certified art teacher, and contributing writer to an art textbook. Sixteen years in graphic design sharpened my eye to the aesthetic qualities of a book. Providing the conceptual and aesthetic frameworks for a staff of graphic designers made me keenly aware of the relationship of design to communication. In 1999 I completed National Board Certification in Early Adolescent and Young Adult Art. For me, it was a highly creative process. The experience of National Board Certification taught me to focus on the local and the particular: the needs and imaginations of my students as individuals. The reality of personal relationships with students may reveal as much

information as research studies or media reports. In recent years, I have given presentations and have been a contributing writer for two publishers. I have written art criticism lessons for student artists in kindergarten through high school, demonstrated to art teachers ways to use the textbooks creatively, and selected artworks to illustrate the lessons in the textbooks. These experiences provided an inside look at how textbooks are put together and how the books could be used to expand students' imaginations.

Because, in the United States, our certification is K-12, art teachers often see the wide view. Since 1973 I have taught art in all grades, kindergarten through high school, in rural, city, and suburban schools in the Midwest and South. The students in two school systems, especially, have led to my aesthetic inquiry of imagination in art textbooks. Those particular places—I'll call them Wawasee and Oak Bridge High School—illustrate the needs of students in differing communities. Wawasee is a rural northern Indiana school district in which about half of the school population was Amish, Old Order Mennonite, or New Order Mennonite. In Wawasee, the community value system rejected imagination in favor of more practical goals. I was a brand new art teacher, inexperienced in connecting art to community ideals. It was not until many years later that I began to understand the unique culture of that place. Struggling to make sense of my experiences there has enabled me to isolate imagination, dissect it, and investigate why some people fear it.

The other environment, Oak Bridge High School, is familiar to me as a parent, a teacher, and a citizen. My suburban Atlanta county is one of the nation's fastest-growing areas. Many of the students are newcomers from other countries, other states, and other school systems. In these schools, as in many schools today, there is great emphasis upon

standardized test scores. The hometown newspaper compares test scores of the local schools. The general climate of standardization in education pressures schools to spend their resources tightening standards, measuring learning in quantifiable ways, and preparing for testing. Originality and imagination are in danger of withering in a barren landscape of standardization.

In the scenery of art textbooks, I have brought four books to the foreground where we may examine the details and put them into perspective. Three of the books stand out for their ways of engaging students' imaginations. They are: *Arttalk* (Ragans, 2005), a basic level high school text published by Glencoe McGraw-Hill; *Art: Of Wonder and a World* (Morman, 1978), a middle school text published by Art Education, Inc.; and *Launching the Imagination* (Stewart, 2006), a high school text used in advanced placement art classes, published by McGraw-Hill. *Arttalk* balances art history, basic aesthetic concepts, and studio activities. The concepts are illustrated by artworks from many cultures, as well as many women artists. The book clearly explains many basic art techniques and media. *Arttalk* is a solid foundation for high school students beginning the study of art. *Art: Of Wonder and a World* stands out for its open-ended, imaginative activities and outlook. In *Launching the Imagination* the author created a framework for students to use their imaginations to extend their own artworks. A wide variety of creative works are included in the term "art." These authors have shown us many ways an art textbook can leave the beaten path and venture into the indeterminate and the imaginative.

A fourth book provides contrast with a more pedestrian approach to art education. *Art* (Turner, 2005), a middle school text published by Scott Foresman, represents missed

opportunities for imaginative learning. *Arttalk*, *Launching the Imagination*, and *Art* are currently in use in schools, so it is appropriate to study them. *Art: Of Wonder and a World* is no longer on the market. It is, however, one of the most imaginative and aesthetically stimulating of all of the textbooks I have studied. I believe it has much to teach us about the future design of art textbooks.

The analysis will be based on the embodiment of the three concepts from Eisner's lessons the arts teach. The concept of *aesthetic satisfaction* includes such ideas as: the way something is formed matters; intrinsic satisfactions matter; judgment depends on somatic knowledge; relationships are critical. These ideas live in the art book that teaches that the form of the art book matters; enjoying the process is as important as the product; somatic and kinesthetic knowledge matter; competence in the physical world is important; how things are formed matters.

Eisner maintained that imagination is “absolutely *central to our cultural development*” (2002b, p. 198). Under this umbrella are the ideas of teaching children to be flexible yet purposive in their work (p. 206), valuing innovation and divergent thinking, and teaching children that their personal signature is important. These ideas come alive in the art textbook that encourages fantasy and imagination; teaches the student to interpret and create humor, myths, and symbols; and teaches children how they can put their own mark on their artwork.

Finally, Eisner promoted *multiple perspectives*. The arts teach children that solutions need not be identical, that language and quantification are not the only means through which human understanding is secured or represented, and other fields can be treated as potential art forms (pp. 196-208). These ideas are embodied in the imaginative

art textbook through the use of open-ended questions, multiple “right answers” and varied outcomes; and through enjoyment of the creative process. Activities in the textbook could teach the student to approach other fields as art. They could encourage multiple viewpoints and generate many opinions. Writing activities could deepen understanding of art and expand imagination.

Chapter review questions in an imaginative book could represent the high end of Bloom’s Taxonomy: synthesis and evaluation. Bloom and his associates developed a hierarchy of six categories of cognitive learning outcomes: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis (Bloom, 1956). They are used at all educational levels. Central to educational practice today is the idea that critical thinking is developed by activities at the higher end (synthesis) rather than the lower end (knowledge) (Oliva, 2001, p. 348). A number of educators have applied Bloom’s work to writing learning objectives as behaviorally-oriented verbs. In this adaptation by Barton (1997), the activities for each level include the following:

Level 1: Knowledge (recall facts, terms, basic concepts and answers): list, name, match, choose, label, define, select, find, tell, describe.

Level 2: Comprehension (demonstrate understanding of facts and ideas by organizing, comparing, interpreting, describing, and stating main ideas): compare, contrast, rephrase, demonstrate, summarize, outline, explain, classify.

Level 3: Application: (solve problems in new situations by applying acquired knowledge, facts, techniques and rules in a different way): construct, plan, utilize, build, develop, model, solve, identify, experiment.

Level 4: Analysis: (examine and break information into parts by identifying motives or causes. Find evidence to support generalizations): dissect, inspect, find relationships, make inferences, categorize, divide, simplify, test for, make assumptions, classify, discover, examine, survey, distinguish, find themes, find motives, draw conclusions.

Level 5: Evaluation: (present and defend opinions by making judgments about information, validity of ideas or quality of work based on a set of criteria): criticize, determine, compare, recommend, agree, support, prove, estimate, dispute, decide, appraise, perceive, conclude, measure, assess, value.

Level 6: Synthesis: (compile information together in a different way by combining elements in a new pattern or proposing alternative solutions): imagine, create, invent, solve, originate, theorize, improve, design, formulate, modify, adapt, change, propose, predict, build, estimate, plan, compile, discuss, compose, make up, maximize, elaborate, make happen, construct, suppose, delete, test.

I have chosen to use Bloom's Taxonomy as a way of evaluating the chapter reviews because the taxonomy activities because higher-end learning objectives encourage creativity and open-ended thought. High-end activities in the art textbook could be able to be used repeatedly with differing results each time.

In evaluating art textbooks, I have synthesized a framework of criteria that come from the imagination theories of Dewey, Greene, and Eisner. In many ways, their theories overlapped, like the colors in a watercolor. The four criteria are:

How does the book expand imagination through enjoyment of the creative process?

How does the book expand imagination through synthesis?

How does the book expand imagination through multiple representations of knowledge?

How does the book expand imagination by teaching aesthetic principles?

From Dewey's work, the framework emphasizes interaction with the environment: somatic knowledge, sensory experience, taking time to relish the process. The first criterion for art textbooks, then, is: *How does the book expand imagination through enjoyment of the creative process?* This theory comes alive in the books by the encouragement of experimentation, the valuation of process as much as product, extensions of the artwork, and delayed closure of the project. Pre-determined answers close off inquiry too soon, stunting the imaginative opportunities. So, too, does a rush to produce an art product. Efficient production is the goal of factories, not artists. In an imaginative textbook, the process will be as important as the product. Greene (2001) described the value of the process: "Like the artists, we are always in process, always exploring our texts, our raw materials, always seeking ways of reaching others and moving others to come alive, to think about their thinking, to create meanings, to transform their lived worlds" (p. 70).

Eisner believed the arts encourage improvisation. "Problem solving objectives are objectives in which the criteria to be met are specified, but the form the solution is to take is not" (2002b, p. 160). Open-ended, emergent learning is highly valued in the arts. Therefore, the second criterion is: *How does the book expand imagination through synthesis?* In the books this will show up in the form of open-ended questions, higher level thinking activities, and writing projects that deepen understanding of art. Eisner

described the importance of being “flexibly purposive” in arts work. In his view, “artistic activity is opportunistic. When new openings emerge, they are exploited.” Goals may shift during the process; an inquiry process is underway; “individuals are immersed in tasks in which they are trying to bring something to a resolution but who are not rigidly pinned to aims that initiated the inquiry” (p. 206). Writing activities in art textbooks are opportunities to go beyond listing and labeling. As Greene wrote, “It is never enough to simply to label, categorize, or recognize certain phenomena or events. There has to be a live, aware, reflective transaction if what presents itself to consciousness is to be realized” (Greene, 1995, p. 30). Writing in an art textbook is an opportunity to lead to deepening the student’s understanding of art.

Eisner’s work encompasses all of the criteria, but he clearly expressed the need for schools to promote multiple solutions, and teach many ways of representing knowledge. “The meaning that representation carries is both constrained and made possible by the form of representation we employ. Not everything can be ‘said’ with anything” (Eisner, 1998, p. 121). Therefore the third criterion for examining art textbooks is: *How does the book expand imagination through multiple representations of knowledge?* The book will meet the criterion well if it encourages multiple solutions and many types of assessments

Art textbooks are teaching aesthetic beliefs and principles not only by their content but by the way they model design. So the fourth criterion for judging art textbooks is *How does the book expand imagination by teaching aesthetic principles?* Eisner believed the way something is formed matters. If form matters, then the design of a page is important to learning. The design of the book has a bearing on its instructional

utility. The book's design performs four functions that influence learning: (1) it captures attention; (2) it communicates concepts; (3) it sparks imagination by showing alternative solutions; and (4) it invites participation.

In my inquiry I have applied each of the four criteria to the books in the following order: *Arttalk*, *Art*, *Art: Of Wonder & A World*, and *Launching the Imagination*. My reasoning for examining the books in this order follows. *Arttalk* is first because it is a basic, all-purpose book used in the first year of high school. The book covers art history, aesthetics, artmaking, and art criticism clearly, and is therefore a good basis for comparisons to the other books. *Art* represents a missed opportunity for a similar basic book, and is therefore placed second. *Art: Of Wonder & A World* is very imaginative and at the far end of the scale in open-ended activities, and so is placed third to highlight the contrast with the newer books. *Launching the Imagination* takes a specialized approach to imagination in its extensions to projects, so it is placed last. For each criterion I have described one or more representative examples from the text of the books.

Literature to Be Reviewed

Across the street from the park in my metaphoric painting, we can imagine a public library where we might find books describing the many features of the park. Besides books on the local flora and fauna, the shelves hold books on imagination and aesthetic satisfaction, imagination and culture, and imagination and multiple perspectives. In the history section, we find a historical review of art textbooks. We might also read about the effects of textbook adoption and standards on art textbooks. Knowledge of the literature can help us notice important features of the park.

Chapter 1 is a sketch of the landscape in which art textbooks work. The social and cultural contexts of imagination affect the art textbook's impact on students. The students in school today will be likely to pursue careers in fields where imagination is integral to the job. Unlike previous generations, our students—and their imaginations—are influenced by television, computers, and electronic games. Literature on this topic comes from contemporary periodicals and from Richard Florida, Dorothy and Jerome Singer, Patti Valkenburg, Tom Van der Voort, Marie-Louise von Franz, Bruno Bettelheim, Gerard Jones, Kerry Freedman, and others. The political and economic atmosphere in which art textbooks are developed influence the imaginative qualities of the book. To succeed in the marketplace, publishers must produce books that will sell in the large adoption states. Literature on this topic was gathered from Michael Apple, Linda Christian-Smith, Joan Delfattore, The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, Harriet Tyson-Bernstein, Joel Spring, and contemporary writers such as Jay Mathews and others.

Chapter 2 is an historical review of art textbooks, with emphasis on how they regarded imagination, from Rousseau's publication of *Emile* in 1761 to the present. I chose this starting date so that I could give the background for the art textbooks I have actually collected, which begin with a Prang sixth grade book published in 1895. Arthur Efland's *A History of Art Education* (1990) provides the framework for examining art textbooks from the middle eighteenth century to current times. In this chapter the purposes of the textbooks are traced from preparing students for careers, to developing appreciation for beauty, to self-expression, to promoting academic subjects. Literature for this chapter comes from Arthur Efland, Eldon Katter, Harlan Hoffa, Arthur Efland, Andrew Phelan, and the authors of the art textbooks themselves.

An autobiographical sketch showing what brought me to the study of imagination opens Chapter 3. My principal theorists on imagination are John Dewey, Maxine Greene, and Elliot Eisner. In addition, I outline the cognitive process of imagination. Besides the works of my three theorists, I included literature from Ming Fang He, JoAnn Phillion, Jim Garrison, Kieran Egan, Tom Barone, Paul Harris, Howard Gardner, Rollo May, Ellen Dissanayake, Arthur Efland, and others.

The process of textbook adoption and its impact upon the design of art textbooks is the focus of Chapter 4. The necessity of meeting the requirements of the large adoption states has caused publishers to produce books that are uniform and shallow in coverage, making them unimaginative. Michael Apple, Linda Christian-Smith, Harriet Tyson-Bernstein, James Loewen, Linda Darling-Hammond, Marilyn Chambliss and Robert Calfee, The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, the Association of American Publishers, and others provided the literature for this topic.

Another force that tends to make art textbooks less imaginative is the current focus on standards in education. Chapter 5 examines the trend toward quantitative education, testing, narrow views of art, and the increase in non-art activities that show up in art textbooks as a result of the standards movement. The work of Deborah Meier, Linda Darling-Hammond, Alfie Kohn, Susan Ohanian, Dennis Littky, Sidney Walker, Kerry Freedman, Roger Clark, Enid Zimmerman, Harlan Hoffa, and others provided material for this chapter.

In Chapter 6, I analyze four art textbooks. I look at how the books expand imagination through aesthetic satisfaction (valuation of the process as well as the product; relationships are critical); through cultural development (being “flexibly purposive” in

our work; higher level thinking skills); and through promoting multiple perspectives (teaching children that solutions need not be identical; language and quantification are not the only means of representing human understanding; the design of art books). My framework is based on ideas in Elliot Eisner's *Arts and the Creation of Mind*, Benjamin Bloom's *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, and others. The theories and analyses in this inquiry are synthesized in Chapter 7, where I describe what I advocate in secondary art textbooks. The appendix includes an excerpt from a sample chapter of an imaginative art textbook. Literature supporting this approach comes from John Dewey, Elliot Eisner, Maxine Greene, and others. The epilogue is an overview of the landscape of policy, of art teachers, and of students in which an imaginative art textbook could be used. Like the roots of the soybean plants under the soil, what is below the surface is important. We study history to look for patterns and to see how we arrived at our current location. In the next chapter, we look at historic art textbooks to see how the today's books evolved.

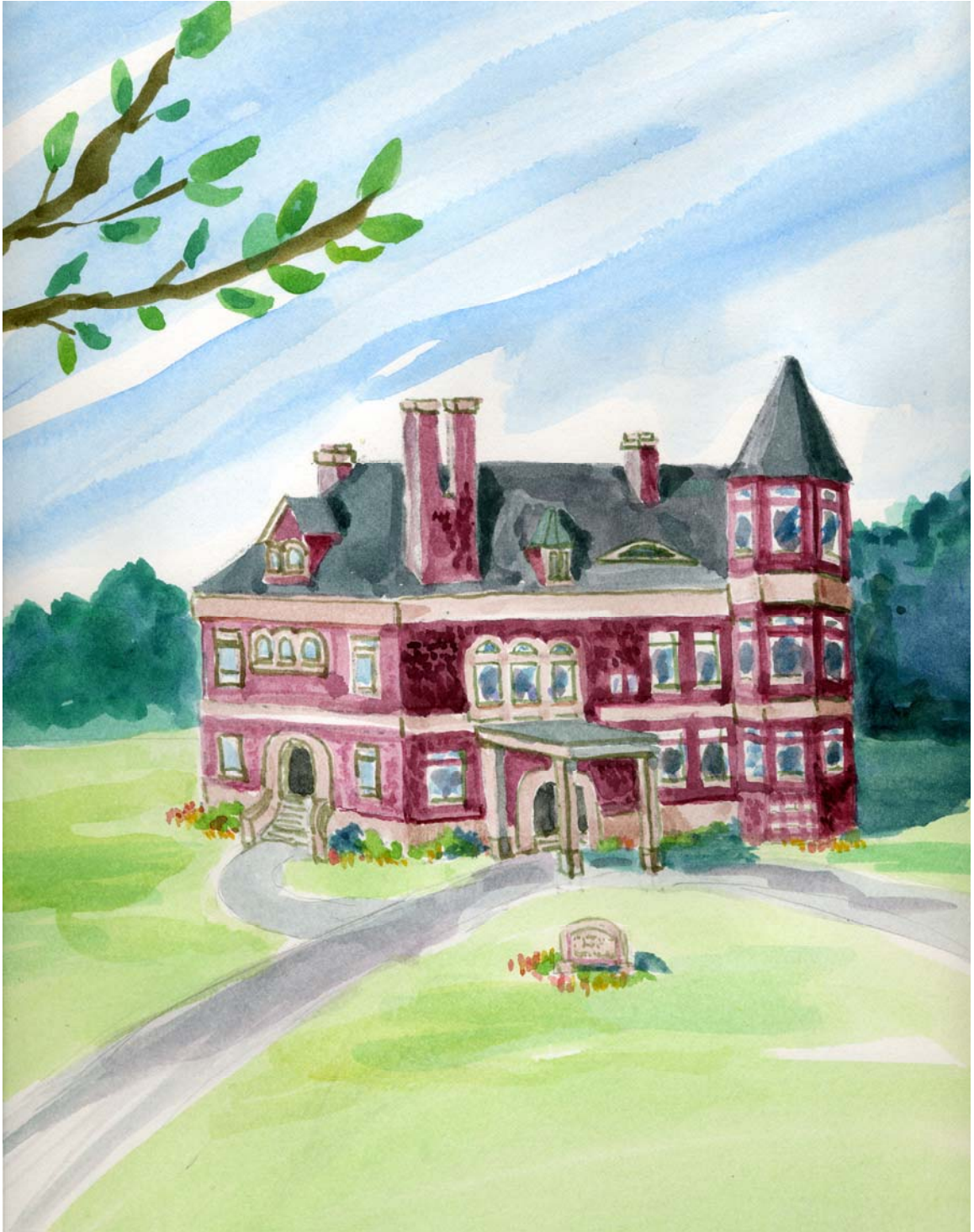


Figure 2-1. Lynda Kerr. *The Museum of Art Education History*. 2006. Watercolor on paper. 9" X 12." Collection of the artist.

CHAPTER 2
PLAYGROUNDS IN THE PARK:
AN HISTORICAL REVIEW OF ART TEXTBOOKS

Our creations are in the first place ourselves

(Ozenfant in Laliberte, Kehl, & Mogelon, 1969, p.88).

Overlooking our metaphorical park is a solid, distinguished structure, the Museum of Art Education History. The museum represents Arthur Efland's *A History of Art Education* (1990), which provides a framework for examining art textbooks through time. As Efland guides us through the history of art education, we will see that the textbooks available to art students changed focus through the decades, but they were not always in harmony with the current thinking of art educators. As a subject in the school curriculum, art has been expected to serve different purposes in the larger education picture. Students in art classes were, at various times, expected to prepare for careers, to learn to appreciate beauty, to develop creative self-expression, and to learn academic subjects.

The imaginary museum building is designed in the style of Henry Hobson Richardson, an innovative Boston architect of the middle nineteenth century. Rounded Romanesque arches are an identifying feature of the Richardsonian Romanesque Victorian style (McAlester & McAlester, 2003, pp. 301). The museum features a variety of window types and two colors of stonework, also characteristics of that style. Richardsonian Romanesque buildings were at first designed as public buildings, then later as homes. (McAlester & McAlester, 2003, pp. 302). Like a playground in a park, an art textbook can be a place that fosters imaginative activity. By entering the imaginary Museum of Art Education History and looking out of its varied windows, we may view

the playgrounds in the park and how imagination was treated in the art books of each time period.

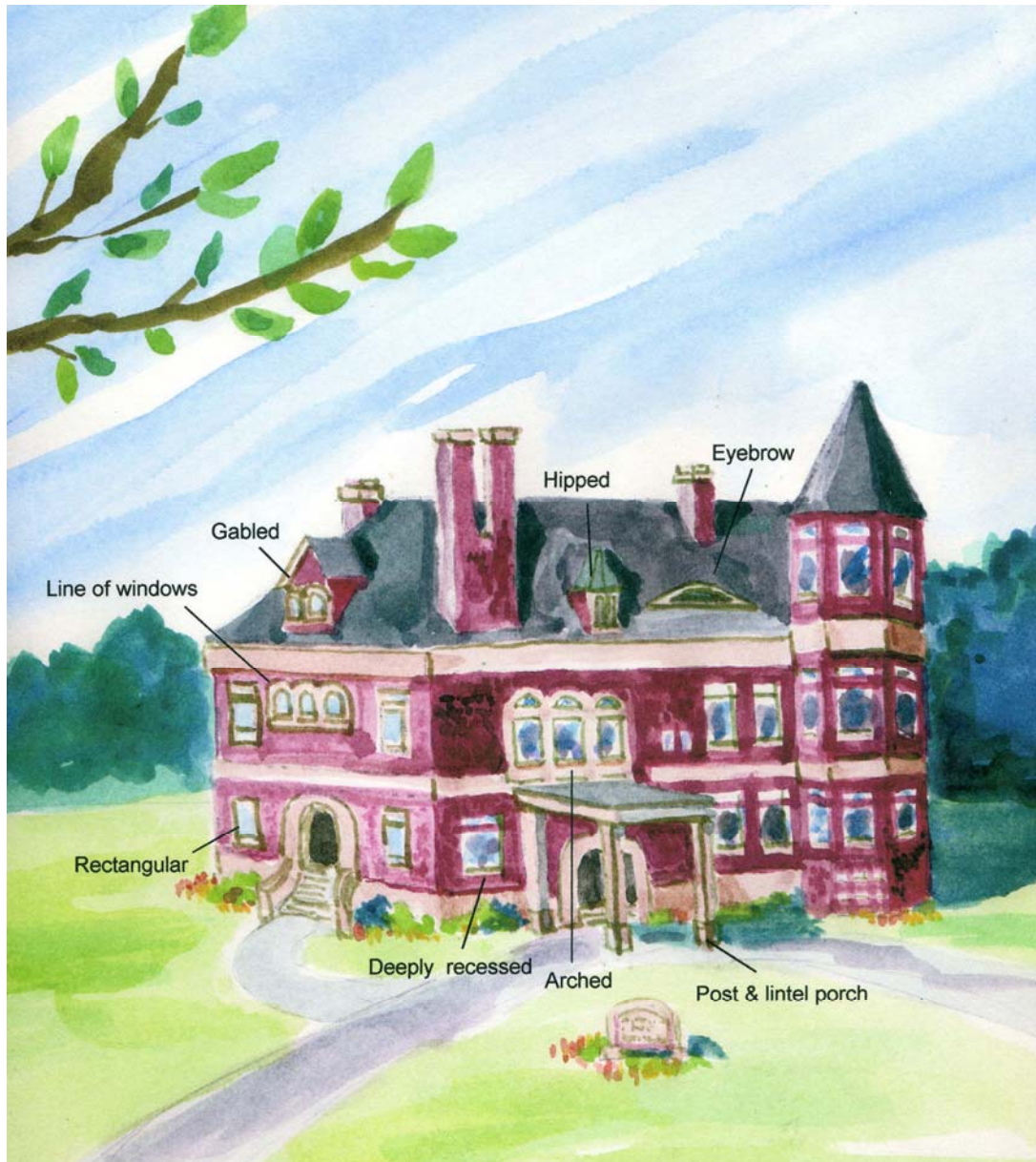


Figure 2-2. Types of Richardsonian Romanesque windows (after McAlester & McAlester, 2003, p. 303).

The Rectangular Window: Accurate Representation

The playground viewed through the rectangular window emphasizes accurate representation and drawing from geometric shapes. In the middle eighteenth century,

drawing was not taught as a way to express imagination. Jean Jacques Rousseau saw drawing as a way to develop thinking abilities. In his 1761 novel, *Emile*, which came to be known as a pedagogical commentary, Rousseau wrote that children should not learn to draw by copying pictures, known as “drawing masters,” but by drawing real objects:

Nature should be his only teacher, and things his only models. He should have the real thing before his eyes, not its copy on paper. Let him draw a house from a house, a tree from a tree, a man from a man; so that he may train himself to observe objects and their appearance accurately and not take false and conventional copies for truth. (Rousseau, 1761/1976, p. 108)

Accurate representation—“truth”—was at the heart of this method of drawing instruction. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the customary systems of drawing instruction were based upon a series of exercises using simple geometric figures (straight and curved lines, angles, plane and solid figures, simple ornaments) and progressing to more complex geometrics. The drawings were outlines; little shading or development of the illusion of form was involved. Accuracy and neatness were paramount. Originality in composition and personal expression were not emphasized. The geometric method was taught in William Bentley Fowle’s popular linear drawing textbook, published in 1825 and in three successive editions (Efland, 1990, p. 79). He believed drawing should be taught by intellectually rigorous methods, and taught to girls the same way it was taught to boys (Efland, 1990, p. 76). An innovative educator, Fowle published more than 50 textbooks for various school subjects. In his Female Monitorial School in Boston, Fowle pioneered the use of blackboards, geography lessons involving the drawing of maps on

the blackboard, linear drawing, printing, physical education, needlework, music, and the elimination of corporal punishment (Efland, 1990, p. 75).

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the Industrial Revolution had brought about rising crime and a concentration of the working poor in slums of America's industrial cities. Horace Mann and other educators viewed schooling as a necessity for an orderly society. Mann was an advocate of drawing, arguing that it would improve handwriting; it was an essential industrial skill; and it was a positive moral force (Efland, 1990, p. 73). As secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, he began advocating the teaching of drawing as a school subject in 1844 (p. 92). Thirty-seven years later drawing was added to the school curriculum.

Following the Napoleonic Wars in Europe, Johann Pestalozzi established schools for orphans in Switzerland, at Burgdorf and later at Yverdun. He was influenced by Rousseau and based his educational philosophy on Rousseau's idea that human learning comes from sensory impressions received from nature. He believed that in music, drawing, and mathematics there is a natural progression from sense impressions to abstractions, and that measurements make sensory information clear in all three areas. Geometry and drawing are related by measurement of form (p. 77). Pestalozzi's associate Hermann Krusi worked at the Yverdun school, and later became the director of a private normal school. Krusi's son, Hermann Krusi, Jr., served on the faculty of his father's normal school and developed a drawing method based upon Pestalozzi's principles. The younger Krusi emigrated to the United States and joined the faculty of Oswego Normal School in 1853. In the primary grades, Krusi's drawing system emphasized the outlines of forms and developing the powers of observation. In the upper grades the emphasis

shifted to proportion, perspective, and shading. As the Oswego graduates took teaching positions across the country, the Krusi method spread in the United States (pp. 84-85).

Pestalozzi's influence was also spread by several artists and teachers who published drawing manuals based upon his methods. Their philosophy was democratic in nature, professing that everyone who applied themselves to the exercises in the books could learn to draw. More than 120 drawing manuals were published between 1820 and 1860; many were informed by Pestalozzian philosophy. One of the most influential manuals for the public was *The American Drawing Book*, by John Gadsby Chapman, published in 1847. William Bartholomew, an art teacher in the Girls' High School of Boston, was one of several authors who attempted to use books to introduce drawing into schools. Bartholomew's series of drawing textbooks for Boston schools helped to show that art was not just for the talented few, but it did not succeed in establishing art as a subject in the public schools (p. 91-92).

Cincinnati and Cleveland had thriving drawing programs in their school curricula as early as 1842, long before the large eastern cities. The popularity of drawing in the Midwest is attributed to the heavy German immigration of that area. Settlers coming from German-speaking countries expected that drawing would be a part of the school curriculum, as it had been in Prussia, and demanded it in their schools when they arrived in America. In contrast, cities like Boston and Philadelphia had been settled for much longer, but their schools were based upon the English tradition. Efland explained, "Practices like drawing instruction, which had originated in the German-speaking world, would have had to surmount a Puritan or Quaker tradition, both which regard the arts with suspicion" (p. 91).

Art became a school subject because of a perceived national economic need. Late in the 1800s, more consumer goods were being imported to the U.S. from Europe than were being exported to the industrial nations of Europe from the U.S. Business leaders on both sides of the Atlantic believed that American textiles, furniture, and consumer goods were adequate in quality of manufacturing, but were inferior in design. There was a perceived need for better training for artisans and designers. (Nine decades later, the Russian satellite Sputnik was sent into space. In similar fashion, it gave rise to a perceived need, and many people believed the schools needed to increase training in math and science.) In response to the need for design training, the legislature of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts passed an act in 1870 requiring drawing to be taught as a subject in public schools (Kern in Wilson & Hoffa, 1985, p. 41).

In 1871 the Boston School Committee brought an English drawing master, Walter Smith, to Boston to become, simultaneously, Boston's first art supervisor and the first art education supervisor for the state of Massachusetts. Smith devised a system of drawing instruction and the first training program for professional art teachers in the nation. In 1875 the Louis Prang Company published a 24-page brochure to promote Smith's drawing courses, along with supporting drawing books, teacher's manuals, and cards (Chalmers, 2000, p. 85). Smith's industrial drawing system was based upon plane and solid geometry. Smith taught the teachers to memorize five important differences between industrial art and fine art. Teachers were to recite them just as he had learned his Catechism as a child in Kemerton, England:

Industrial art should be:

Ornamental, and not
Conventional, and not

Fine art should be:

Pictorial
Natural

Geometric, and not	Perspective
Repetition[al and not show]	Variety
Symmetrical [not]	Non-symmetrical
	(Chalmers, 2000, p. 84)

The Prang brochure described Smith's drawing system as it began with plane geometry and progressed in gradual steps to geometric forms, shading, and decorative ornaments. The brochure proclaimed that Smith's "Industrial Drawing develops the taste, the imagination, and the inventive faculties, and in such a way as to benefit everyone who has to do with form, either as a producer, merchant, or consumer" (Chalmers, 2000, p. 85). By 1882 Smith had become embroiled in a dispute with Prang over book royalties, and had fallen out with the Boston Board of Education. By unanimous vote, his employment was discontinued (p. 127). Despite teacher complaints about his high standards, Smith had achieved much. He had succeeded in increasing the time allotted for drawing classes to five 24-minute lessons per week in the lower grades; two 45-minute lesson per week in the middle grades; and two 60-minute lesson per week in high schools. The annual exhibition of industrial drawing began in 1872 and continued to showcase the work of the school districts (pp. 114-115). Smith made drawing a part of the school curriculum, and defined the teaching of art as a vocation (p. 148).

From that time through the first two decades of the next century, instructional materials focused on manual skills. Ornamentation, drafting, and mechanical drawing were taught through prescribed exercises in books. The Prang Educational Company, a division of Louis Prang's art supply manufacturing business, published a series of drawing books, *White's New Course in Art Instruction. The Manual for the Sixth Year* (1895) included geometric, decorative, and pictorial drawing. The lessons were presented

in carefully planned order. A lesson on botanical drawing specified four steps to follow in drawing *the leaves, beginning with the midrib* and ending with detail lines (Prang, 1895, p. 59). Accurate measurement was learned through drill exercises with rulers and compasses (Prang, 1895, pp. 28-30). Several of the lessons involved simplifying natural forms of flowers from realistic to geometric shapes, like the example on page 71. (See Fig. 2-2.)

The book pointed out good and bad examples unequivocally, stating, “The pupil should be led to see that straight lines suggest force and strength, that curved lines suggest grace, and that beauty arises from the proper balance or relation of these” (Prang, 1895, p. 53). There were many lessons on creating formal, symmetrical designs and borders using images from nature or from art history. An “Introductory” at the beginning explained the goals of the textbook series and how it differs from other courses. Among its methods, the authors described why students draw from real objects rather than from pictures:

II. **The methods** employed are determined by the laws of the mind. Since the object itself impresses the mind more vividly and accurately than any representation of the object, models and objects take the place of pictures to be copied throughout the course; that is, pupils draw from real things, not from pictures. (Prang, 1895, p. 9)

The description continued, in a rather contradictory way, explaining that students are given “great freedom” in the execution of the drawings as long as all of the rules are followed:

Since different minds have individual peculiarities, great freedom is allowed the individual pupil in the application and expression of his own ideas, and this is done, while adhering closely to underlying principles, laws, relations, styles of handling, etc. These illustrations convey a great amount of information, but are in no sense *copies*. (Italics in original). (Prang, 1895, pp. 9-10)

In the actual lessons, however, the promise of freedom did not materialize. For example, the goal of the pictorial drawing chapter, where we might be most likely to find individual expression, was accurate imitation: “Model drawing, or drawing from type solids as they appear from one point of view, is the basis of all pictorial representation. Continued practice, intelligently guided by principles, will insure correct, accurate drawings” (Prang, 1895, p. 82).

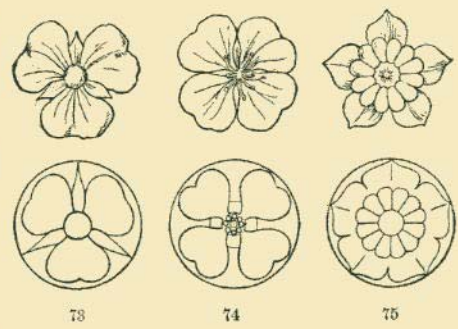
RESULTS.

The original designs may be considered good at this stage, if they do not violate a principle of design and are well drawn or accurately cut.

Complicated designs are not to be required nor encouraged. A few well-placed main lines, in which the principles of growth and radiation are observed; a few carefully studied units, beautiful in outline, and symmetrically placed, with a regard for the principles of variety, rhythm, repose, etc., will give a more chaste and pleasing design than will a great variety of forms thoughtlessly combined, or drawn with painful precision on deformed main lines.

The drawings should be clean and clear, and finished in delicate gray lines.

Design should develop taste and originality.



ILLUSTRATIONS.

73. Natural and conventional form of the flower of the sagittaria or arrow-head.

74. Natural and conventional form of the flower of the evening primrose.

75. Natural and conventional form of the fruit of the common mallow.

76. *a*, *b*, *c*, and *d*. Repeats and main lines for borders.

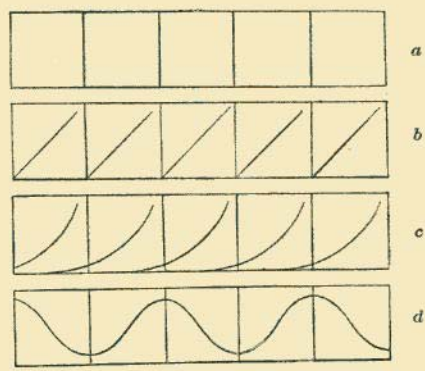


Figure 2-3. Manual for the Sixth Year, p. 71.

In the section on the overall objectives of the course, the authors stated clearly that accurate representation was paramount:

Its aims are...to lead pupils to feel that, while art and love for the beautiful may be fostered by an artistic and beautiful environment, skill and power and quick original perception of beauty come only through faithful and persistent practice in drawing; for this reason correct proportions, accurate measurements, and exact truthfulness in drawing are considered of chief importance. (Prang, 1895, p. 10)

Development of imagination was not a goal of this art textbook. This book takes the approach that there are several “correct” ways to create art, and beauty is produced by accurate representation. In this textbook playground, the student artist did not play, but worked painstakingly, in a small space fenced by his ruler, his pencil, and his compass.

In the early 1920s the Prang Company expanded its line of textbooks. *The Prang Art Catalogue*, third edition, printed circa 1920, offered an extensive selection of drawing books, art history books, painting books, and art reproductions. Prang hired Hugo B. Froelich, a former instructor of design at the Pratt Institute in New York, and Bonnie E. Snow, formerly supervisor of Drawing, Minneapolis, Minnesota, to write the *Text Books of Art Education* for grades one through seven. In the Prang catalog, several pages written by the authors extol their series:

The “Text Books of Art Education” need no introduction to the American public. Their appearance a few years ago was immediately hailed as epoch-making, and in an incredibly short time they swept over the country from coast to coast, finding their way, either as pupils’ books or as reference books, into practically every city in the country. The idea of a Text Book in Art—not a Drawing Book in

which the pupil was to draw or paint, not a Manual for Teachers' use, but a *Text Book*, to be used by the pupil in the same way that he would use his Arithmetic or his Geography—this idea seemed radical to many, but it met with instant and widespread favor...The reasons for the continued popularity of the “Text Books of Art Education” are not far to seek. They are to be found in...the carefully worked out philosophy of art education that underlies the books; the simplicity, directness and thoroughness of the text; ...and the way in which Art Education is related to the other school subjects, especially to literature, language work and nature study. (Prang Art Catalogue, c. 1920, pp. 8-9)

The characteristics they emphasized are similar to those valued in art textbooks today. In addition, Prang offered books that specialized in one material or technique, such as *Permodello Modelling: A Handbook in the Use of 'Permodello' the Permanent Modelling Clay*, (1920), also by Bonnie E. Snow and Hugo B. Froelich, *First Lessons in Batik: A Handbook in Batik, Tie-Dyeing, and all Pattern Dyeing*, (1921) by Gertrude Lewis, and *The Cartoonist's Art*, (1920) by J. Campbell Cory. This edition of the *Prang Art Catalogue* introduced a new series called *Art Education for High Schools*.

Acknowledging in the description that emphasis on drawing had heretofore been in the elementary grades, the catalogue stated that

High School Art and Drawing Courses, have, with few exceptions, received but meager attention from Superintendents and Principals, and these courses have varied according to the special training and inclination of the Art instructor and the time allotted to her department. Recently, however, the tendency has been to lay greater stress upon the Art work in the High school, and to utilize it in the

thorough preparation of the student for his life work, whether that work be along academic, technical or commercial lines, or in some special form of Art expression. (Prang Art Catalogue, c. 1920, p. 23)

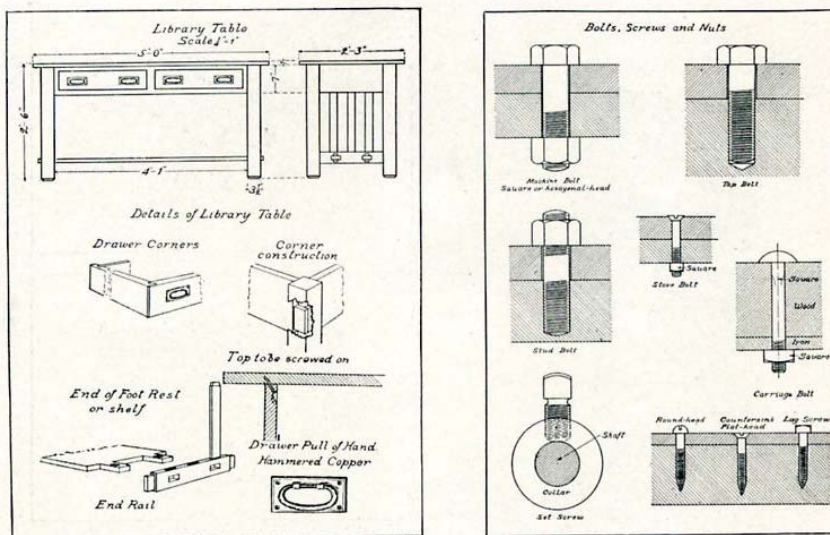
Art Education for High Schools consisted of seven topic books, which were available as a set or individually. The topics were Pictorial Representation, Perspective Drawing, Figure and Animal Drawing, Mechanical and Constructive Drawing, Architectural Drawing, Design, and Historical Ornament and Art History. Unlike other books in the catalogue, no author was listed. Each paperback topic book sold for twenty-five cents, or a hardbound edition containing all seven topics was available for \$1.25 per copy. Both the topic books and the hardbound edition were printed on “a fine quality of white coated paper” and included color plates (Prang Art Catalogue, c. 1920, p. 22). The approach to art in this series was oriented toward drafting and representational drawing, and the topics are similar to those covered in Prang’s 1895 series *White’s New Course in Art Instruction*. Page 24 of the catalogue shows a sample from the high school books. (See Fig. 2-3.)

In 1899 Arthur Wesley Dow published *Composition*, a new kind of art instruction book. A number of successive editions of the book were published until 1940. *Composition* was different from previous drawing and painting books in that it was based on the elements and principles of design. Dow successfully taught his system in Boston, then became director of fine arts at Teachers College, Columbia University in 1904. Dewey arrived at Teachers College that same year. Among Dow’s students were Georgia O’Keefe and Max Weber (Smith, 1996, p. 71). Dow’s system utilized three basic elements of design: line, *notan* (a Japanese word for light and dark), and color. Dow

believed the three elements formed a hierarchy, so it made sense to study line first. Placement of lines forms good spacing, which in turn, creates good *notan*. Good *notan* forms good color, which comes from the quality of light. *Notan*-beauty is formed by the harmony of dark and light spaces in buildings, pictures, and nature. In addition to the elements, five principles of composition apply: opposition, transition, subordination, repetition, and symmetry. Dow called his theory of design “synthetic” because he believed they could be applied to all forms of art. The fact that Dow’s book was in print for four decades indicates it was widely used in teaching (Efland, 1990, p. 178-179). Fig. 2-4 shows an exercise in light and dark from *Composition* (p. 181).

In *Emile* in 1761, Rousseau advocated drawing as a search for truth through accurate representation. During the industrial revolution, the need for artisans and draftsmen caused drawing teachers to emphasize accurate representation and geometric shapes. Imagination was restricted; expression was not encouraged. The playground was strictly bounded by fences of geometry and realism. With the advent of Dow’s publication of *Composition* in 1899, drawing, at last, began to tiptoe out of its geometric captivity and explore light and color. The playground became a little larger.

PRANG ART CATALOGUE



Two Pages of Mechanical Drawing for High Schools

The text for each chapter has been most carefully prepared with the assistance and advice not only of specialists in each of the fields covered, but of practical and experienced High School teachers as well. Equal attention has been given to the preparation of the illustrations, that range from simple geometric diagrams to advanced mechanical drawings and finely reproduced color plates.

No great amount of previous instruction is necessary to an understanding of the text, as each chapter starts with elementary problems. Under each heading, however, sufficient material is presented for a complete and thorough High School course.

No text will, of course, take the place of an instructor, but where "Art Education for High Schools" has been placed in the hands of students the instructor has at once found its 340 pages of text and its 560 plates and illustrations (10 of them in color) an indispensable aid in class room, studio and shop.

"Art Education for High Schools" has proven invaluable in High Schools, Normal Schools and Art Academies. The treatment of mechanical drawing has received unstinted praise from Manual Training Supervisors, while the Supervisor of Drawing finds the volume a never-ending source of inspiration.

Price per copy, \$1.25

A suggestive Course of Study to accompany Art Education for High Schools will be furnished free to teachers where the students are using the book.

Figure 2-4. Prang Art Catalogue, p. 24. Used by permission of Dixon Ticonderoga Company. Copyright 1920.

The Arched Window: Seeking Beauty

The beauty of the Richardsonian Romanesque arched window is enhanced by the majestic stone surround. Through this window we can see a playground designed to build the child's appreciation for beauty. The rigid, industrial approach to teaching art changed in the years following World War I. When the intellectual climate in America turned to creative self-expression, Expressionism influenced all of the arts (Efland, 1990, p. 192). The "child-centered school" of Harold Rugg and Ann Shumaker sought to set the student free from the "machine culture" of the previous eras (Efland, 1990, p. 193). The art student now pursued beauty for its own sake. In the 1920s, the many new elementary art textbooks taught color, design, drawing, and picture study. Educators considered picture study important to "develop in the child the ability to see and enjoy beauty wherever it exists," according to a 1929 curriculum guide for the Wisconsin schools (Wisconsin State Department of Education, 1929, p. 284). Wilson and Hoffa pointed out that the 1929 Wisconsin curriculum guide included the first mention of creativity as one of the goals of fine and industrial arts (Kern in Wilson & Hoffa, 1985, p. 45). The curriculum guide listed the second of five goals as: "To stimulate the child to express himself (sic) through creative thinking and creative activity" (Wisconsin State Department of Education, 1929, p. 284). New printing technology made it possible to print color reproductions in textbooks. In the foreword to her grade seven book *Great Pictures and Their Stories*, Katherine Morris Lester remarked effusively, "The twentieth century has ushered in the reproduction of masterpieces in color! To what heights of delight the children of our schools may be carried by the famous pictures of the world in color!" (Lester, 1930, p. 7). Lester took care to make this small book of ten artworks interesting to children. Each

artwork specified music to accompany it. For example, the painting of *Moonlight*, *Wood's Island Light* by Winslow Homer was to be studied while listening to Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* or Shumann's *Mondnacht* (Lester, 1930, p. 23). After the analysis of each painting, there was an autobiographical sketch of the artist. Some featured lively anecdotes that showed the artists' personalities, such as Homer's humorous conversation with a visitor encountered on the beach, in which he coyly pretended to be an ordinary fisherman instead of the famous artist sought by the visitor (p. 22). Each section ended with a set of five to eight "Study for Appreciation" questions. The questions were predominantly "right answer" questions. Some carried hidden assumptions, for example, "Who is America's greatest marine painter?" (p. 23). Many asked students to describe a part of the painting, such as "Describe the effect of light on the atmosphere. On the sea" (p. 23). There were also a substantial number of other analysis questions, such as, "Where has the artist placed his brightest light, strongest color, and sharpest accents? Why?" (p. 23). In all ten sections, only two questions involved making art, and both were copying. For Homer's painting, students were instructed to "Make a sketch of this picture showing the relation of sky, sea, and rocky coast" (p. 23). For Hobbema's landscape, *Avenue Middleharnis*, students again were asked to "Make a pencil sketch of the picture, massing in the setting, but emphasizing the 'center of interest' " (p. 118).

As Lester had promised in the foreword, she placed great emphasis on the children's interest in how the painting tells the story (p. 9). Her interpretation of Burne-Jones' *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* (pp. 76-83) wove details of the painting's color, texture, and composition into events of the story. In the study questions throughout the book, she twice asked, "Is this a real scene or an imaginative one?" Surprisingly, she

did not ask that question about Corot's *Dance of the Nymphs* (p. 45). Instead, she asked the question about two realistic landscapes, Metcalf's *Icebound* (p. 63) and Hobbema's *Avenue Middleharnis* (p. 117). My impression is that she was using the question not to encourage imaginative thought but to emphasize the realistic qualities of the two landscapes. Although Lester's book did not open up a wide vista for imagination, she did open the window a little wider. She helped students learn to see the stories in the paintings.

Children on this playground could see a wider world, full of pictures and stories. Their imaginations were now fueled with images of kings and queens, knights and artists, faraway lands and the message that beauty was something to be valued and sought.

The Deeply Recessed Window: Practical Uses for Imagination

The larger windows in the Richardsonian Romanesque building have a single pane of glass, deeply recessed into the masonry wall (McAlester & McAlester, 2003, p. 301). The deep recess is practical; it protects the single pane from weather and damage. The playground we see through this window also focuses on practical matters. After the Great Depression, the National Relief Administration enforced child-labor laws to keep adolescents from competing with adults in the job market. For the first time, high school was for everyone, not just those who intended to go to college. With tighter budgets and more students, high school classrooms packed with 40 or 50 students were common (Efland, 1990, p. 204-205).

Two topics dominated art education in the 1930s: integration of art with other subjects, and the uses of art to improve community living through better design of homes and clothing (Efland, 1990, p. 208). *People and Art* (Moore), a textbook on art

appreciation was published in 1932, and a second edition came out in 1938. The book focused on appreciation of beauty in the environment, in our clothing, and in our homes.

Students were encouraged to employ their imaginations in practical ways:

You may pretend that you are a landscape gardener whom your family has chosen to landscape the grounds about your home. It will be fun to use the whole lot with the house on it for your garden... You may imagine that you have recently built a new house. There it is, new and shining, but there seems to be something wrong with it. It looks a bit uncomfortable and as if people did not live there. Why is this? The straight lines of the house, as they come down to meet the straight lines of the ground, look too severe...(Moore, 1932, p. 116)

The chapter review activities in *People and Art* involved making scale drawings of gardens and floor plans, consulting science books for types of plants and shrubs that might grow in gardens, planning ways to beautify the community, and suggesting improvements for the school grounds. A section called "My Questionnaire" asked citizenship questions like, "Is it everyone's duty to help make the city or town beautiful? Why?... What has man done to mar the landscape as seen from the roadsides?" From the beginning of the book, describing life in ancient Greece, to the end, suggesting art activities for the school, *People and Art* continued its theme of art in community life and social responsibility.

When the Nazi regime closed the German design school, the Bauhaus, in 1932, many of its faculty members immigrated to the United States. Their influence transformed the teaching of the fine arts, design, architecture, and crafts in America's universities and eventually in its schools (Efland, 1990, p. 217-218). The Bauhaus

promoted an analytical approach to artmaking, including the idea that there could be a number of possible “solutions” to an art “problem” (Phelan, 1981, p.7). The Bauhaus influence is still evident today in the organization of art textbooks—many books place the elements and principles of art at the forefront.

In this textbook playground the imagination is used to improve the aesthetics and the quality of life in the community. Art textbooks begin to show the influence of the Bauhaus in their analytical approach, as they lead student artists to imagine multiple solutions to art problems. Practical matters are the concern of this playground.

The Post and Lintel Porch: Art for All

The post and lintel porch offers a gracious welcome to all who enter the museum. The next playground, too, welcomes everyone to the world of art. With the coming of World War II, art education faced the challenge of confirming art as a force preserving freedom and democracy. To defend art against those who favored cost cutting in the name of war effort, art was presented as a form of free speech. Nationalism became a theme among art educators (Efland, 1990, p. 231). Many high school art textbooks published in the 1940s, however, were still centered on the idea that art was for everyone, not just for the talented few. The books continued to focus on the topics of the previous decade: design in the planning of interiors, clothing, and communities. *Art Today* (Faulkner, Zeigfeld, & Hill, 1941) featured architecture, furniture design, textiles, ceramics, and modern art. The foreword, titled “For the Reader,” reiterated the theme of art for the use of everyone in daily life. A key idea was the democratization of art: “Keeping in mind that anything which man does may have art value protects us from a

snobbishly narrow concept of art” (Faulkner, Zeigfeld, & Hill, 1941, p. xxii). The ideas were stated in practical terms echoing the philosophy of the previous decade’s books:

The primary purpose of this book is to help make art more effective in daily living. Each person is faced with the necessity of selecting such articles of common use as clothing and furniture, and the pleasure enjoyed from such things depends to a large extent on how wisely they are chosen...All of them offer genuine possibilities for expressing one’s own personality, for coming to understand the experiences of others, in short, for richer individual and social living. (Faulkner, Zeigfeld, & Hill, 1941, p. xxii)

The authors displayed an understanding of adolescent interests. The first chapter opened with an illustration of how to furnish one’s first one-room apartment with an eye to style and budget. Throughout the chapters there were discussions about designing spaces for social interaction in the home and in the community. There were illustrations and descriptions of modern and historical artworks. The only color page was a color wheel with a value scale and intensity scale (p. 185). There were no separate review questions at the chapter ends; questions were woven into the text at infrequent intervals with answers following in the discussion. The text was conversational in tone and sprinkled with metaphors to clarify key points. The final six chapters featured explanations of materials. A chapter is devoted to architectural materials, another to wood, metal, and plastics, and one to textiles featuring definitions of various fabrics, such as rayon and worsted gabardine (p. 293). A chapter describes printing and graphic processes like collotype (p. 319). A final chapter is dedicated to photography. There was, however, little to expand

the imagination in this inquiry. This textbook playground remained earthbound, tied to the concrete and focused on materials and measurements.

Eurocentric bias appears in some books. For example, in *Art Today* two captioned photos share a page: one shows a Mexican potter working at home on a “primitive foot-powered pottery wheel” (Faulkner, Zeigfeld, & Hill, 1941, p. 88). His family looks on from across the dirt floor of the adobe house. In the other photo, the camera angles upward at an enormous glass building in Germany, described as “an epoch-making experiment in architecture” (Faulkner, Zeigfeld, & Hill, 1941, p. 88). The juxtaposition and captions imply that the authors view the European building as the more advanced art.

Another book from this decade, *Art for Young America* (Nicholas, Trilling, Lee, & Stephan, 1946) also emphasized the practical uses of art in everyday life for all students. The authors stated, “Instead of being an activity largely for the pupil with special talents and abilities, it has become a vital subject which aids every youth in the school to meet effectively the problems of living in a modern world” (Nicholas, Trilling, Lee, & Stephan, 1946, p. 5). This book also featured the study of classic architecture, cartoons, lettering, interior and exterior design, and paintings through the principles of design. Rhythm is applied to the design of automobiles and airplanes (pp. 21-24). Balance is applied to advertisements (pp. 89-90). Color harmonies are applied to paintings (pp. 71-79). *Art for Young America* is unusual among secondary art textbooks in the number of editions published. First published in 1946, four more editions were published in 1952, 1960, 1962, and 1967.

Like art education two decades earlier, *Art for Young America* was concerned with teaching the student to enjoy beauty. Chapter one discussed the uses of art in everyday life, including the enjoyment of beauty:

Art study does help us to see and enjoy beauty which otherwise we might not find...Most people thrill to the beauty of a great cathedral, but they may miss the charming beauty of a tiny, country cottage. There is a great deal of beauty in the world...It is there all the time, but the trouble is we do not always see it.

(Nicholas, Trilling, Lee, & Stephan, 1946, p. 17)

Chapters ended with summaries of aesthetics in everyday objects. An example was chapter two's "Beauty in modern airplanes" with photos (pp. 26-28). Each chapter ended with suggestions for activities, divided into "Appreciation Activities" and "Technical Activities." The Appreciation Activities tended to be at the middle levels of Bloom's Taxonomy, involving collecting pictures and displaying, classifying and analyzing them. A typical activity wrapped up chapter seven's study of greeting card design. The students were asked to collect greeting cards and arrange them on a bulletin board. They were to make labels explaining the best design points of each card (p. 111). Chapter two had a progressive view, suggesting in Appreciation Activities "an exhibition of model airplanes made by the boys and girls in your school" (p. 30). Most books a decade later, in the late 1950s when I was a child, would have assumed only boys made model airplanes. The Technical Activities posed "An imaginative problem: Design the airplane of tomorrow. Remember what you have learned about streamlines and good proportions" (p. 31).

Art for Young America valued experimentation. Chapter five's Technical Activities suggested, "Use water colors to make some accidental minglings of various color combinations. In making an accidental mingling do not try to make a picture of anything. Merely let your colors flow together in interesting arrangements." Following were six suggestions for color combinations and effects (p. 30). Also in an experimental vein, chapter nine's Technical Activities suggested, "Try to create a figure that is really comic. Try a joke drawing. Try to cartoon some local happening...Caricature your classmates" (p. 142).

Art for Young America was printed on gloss paper. It had two color pages bound in, one of which was a color wheel. Two other pages had color paintings which were cut out and hand pasted onto the pages. An interesting note is the description of the gargoyles of Notre Dame Cathedral with two photos (p. 206). They were pictured and their Middle Ages folklore was described without hesitation. Some publishers today might shy away from discussing gargoyles purported to frighten away evil spirits, fearing censorship.

Everyone was welcome at this playground, even if the topics were not in step with the current concerns of art educators. While art educators focused on nationalism during the 1940s, textbooks were still centered on the topics of previous decades. *Art for Young America* and *Art Today* were playgrounds for the practical artist, spotlighting the functional and utilitarian aspects of art. The message at these playgrounds encouraged everyone to use and enjoy art in everyday life.

The Gabled Dormer: Expressive Play

Bringing to mind romantic castles, the gabled dormer window high in the roof of the museum shows us a view of an expressive playground. General education responded

to the Cold War era of the 1950s with a greater emphasis on science and mathematics, especially after the launch of Sputnik in 1957. Art education, however, turned toward expressionism at this time. The reason for this has not been fully explained, but some authors cite the influence of art educators like Viktor Lowenfeld (Efland, 1990, p. 234). Lowenfeld's *Creative and Mental Growth*, from its first publication in 1947 to its eighth edition in 1987, has been a landmark book for art educators. Lowenfeld regarded child art not as an end in itself, but as an experience necessary for the healthy growth and development of the child (Efland, 1990, p. 235). In *Creative and Mental Growth*, 5th edition, Lowenfeld (1970) explained the importance of art experiences to mental development:

It is the interaction between the symbols, the self, and the environment that provides the material for abstract intellectual processes. Therefore, mental growth depends on a rich and varied relationship between a child and his environment; such a relationship is a basic ingredient of a creative art experience.

(p. 4)

Art textbooks published in the 1950s reflected this interest in self-expression and individuality. *Art for the High School* (Ellsworth, 1957), a part of the *Growing with Art* series, emphasized self-expression, awareness, and use of art materials. A summary paragraph for a mural project stated, "A sincere painter tells his own reaction to life through his paintings. To grow in ability to paint, one should develop imagination and increase the capacity to see and feel" (Ellsworth, 1957, p. 31). Experimentation was valued in this book. In a section titled "How to work at drawing and painting" the author advised:

Be yourself. The way to enjoy drawing and painting is to toss fear out the window and try everything. Try new materials, new problems, new ways of working. Keep an experimental attitude. Do not copy others. You will paint best that with which you are familiar. (p. 16)

Ellsworth purposefully awakened the student's imagination. In a four-page section with examples of student work, titled "Problems to Stretch Your Imagination," she suggested the student choose a dark crayon and "let it wander around over the paper. When the paper is comfortably filled, stop and look at the scribble to see if you can find the shape of an animal, bird, or other form suggested by the lines" (p. 18). Following are more ideas, such as turning the paper upside down or sideways, outlining or using solid colors to bring out a shape, looking for groups of figures, adding backgrounds, experimenting with dots and patterns, adding chalk or paints, and making quick imaginary paintings in series. Questions at the end were designed to generate more ideas (pp. 18-20).

Experimentation is valued. In designing enameled jewelry, the text suggested students "experiment, and learn to make use of effects you get by accident" (p. 59). At the beginning of the block printing project, students were instructed to experiment with linoleum scraps to test the cuts and how the prints would look (p. 63). Students were encouraged to experiment with silk screen printing and to report on the results to the class (p. 76). Some of the activities were open ended, such as, "Make sketches of interesting doorways" (p. 94). The student decides what is interesting.

In the section on stretching the imagination, Ellsworth included a watercolor, entitled *Pagan Worship*, by Ralph Hulett (p. 19). It depicts people carrying small baskets or buckets on a beach. The caption below the painting read, "Ralph Hulett is a young

artist who lives in California. During a trip to Guatemala he got the idea for this painting, which he worked out in watercolors.” No other information is given. In 1957 the title would have raised few eyebrows. In today’s climate, however, publishers would probably want to change the title, or at least provide some explanation. To do otherwise would be to risk stirring up controversy from ultraconservative interest groups.

A 1960 series for grades 1-8, *Our Expanding Vision* by Fearing, Martin, and Beard, included both creative and appreciation activities. The purpose was to express ideas in unique ways and to learn from the self-expression of adult artists (Katter in Katter in Wilson & Hoffa, 1985, p. 309). The textbook as playground continued to be a place of individual expression and exploration of materials.

As the 1960s began, Jerome Bruner asserted that curriculum should be based not on school subjects, but on disciplines—intellectual fields of inquiry modeled on those of adult professionals (Efland, 1990, p. 238). Many educators believed that any subject—including art—could be taught in the manner of the sciences. Art educators embraced the idea that art is a discipline, with “goals that should be stated to in terms of their power to help students engage independently in disciplined inquiry in art” (Efland, 1990, p. 242). In practice, they advocated the addition of art history, art criticism, and aesthetics to art production in the curriculum.

In art textbooks, the emphasis on creativity and self-expression continued. *My World of Art* (Jefferson, 1966) activity books for grades 1-6 featured starter sheets with images to prompt further creative expression. Expression and imagination took precedence over standards in this series. The Book 6 Teacher’s Manual advised:

Knowledge and skills are only a means to an end. In art, information is used to open even more doors to creativity and to enrich the resources on which children draw for their expression. When information is presented to them, they may use it immediately, put it aside for future reference, or disregard it altogether. Creativity depends on freedom of choice in every possible way...Teachers must also be aware that knowledge means ideas, concepts, and awareness. It does not mean that children should be permitted to copy objects for the sake of accurate representation or that they be shown how to shape a form. (Jefferson & McGeary, 1964, p. 23)

Students were trusted to sort knowledge for themselves. This series presented a very different view of art knowledge from that found in the early Prang publications, where accurate representation was a priority and the student was expected to absorb everything in the textbook. Freedom to play with art continued in other textbook landscapes. *Art: Of Wonder & A World* (Morman, 1967) explored the creative thought processes of artists and designers. The discussions touched upon all of the arts, from music and dance to cartooning and industrial design. Imaginative activities were abundant in this book, such as listening to music and describing its “color,” and using clay to model an expressive sculpture titled *joy, fear, or anger*. Students were encouraged to use all of their senses. There were plentiful black and white photos of modern art, as well as art from various world cultures. An unusual art textbook of this decade is *100 Ways to Have Fun with an Alligator & 100 Other Involving Art Projects* (1969), a pocket-size paperback textbook by Laliberte, Kehl, & Mogelon. The lead author was Canadian artist Norman Laliberte. In each spread, the right hand page contained a short description of a highly imaginative

art problem, such as a creating a miniature kitchen or device that moves—all within a suitcase. A list of materials appeared at the top of the page. This textbook did not include art history content or art reproductions. Its purpose was to extend creative thinking and encourage making unusual connections through two- and three-dimensional experiences. The verbal and visual games intertwine to make a delightful imaginative treasure box. A quotation about art or creativity was located at the bottom of the page. The quotations promote open-ended thought, for example: “Contradictions are the source of all movement & of all life. All things are in themselves contradictory & it is this principle, more than any other, which expresses the essence of things” (Laliberte, Kehl, & Mogelon, 1969, p. 33). The left hand page featured an illustration in the style of old-time engravings, or a collage combining cartoons and photos. This textbook’s design reflected the inventive, freeform style of 1960s self-expression. *Art: Of Wonder & A World* and *100 Ways to Have Fun with an Alligator & 100 Other Involving Art Projects* were textbook playgrounds on which artists could play freely.

The playground has opened. Children are free to play and experiment. They are trusted to sort knowledge for themselves. No longer restricted to accurate representation, art now means imagining, experimenting with materials, combining unlikely images and words, playing games, and expressing their own thoughts. Some textbooks even express a sense of humor!

The Hipped Dormer: Objectives and Skills

The neat lines of a faceted roof shade the narrow windows of the hipped dormer. Through these exiguous panes we can view a playground delineated by objectives and skills. By the early 1970s the postwar baby boom was coming to an end and school-age

populations were waning. Taxpayers were hesitating to fund educational programs even as school costs rose. In addition, the Arab oil embargo of 1973 and the resultant energy crisis brought on a feeling that American affluence and economic opportunities were declining. The public began to question the effectiveness of the public schools (Efland, 1990, p. 248). It was at this juncture that I entered the education picture. In the spring of 1973, I was sending out résumés and preparing to graduate with a degree in art education. In Illinois and Indiana, teaching positions were scarce and there was little public support for art education. My heart was devoted to teaching art to children, but I remember wondering whether it would turn out to be the wrong career choice. A year later I had secured a position as the itinerant art teacher for all four of the elementary schools in a rural northern Indiana school district. Many of my students were Amish, Old Order Mennonite, or New Order Mennonite. At that time, art textbooks were virtually unknown in Midwestern schools. The only visual aids I had were a few art reproductions I had collected in college.

As the public demanded accountability, behavioral objectives became the basis for curriculum development and evaluation (Efland, 1990, p. 248). One would expect that art educators would have resisted such closed-end approaches to curriculum, but many art educators accepted the behavioral objective movement. Efland cited three reasons for this acceptance. One, many art educators appreciated an alternative that took the focus off verbal learning, so prevalent throughout the academic subjects. Two, the upcoming generation of art educators was ready to turn away from the self-expression movement. Three, many state legislatures mandated the use of behavioral objectives (Efland, 1990, p. 249). I would add one additional reason for the acceptance of behavioral objectives. In

some universities, art education professors were teaching the use of behavioral objectives as the only basis for an art curriculum. Their pre-service teachers, like me, knew no alternatives.

Resistance to behavioral objectives in curriculum planning came from a group of curriculum theorists later known as “Reconceptualists.” Although they differed in their beliefs about curriculum, they all held “holistic or organic views of people and their interdependence with nature, conceived of individuals as agents in the construction of knowledge, drew upon a broad array of literature from the humanities, valued personal liberty and higher levels of consciousness, and valued diversity and pluralism” (Efland, 1990, p. 251). Among these theorists is Maxine Greene. The Reconceptualists had more impact on art research methods than on art teaching (Efland, 1990, p. 251). It was in this era of objectives that Edmund Feldman published the first edition of his college textbook, *Varieties of Visual Experience* (1973). It introduced the four-step method of art criticism he had been developing through the previous decade. The method of describing, analyzing, interpreting, and judging made art criticism a successful classroom activity for teachers and students at all grade levels. Feldman was Rosalind Ragans’ professor, and his influence was seen in her *Arttalk* series. Partly because of the wide success of *Arttalk*, Feldman’s method spread throughout the nation and is today a widely used method of art criticism in schools.

Secondary art textbooks of the 1970s focused on the language of art and the study of traditional and contemporary artworks in sequential programs. *Art: Meaning, Methods, and Media*, by Hubbard & Rouse offered a sequential program of art study for grades 1-6. Hubbard & Rouse also authored *Art: Choosing and Expressing* and *Art: Discovering*

and Creating, a two-volume set for junior high published in 1977. This set offered a prescribed course for the student to follow toward a chosen goal. *Creative Experience Through Art* by McGeary & Dallam, published in 1976, was divided into ten units per year that encouraged the student's creative response and self-expression. (Katter in Katter in Wilson & Hoffa, 1985, pp. 311-312). *Exploring Visual Design* (Gatto, Porter, & Selleck, 1978) organized the study of two- and three-dimensional art around the elements and principles of design. Photos of design examples accompany discussions and instructions for design projects. The project instructions are analytical rather than imaginative: "Place a shape or object that you would ordinarily locate in the central area of your design in a corner of your paper or canvas. Let this challenging position help you complete the design" (Gatto, Porter, & Selleck, 1978, p.161). The text is consistently factual and down-to-earth, at times even pedestrian: "In the hands of a skilled potter, clay can produce a wide variety of textured surfaces" (p.111). Experimentation almost seems too dangerous to these authors. They caution: "Special care must be taken when working in various mixed media combinations. Often such combinations can become chaotic, because the excitement of unplanned 'happy accidents' can lead to an unharmonious surface. In such cases, other techniques for achieving unity might be used..." (p. 143). Unlike the freeform scribble experiments Ellsworth (1957) suggested, these authors prefer controlled activities: "Set up a still life in the classroom. Attempt to arrange similar objects on both sides of central form for an example of symmetrical balance. Make drawings of the still life, attempting to maintain the concept of symmetrical balance" (p. 130). The activities in *Exploring Visual Design* tend to be closed ended and focused on the product rather than the process. Although they had moved away from the imaginative

approach of the previous decade, most of the art textbooks of the 1970s encouraged the art student to work independently. Skills, rather than imagination, could develop on these playgrounds.

Like a red flower growing through a crack in a gray sidewalk, *Art: Of Wonder & A World* (Morman, 1978) stood out from the art textbooks of the 1970s. The stated purpose of the student text is to encourage the student to “think new” (Morman, 1978, p. 7). This book provides a rich environment for individual expression and imaginative thought. Norman Laliberte, an author who came to play earlier, created the lively design of this book. The book was organized around 37 varied topics, including aesthetics, media, line, color, shape, and form, printmaking, architecture, sculpture, advertising art, and a concise survey of Western art history with a section on Asian art. Chapter titles were engaging: “Color is dynamite;” “Cool and clear and sudden (Cubism);” “A dozen right answers;” and for the chapter on the relationship of art to math and science: “Wonder never died.” The artworks chosen were contemporary paintings and sculptures, installations, fiber art, and environmental art. Artworks were shown in black and white photos, with two color sections of eight full-bleed pages each. Use of the other senses was encouraged in the sections titled “Look,” “Listen,” and “Feel.” Questions are open-ended, such as “Look for a loud blue, a cold blue, a mysterious blue” (Morman, 1978, p. 43). The activities are highly imaginative; for example, “Do an assemblage on one word, like *lace*, *jello*, *oatmeal*. Find unusual textures that convey the effect of your word” (p. 63). Of the textbooks I have examined, *Art: Of Wonder & A World* most effectively created a space for imagination to expand. This textbook will be examined in detail in chapter 6.

As the 1980s opened, the publication of *A Nation at Risk* and other national reports renewed public interest in the quality of education. The arts were treated respectfully, but superficially, in these reports. The National Art Education Association responded with its own report, *Excellence in Art Education: Ideas and Initiatives* (Efland, 1990, p. 252). In Los Angeles, the J. Paul Getty Trust established an influential center for arts education. W. Dwaine Greer headed the staff and originated the term *discipline-based art education* (DBAE). DBAE was based on ideas in use since the 1960s, which treated art as a discipline. Once again, art educators called for an expanded curriculum that included art history, art criticism, and aesthetics along with art production (Efland, 1990, pp. 252-253). Elliot Eisner was one of the noted advocates of DBAE. The Getty Center spread the word of DBAE through the land beginning with its book *Beyond Creating: The Place for Art in America's Schools*, published in 1984. Annual conferences of the National Art Education Association from 1984 to 1988 featured presentations advocating DBAE. Artmaking was no longer enough to justify art in school. As a response to *A Nation at Risk*, DBAE now made art education, according to the Getty Center's publications, "a principal means of transmitting [the values we cherish] from generation to generation" (Efland, 1990, p. 253-254). Critics, however, objected that DBAE made art a passive study of "past cultural achievements certified by credentialed experts" rather than an active, imaginative pursuit (p. 254).

The playground has been fenced in again. With the exception of Jean Mary Morman's books, objectives and skills are the central focus of art textbooks in the 1970s. Discipline-based art education and sequential programs guide students toward

development of essential skills. Imagination and expression are marginalized; experimentation is restricted.

The Lines of Arched Windows: Diverse Playmates

Like happy faces in a row, lines of arched windows look out upon a playground of diverse playmates. In the 1980s, artworks from other cultures began to appear in art textbooks in greater numbers than ever before. Laura Chapman's *Discover Art* series for grades 1-6 introduced children to art from many cultures (Katter in Wilson & Hoffa, 1985, p. 313). Rosalind Ragans' *Arttalk* for high school featured non-Western artworks throughout the book (Ragans, 1988). Full-page artist biographies featured women artists. Student activities were imaginative and cross-disciplinary. For example, a mixed media collage combined visual symbols and words (Ragans, 1995, pp. 336-337). Art criticism lessons followed Feldman's four-step method. This book was among the first to feature computer art activities. *Arttalk* also stands out among secondary art textbooks in the number of editions. Since the first edition in 1988, new editions were published in 1995, 2000, and 2005. With artwork from other cultures all around, the student artist now met diverse companions on the playground. Chapman's *Discover Art* (1985) and Ragans' *Arttalk* (1988) marked the beginning of the widespread use of textbooks in art classes throughout the country (Hudak, personal communication, 2006).

The broadening of perspectives continued into the 1990s as educators turned their attention to the cultural diversity of students in the public schools. Multiple perspectives were represented. Art educators now discussed topics such as art for students with disabilities (Guay, 1994, p. 44-56) and how technology was changing the speed and quantity of visual content delivery (Koroscik, 1996, p. 4-20) Art textbooks began to show

more types of artists and artworks. Students could see that “artist” might mean a woman or a man, a person from any culture or part of the world. “Art” no longer meant oil painting or sculpture alone. Now textbooks included photography, computer art, stills from films, and photos of performance art, installations, and environmental art. *Art: Images and Ideas* (Chapman, 1992) was organized around the disciplines within art, and included chapters on printmaking and electronic arts. The book began with a chapter on the creative process, which included brief descriptions of aesthetic perception, the two sides of the human brain, symbolic thinking, inventive use of materials, critical thinking, the artistic process, education in art, and art careers. Only one short description (eight sentences) mentioned imagination. Imagination was defined as “the trait that helps you understand and create symbols” (Chapman, 1992, p. 6). The definition left me wanting to know more. The second chapter explained the elements and principles of design. Abundant artworks in the book represent world cultures as well as environmental art, book covers, fiber arts, and industrial design. Examples from art history suggested ideas for student work. Student activities emphasized techniques, with small color photos showing samples of various methods across the bottom of the spread. Chapter summaries included questions on art history, aesthetics, and art criticism. Most questions were listing questions, such as, “What are four traditional materials for sculpture?” (Chapman, 1992, p. 265). Glencoe pioneered the “teacher’s wraparound edition” in 1990 with the middle school books, *Understanding Art* and *Exploring Art* (Hudak, personal communication, 2006). In these books the student text is reproduced slightly smaller in the center of the spread, while the teacher’s material is printed in a margin that wraps around the left,

bottom, and right. The layout enables the teacher to view the same pages as the student, with the same page numbering, while accessing teacher material simultaneously.

The introduction to *Themes and Foundations of Art* (Katz, Lankford & Plank, 1995) encouraged the student to “stretch your imagination” (p. xiii). The featured student activities, however, were the conventional projects found in most middle school art rooms: a drawing of the student’s shoe; a yarn coil basket; a clay slab box. Directions proceeded directly to technique without imaginative motivations at the beginning. This book presented a large amount of text. Interesting sidebars on aesthetics and quotations by artists kept the pages from becoming too “gray.” Along with many examples of art from world cultures, the book offered discussions of ephemeral art and graffiti, video and computer art, and environmental art. Section reviews asked many analytical questions; for example, “Why was Michelangelo reluctant to paint the Sistine Chapel?” (p. 367).

Like the first edition of *Arttalk*, Rosalind Ragans’ 1995 second edition was organized around the elements and principles of art. The book featured women artists, installations, and computer art. Chapter review questions linked art to other subjects. Student activities in the second edition focused on specific elements or principles, such as a painting with rhythmic activity based on a Jacob Lawrence painting (Ragans, 1995, p. 238). The activities valued the process; before painting, students were asked to brainstorm and to create a number of sketches, then to choose the best one. Imagination was a part of the process in a fantasy landscape lesson based on a Max Ernst painting; questions encouraged the student to imagine and create in each step of the open-ended project (pp. 206-207).

Imagination was returning to some playgrounds. Children could meet artists from many cultures and countries on the playground. “Art” no longer meant paintings and sculpture alone. Art could include a broad range of media and environments. The playground was widening again—as wide as the world.

The Eyebrow Window: Narrow Standards

An interesting window found on some Victorian buildings is the eyebrow dormer window. Its purpose is to provide light and ventilation to the attic (McAlester & McAlester, 2003, p. 44). This window, however, does not afford a generous view through its slit of glass. Only a narrow view of the playground is provided, just as standardized testing has narrowed the curriculum. Spring (2002) described how this narrowing came about. During the presidential campaign of 2000, candidate George W. Bush needed a bold education plan that would distinguish his platform. He proposed an expansion of federal control over education by requiring states to set standards and establish accountability systems for core subjects in order to receive federal funds. The previous year, as governor, Bush had worked to make the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) a statewide instrument for promotion from one grade to the next, even though the test was originally designed as an instrument for comparing school districts (pp. 10-11). With the implementation of President Bush’s education policy, the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, the era of testing began in earnest. Teachers had no choice but to teach to the test. Curriculum content decisions are, in effect, being made by standardized testing companies driven by profit motives, and government agencies looking for efficient ways to measure the work of teachers and administrators (p. 168).

Art educators, once again placed in the position of justifying their subject, began to link art to academic subject matter. In 2005 *Arts & Activities* magazine added a regular feature called “Art Across the Curriculum” which suggests ways to connect artworks to math, social studies, and language arts. Maryellen Bridge, the magazine’s editor-in-chief, stated, “If art can be related to other subject areas, it helps art stay alive in the schools” (Bridge, personal communication, November 22, 2005). Publishers, eager to make art textbooks attractive to administrators and textbook committees in the testing era, added non-art activities such as writing and social studies projects to the books. For example, Glencoe McGraw-Hill’s *Arttalk* (Ragans, 2005) featured “Quick Write” activities. A special symbol indicated writing activities throughout the textbook. One activity involved analyzing a word meaning from context clues, and then re-writing the quote (p. 3). In Glencoe McGraw-Hill’s middle school series, the grade six book *Introducing Art* (Mittler, Unsworth, Ragans, & Scannell, 2005) asked students to research a local historic event, then sketch and write paragraphs about it (p. 209). (The second author of this book is Jean Mary Morman Unsworth, whose earlier work, *Art: Of Wonder & A World* was a fountain of imagination in 1978. The 2005 text is a very different book from *Art: Of Wonder & A World*.) Scott Foresman’s middle school series, *Art* (Turner, 2005), referred to the student artist’s sketchbook as a “sketchbook journal” throughout the books. Each unit review included a “Write about Art” activity such as “Persuasive Paragraphs” (p. 62) and “Explanatory Writing” (p.158). Eisner pointed out, “By defining the forms of representation that matter within the curriculum, the school significantly influences the kinds of meanings that students can learn to secure and represent” (1998, p. 119). Writing about art can benefit students most when it expands imagination and deepens

understanding of art. Writing that is only a grammar exercise in an art textbook reinforces the school convention that words are valued over images.

The playground is narrowing again, bounded by a fence made of words and numbers, and held up by standards. More and more, school activities are justified by their value to standardized test preparation. Imagination is not considered a priority because it cannot be measured on a standardized test.

Summary

Maxine Greene envisioned education as expansive: “experiences that lead to transformations, that open new vistas, that allow for new ways of structuring the lived world” (2001, p. 37). In the era of testing and standards, the panoramic view has been walled off. When teachers must tailor their teaching to the test content, the student will see only the views chosen by the testmakers. Textbooks may further narrow the student’s horizons, or they may expand the view. Historically, art textbooks began as narrow spaces, fenced in by the ruler and compass. They changed to promote the appreciation of beauty, and made room for the child’s self-expression. They added art history, art criticism, and aesthetics to art production. They provided a spacious playground for imagination, and then narrowed to behavioral objectives. They introduced diversity in artists and artworks. The textbooks reinforced the connections of art to other subjects, but under the threat of the standards movement, were in danger of attenuating art for the sake of language and quantification. Imagination remains at the source of art. People look out of a window and each person mediates his or her own view. Similarly, regardless of the intended uses of the textbooks, creative teachers and students find ways to use art textbooks to open up spaces for their own imaginative creations. Imagine the kinds of

learning that could take place if the art textbooks were intentionally designed with an understanding of how imagination works!

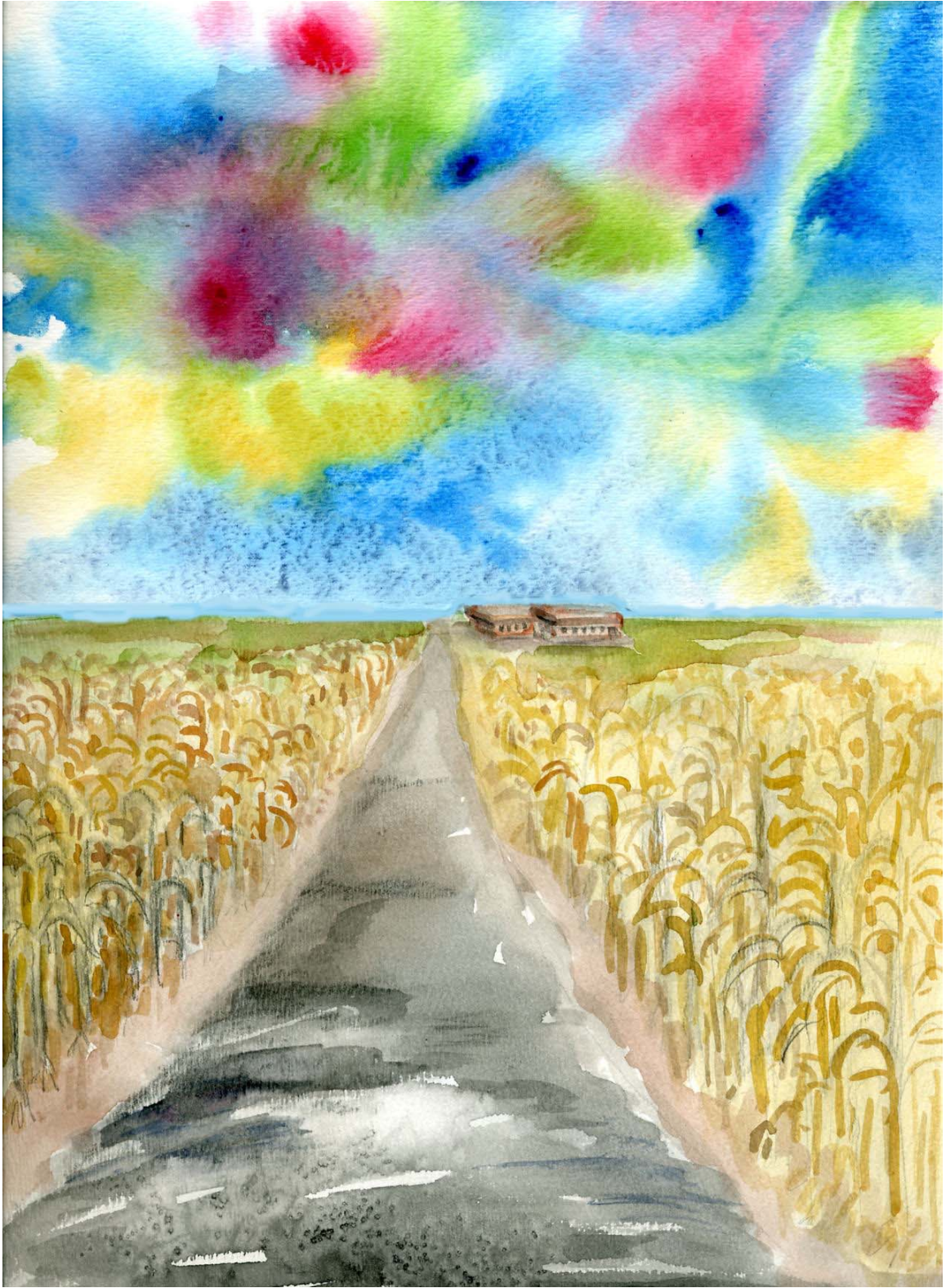


Figure 3-1. Lynda Kerr. *Wawasee Road*. 2006. Watercolor on paper. 9" X 12." Collection of the artist.

CHAPTER 3
CORNSTALKS AND WILDFLOWERS:
THEORIES OF IMAGINATION

Creation begins with vision
(Henri Matisse in Laliberte, Kehl, & Mogelon, 1969, p. 79).

Wawasee and Me: How I Came to Study Imagination

I'm painting the memory of a November afternoon in northern Indiana. In my hand I hold a wide brush to create the big sky over that gently rolling landscape. Rain clouds are gathering in the west. Through the windshield of my brand new 1974 Mustang I can see the blacktop ahead of me, a straight and narrow road for the straight and narrow life people live here.

I'm driving from a very old school building to a slightly newer one—the red brick structure ahead is my Tuesday school. It is one of four elementary schools in the school system I'll call Wawasee. Close beside me on either side, fields of dried cornstalks blow in the wind. The leaves make a scratching sound. The landscape is all pale tan corn leaves and light brown soil—the colors of Mennonite girls' dresses. More than half of my students are Old Order Mennonite, Amish, or New Order Mennonite. The Old Order Mennonites and Amish are similar. A dissenting sect of the Old Order Mennonites, the Amish adhere to an even more stringent social code and rejection of worldly goods than that of the Mennonites. The Amish use horses and buggies rather than motor vehicles, and they do not use indoor plumbing or electricity. They wear black or dark blue. The Old Order Mennonites also use horses and buggies, and wear pale solid colors. Most people here are farmers, although some New Order Mennonite men work in the

recreational vehicle factories in Elkhart. The New Order Mennonites dress somewhat more modernly, although in a prescribed style, and use automobiles and electricity. I teach art in all four schools every week. I'm the entire elementary art program for this district. Just me—fresh out of Illinois State University, bursting with progressive ideas, wanting to show these Amish and Mennonite kids the wonders of Abstract Expressionism and brilliant colors of The Fauves.

The red brick school is the only building for miles, a lone geometric shape among organic forms on a ridge top. Like me, it is isolated. I live in South Bend, which is only twenty-five miles away, but it might as well be another country. People here call it “the evil city.” Although I grew up on a farm in Illinois, I am foreign to them. In this place people debate whether it is a sin to install a windshield on one's horse-drawn buggy. Even among my co-workers I am separate. Except for one, my fellow teachers are not Mennonites, but they are older, conservative church members, and most have lived here all of their lives. The only other art teacher in the system is at the junior-senior high school. He's a lifelong resident who attended a local conservative private college. Our paths rarely cross. The other first year teacher is Glenda, a young married woman who is the only member of her church to have attended college. She teaches first grade. She wears home-sewn shirtwaist dresses in the prescribed Mennonite style. Her hair is tightly rolled in a bun, covered by the white organza prayer cap. She is patently intent on proving that a woman can graduate and still remain a good New Order Mennonite. She is judgmental and openly disapproving of me.

The school sits at a place where three pastures join. Some of the Old Order Mennonite kids ride their ponies to school. It would be a sin for them to ride in a motor

vehicle like the school bus. They tether their ponies to a fence at the edge of the playground until the afternoon bell dismisses school. Next year their parents will carpool—buggy-pool?—these boys and girls to the junior high for seventh grade, and then their formal schooling will end. The Amish and Mennonites have secured permission from the Indiana Board of Education to waive the rule requiring children to be in school until they are sixteen. After age fourteen their days will be filled with the work of home and farm.

My students love to draw and they do it with the greatest detail. They focus for long periods, girls in prayer caps bent over their drawings, boys in their bowl haircuts and suspenders arguing over how to draw harness details. They draw amazing pictures of their farms, with tiny details like corn falling from a bucket and the chickens eating the kernels. (Along with their non-Amish friends, the boys also draw rockets and race cars. I am mildly annoyed that I must continually pick up these drawings they abandon in the art room. It never dawns on me that they might have a reason for leaving them behind.)

I have no art textbooks, and only a few reproductions I brought from college. They look politely when I show them abstract art. When I try to get them to do freeform paintings or imaginary landscapes, though, it's an uphill battle. I want them to pour color washes onto paper and see what the colorful shapes suggest, drawing an imaginary world. They fidget, want to change to another activity. They don't finish their paintings. I persist, thinking they don't understand the objective. I consult my notes from my college methods classes. Did I fail to write a good learning objective? The next week I try again. More colors? Bigger paper, perhaps?

The evening arrives for the parent-teacher organization music program and its accompanying big art show. I have finally collected some colorful fantasy paintings from all of the grades, along with many realistic drawings. I carefully mount them on colored poster boards and make a name tag for each one. Three sixth grade Old Order Mennonite girls are helping me hang the artworks on the walls of the cafeteria. As I'm taping boards to the cinder block walls, I wonder why we don't have a PTA like many American elementary schools. (Later I would learn that these parents and teachers wanted no affiliation with the national PTA because it endorses a sex education curriculum.) The art show is finally complete. The girls are carrying on a whispered conversation. I step back to admire the display, and then I leave to grab a bite of supper at the café in town before the music program begins.

When I return, cars and horse-drawn buggies are parking in front of the school. Families are arriving for the program. I walk into the cafeteria and I am flabbergasted. There are gaps in my art display! Someone has removed the fantasy paintings and left only the realistic drawings! Third grade music students are milling around the cafeteria, but no one can explain to me what has happened to the art show. I am distressed, puzzled, bewildered. The teachers are sympathetic, but they don't really understand why I am so upset. The principal, a kind man who is also the local Ford car dealer, tries to console me by suggesting the students liked their artworks so much they took them home. This is highly unlikely; I have noticed these students will almost never take home any color artwork. I take a walk down an empty hallway to compose myself.

Looking out of the back door of the school, I see my sixth grade girl assistants leaving, trotting their ponies down the fence-row. Something feels odd. I step out of the

door. Behind the cafeteria are stacks of milk crates. Barely visible in the fading light, protruding from under a stack of crates, are the edges of the fantasy paintings.

I remember not knowing what had gone wrong, but intuition told me I'd missed something important. My students were much like other kids. They weren't angels despite their strict upbringing, but this was out of character for them. I did not re-hang the fantasy paintings. I was upset and puzzled, but I didn't pursue it, mainly because I didn't know what to do. There was no one in whom I could confide. In the middle of my second year there, my husband was transferred and we moved out of the state.

For thirty years the mystery lay forgotten in a corner of my mind. Then, as a doctoral student, I ran across a research study on Mennonite children and imagination. I read it with interest. Researchers from Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, studied the influence of culture on pretend play in Mennonite children (Carlson, Taylor, & Levin, 1998). Using conversations and questionnaires together, the researchers interviewed 18 teachers in three schools in rural Pennsylvania: an Old Order Mennonite school, a New Order Mennonite school, and a non-Mennonite Christian school. The researchers also observed 61 first graders playing during recess at the three schools. Many of my Indiana students' families had roots in the Pennsylvania Mennonites, so the cultural connection was real.

In the background for their study, the researchers described Mennonite views of childrearing. In keeping with the Mennonites' conscious separation from society, little children are kept close to parents when shopping outside their community, are not introduced to non-Mennonite strangers, and are not taught about the outside world. Parents do not encourage fantasy, and often actively discourage it. Mennonites do not

want books read to their children in which animals talk or act like humans, nor stories involving magic. The researchers noted that Menno Simons, the founder of the Mennonite faith, instructed parents not to encourage children in frivolous pastimes like pretend play: “Wink not at [their] follies” (p. 539). The researchers also observed that Mennonite culture severely restricts children from asking questions. Children are expected to learn by watching and imitating adult behavior rather than by asking “why?” Parents caution against new ideas. The study further explained, “Too much education is considered to be a detriment to children’s enjoyment of physical labor; it is associated with individual role confusion, as well as conflict and instability in the culture as a whole” (p. 543).

One of the questions in the study asked the teachers to comment on what aspect of their classroom environment they thought had the greatest influence on children’s imagination. Old Order Mennonite teachers were in high agreement that stories read aloud, art, and workbook lessons in the school curriculum stimulate children’s imaginations most. Acceptable reading in Mennonite schools consisted of stories with a moral purpose, usually involving rural themes. Teachers approved of students who liked to pretend they were characters in stories. One teacher said she asked students to picture what it was like when the pilgrims came to America, or when studying a health lesson, what a human body might look like without skin. When art class was mentioned, it was directed by the teacher. All children drew the same picture, and the “best” picture, by student vote, was the most realistic one (p. 551).

The New Order Mennonite teachers stated that creative writing stimulated children’s imagination most. In these lessons, children wrote about real-life events, such

as going to visit a relative, or they completed a story started by the teacher. These teachers also stated that students disliked creative writing activities. The teachers also mentioned socio-dramatic play (“playing school”) at recess, and science class as stimulating imagination. (Old Order Mennonite schools do not formally teach science.)

In the non-Mennonite Christian school, teachers listed a wider variety of activities that trigger imagination, including creative writing, “freedom to explore,” and “exposure to lots of different things.” One teacher in this school, however, cautioned against encouraging children who have imaginary friends. She believed that “manipulating make-believe entities in the mind is like witchcraft and thus contrary to a true God” (p. 553).

In observing the first grade students at play during recess, the researchers rated play as primarily *reality-oriented*, based on use of objects for their intended purpose (building a tower of blocks) or involvement in a realistic activity (reading a book or climbing a structure), or *fantasy-oriented*, based on performing activities in the absence of the necessary materials, or inanimate objects treated as animate, or one object or gesture substituted for another. Play was scored high in imaginativeness if children introduced their own settings, sound effects, characters, or other make believe elements. If the play showed more realism, used real objects, and stayed within the limits of the immediate environment, it was scored low in imaginativeness.

The Old Order Mennonite children scored lowest in the use of imaginary objects. Their play was closer to the reality of their lives, keeping to themes like pretending to drive a horse and buggy, or care for a baby. They did not use the swings or seesaws as props in outdoor pretend play. Although the New Order Mennonite and non-Mennonite

Christian children also engaged in some real-life types of play, they also made up wilder story lines involving stealing gold, and being captured (p. 557). The New Order Mennonite and non-Mennonite Christian children were also more likely to make up imaginary props like knocking on the imaginary door of an imaginary house, or serving imaginary food during their play. Old Order Mennonite children were not observed using any imaginary props during the study (p. 558).

The researchers cited several possible reasons why Mennonite children tended to act out roles that imitate their everyday lives instead of more imaginative themes. Mennonite literature indicates adults have more positive attitudes about play that prepares children for their future lives. Mennonite children also have a narrower range of experience in their play lives. They are not exposed to the media and they do not have large amounts of free time to visit friends or engage in unstructured play. Mennonite children even seem to lack words for some imaginative experiences. Carlson, Taylor, and Levin gave an example of a first grader who did not know the word “pretend” when he came across it in a story about a bird who faked death to trick a predator. He asked the researcher to explain what the word meant. An Old Order Mennonite girl was watching another girl dress a doll. The researcher reported, “She kept repeating in a dismissive tone, ‘It’s not a right baby.’ We questioned her and learned that she was trying to express that the doll was not a real baby” (p. 561).

These researchers concluded that the capacity and inclination for imagination develops in all children as they reach the age of using symbols and representational thought. The child’s social environment, however, has a major influence on the ways pretend play is manifested (p. 562).

For the first time I began to understand how the Mennonite culture views imagination. I realized the girls might not have wanted their families to see fantasy paintings they and their younger classmates had done because their community did not encourage imagination in any form. I also realized the power differential. With the best of intentions, I may have put them in a difficult spot between obeying their teacher and violating the values of their community.

When I think of driving home from school in Wawasee, there is an image that still comes to mind. On the edge of the pavement ahead I can clearly imagine a black horse and black buggy. Below the back window, there is an aluminum triangle painted Day-Glo red. It's the slow-moving vehicle emblem displayed for safety as they clip-clop along the highway with tractor-trailers roaring by them. The state-required SMV emblem is an incongruous sign on the antiquated vehicle. The Amish and Mennonites comply with the state laws regarding both the SMV emblems and public schooling, but they maintain their religious beliefs and culture without change. Even the children resisted the efforts of the art teacher who wanted to captivate them with fantasy.

When I learned that I had been right in the middle of a strong reaction against imagination, I wanted to study it as a distinct entity. Some people believe it is a dangerous thing—so what *is* this power called imagination?

Imagination and Cognition

The brush is my magic wand. There's a moment of tension as it comes close to the wet paper. Anticipation—and then a wave of brilliant alizarin crimson spreads across the page. Beautiful blooms of red radiate in clusters. I touch the paper with blue. Violet bursts appear as the water carries the colors across each other's boundaries. It happens

because of the attraction of water molecules to each other and to the paper fibers. The pigment molecules are carried along like miniscule surfers riding the cohesive force.

Artists call alizarin crimson a “staining color.” Its pigment has smaller molecules which travel farther on the water than other colors. The paper is a quality watercolor paper with a high cotton content; water travels easily over its clean fibers. I can see mountains with mysterious caves, islands with mermaids, a flying ship, jewels and giant flowers. A fantasy landscape is appearing on the page all by itself, created by pigment traveling on water. I perceive the colored shapes forming in front of my eyes, but by what process do they become a landscape in my imagination?

Long ago people believed there was a little man in our heads who looked at pictures transmitted to our brains. It was called the “homunculus fallacy,” after the Greek word for “little man.” We now know that our visual system processes light patterns into information useful to us. When I look at the watercolor, the red light passes through my pupil, the opening at the front of my eye, where it reaches the lens. My lens focuses the red bloom shape on my retina, a layered sheet of neural tissue lining the back of my eyeball (Livingstone, 2002, p. 24). The light must first pass through the fluid in the center of the eye, then through the first three retinal cell layers, the ganglion, bipolar, and horizontal cells. This is not a problem because these layers are mostly transparent. The fourth layer, the photoreceptor layer, is made up of light-absorbing chemicals, pigments that give off a neural signal when they absorb light. When the light reaches the photoreceptors, the neural signals bounce back toward the front of the eye to the ganglion cells. The ganglion cells, in turn, send the signal to the optic disk, which is the connecting point where the optic nerve passes from the eyeball to the brain. Livingstone explained

that the optic disk has no photoreceptors or other neuronal cells in it, so that part of the retina cannot be used for seeing (p. 24). From the optic disk, the light of the red bloom shape enters the optic nerve and travels to the brain. We'll continue to follow it in a moment. First, though, a word about this cell layer in the retina. Its structure is consistent with humans' propensity to be active in the daytime. Our eyes are designed for acuity rather than for nocturnal vision. We have two kinds of photoreceptors, rods and cones. Both generate neural signals in response to light, but cones are less sensitive and work in daylight. Cones are concentrated in the center of the retina. Rods are more sensitive, more numerous, and are used in dim or nighttime light conditions; they are located on the periphery of the retina. We have only one kind of rod, which is why we cannot see colors in very dim light. Three different kinds of cones allow me to perceive the colors in my painting. Each kind contains a different pigment and responds best over a different range of visible light wavelengths. The cones' neural signal is binary—the neuron signals or it doesn't. So the signal does not provide information about the color of the light that produced it, only whether there was light or not. Information about the color of the light is indicated by which cells signal and how often they signal. The cone types are referred to as long-, middle- and short-wavelength cones, although they are more often called red, green, and blue cones, referring to the visual pigments found in the cone cells (Livingstone, 2002, p. 24-27). The cone cells detect the three primary colors and the brain decodes the myriad combinations of hues, values, and saturation possible (Livingstone, 2002, p. 87).

The image of the big red bloom has now traveled along the optic nerve to my brain. I can store this image in my memory, and later transform it into something never

seen before. Visual images are often built on memories. Kosslyn and Koenig (1995, p. 129) explained that imagery can be used to access information in memory, to help people reason, to learn new skills, and to assist in comprehension of verbal descriptions. In imagining a landscape in my mind, the visual area of my brain may become active just as if I were actually seeing it. In a study, people were asked questions requiring imagery, such as, “Is the green of pine trees darker than the green of grass?” They were also asked mathematical questions not requiring imagery. When the subjects were answering imagery questions, blood flow to the visual areas of the brain increased as if they were actually looking at something (Kosslyn & Koenig, 1995, p. 132). Visual imagery and visual perception share the same processing mechanism of my brain. Therefore, as I begin to form an image of the fantasy landscape in my mind, a spatial pattern will begin to take shape. My visual cortex in the occipital lobe will map out a three-dimensional structure for the red bloom shape (pp. 133-134). As part of interpreting the image, I will mentally inspect it. The brain mimics the activities of perception, “holding up” the image, showing the details of the red bloom shape and its spatial properties as if it were a sphere (p. 134).

In creating the fantasy landscape, three ways of generating mental images will come into play. When I imagine the mountains and caves, I am *recalling previously seen objects*. Activation of stored information is a complex process, according to Kosslyn (1994, p. 285). My memory may have stored separate images of a mountain individually, such as cliffs, ledges, or cave openings, so my mind must integrate these representations. In imagining the flying ship, I am *combining objects in novel ways*. Familiar components like my memories of rudders, decks, and hulls are combined in new ways with wings and

billowing sails. Finally, in imagining mermaids, I am *visualizing novel patterns that are not based on real components*. I am “mentally drawing” creatures never actually seen. Kosslyn reported that research on image generation has increased in recent years, but it has been controversial because the process is intricate and studies have produced conflicting results (p. 285).

Literature on Imagination

In creating the watercolor shapes and imagining them as a landscape, I have utilized imagery and sensory experience. Literature on the nature and functions of imagination includes discussions of imagery and sensory input. In *Art and Cognition*, Arthur Efland (2002) defined imagination as “the act or power of forming mental images of what is not actually present to the senses or what has not actually been experienced. It is also the act or power of creating new ideas or images through the combination and reorganization of previous experiences” (p. 133). Immanuel Kant pointed out that the imagination relies on sensory data. In *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, Kant wrote, “However great an artist the imagination may be, even if it be a sorceress, it still is not creative, but must gather the material for its images from the senses” (1996, p. 58). Rationalists did not trust the imagination, believing it received unreliable information from the senses. They highlighted the superiority of the mind over the body. Rene Descartes wrote in *Meditations on First Philosophy*:

But finally here I am, having insensibly reverted to the point I desired, for, since it is now manifest to me that even bodies are not properly known by the senses or by the faculty of the imagination, but by the understanding only, and since they are not known from the fact that they are seen or touched, but only because they

are understood, I see clearly that there is nothing which is easier for me to know than my mind. (1996, p. 18)

Further, Descartes believed the imagination served no useful purpose in his makeup:

I remark besides that this power of imagination, which is in one, inasmuch as it differs from the power of understanding, is in no use a necessary element in my nature, or in [my essence, that is to say, in] the essence of my mind; for although I did not possess it I should doubtless ever remain the same as I now am, from which it appears that we might conclude that it depends on something which differs from me. (1996, p. 37)

This outlook may have laid the foundation for the current positivist approach to education we see in many places today. In contrast, Jean-Paul Sartre believed the imagination to be crucial to humanity. Sartre wrote,

There could be no developing consciousness without an imaginative consciousness, and vice versa. So imagination, far from appearing as an accidental characteristic of consciousness, turns out to be an essential and transcendental condition of consciousness. It is as absurd to conceive of a consciousness which did not imagine as it would be to conceive of a consciousness which did not realize the cogito. (1948/2001, p. 103)

Discourse on imagination frequently explores the relationship of imagery to imagination.

In *Art and Imagination: A Study in the Philosophy of Mind*, Roger Scruton distinguished differences between imagination and imagery:

Imagination may, and often does, involve imagery, and imagery is not *just* a kind of thought. However, we might wish to argue that imagery is a separate

phenomenon: it is not only imagining that we have images; there are memory images as well. It should be possible, then, to treat imagination and imagery apart, since neither is a necessary feature of the other. (1998, p. 97)

Scruton continued, dividing the images into two kinds: “those where what is pictured is something that has already been seen, heard, etc. (imagery as part of memory); and those where what is pictured has not in fact been experienced (imagery as part of imagination)” (p. 104). Scruton then explained the connection of image and imagination:

forming an image is one of the principal ways of imagining—this explains, I think, why we use the same word to describe the two activities. Moreover, there is a kind of imagining that essentially involves the distinguishing characteristics of imagery. This is when I undergo an experience in imagination, or imagine the sound, taste, sight or smell of something. (pp. 104-105)

Again, the imagination has returned to the sensory for its material. Amy Kind (2001) identified three characteristics of imagining that indicate mental images are essential to imagination. First, imagining has the quality of directedness. One can imagine an object even if such an object does not exist in the world. In contrast, a mental state like having a headache is not directed (p. 90). Second, imagining is active. Imaginings can be intentional, or they can pop up completely uninvited, like an intense scene from a movie that suddenly comes to mind, interrupting one’s concentration on another activity. This active quality distinguishes imagination from perceiving or hallucinating, both of which are passive (p. 91). Third, imagining contains a phenomenological quality, a “what is it like?” that arises from sensory input. (p. 93). Kind maintained, “No matter what I imagine, my imagining will have an experiential aspect. Without such an experiential

aspect, a mental exercise is not an act of imagining” (p. 94). Images derived from experiences are the vehicles for imagination.

What is the role of imagination in learning? Engaging the imagination is central to teachers’ daily struggle “to enlarge, enrich, and make more abundant the experience of children” according to Kieran Egan (2005, p. 212). “Imagination is the heart of any truly educational experience; it is not something split off from ‘the basics’ or disciplined thought or rational inquiry, but is the quality that can give them life and meaning” (p. 212). Mary Warnock (1978, p. 207) explained how imagination provides meaning:

Meanings spring up round us as soon as we are conscious. The imagination is that which ascribes these meanings, which sees them *in* the objects before us...At an everyday level we must use imagination to apply concepts to things. This is the way we render the world familiar, and therefore manageable.

Imagination works in the creation of multiple meanings and creating symbols. Julie Patton wrote, “The closest word to imagination for me is *dreaming*. Both are parts of the process of transformation and involve the multiplication of meanings” (Edgar & Padgett, 1994, p. 4). A sense of humor develops along with multiple meanings and symbols. Egan argued that “this is important because vivid and flexible understanding and deployment of metaphor are crucial to imagination, creative thinking, and intellectual freedom” (Egan, 1997, p. 226). Egan recommended encouraging students’ playful manipulation of metaphors to develop the sense of humor and metalinguistic awareness. When working with images and metaphors in learning, care must be taken to keep them open and original, not slick and commercial. Beware of labels. Julie Patton explained,

Stable and completed images clip the wings of the imagination instead of encouraging us to dream and to reflect. Such images compel us to consume them and to be dominated by them. My biggest struggle in the classroom involves trying to pry the imagination from confining images. Such confining images include Ninja Turtles, Freddy Krueger, standardized tests, and even styles imagined by young people on the streets of Harlem and repackaged and sold back to them as something new, fresh, and necessary enough to kill for. Meanwhile, the young people themselves will be reprocessed as images, frightening ones, ...such as “children at risk.” (Edgar & Padgett, 1994, p. 5)

I would add to the list of confining images Disney characters, anim  characters, and clothing labels that replace originality with a prepackaged style. My students Kayla and Tiffany have labeled themselves anim  artists. They resist drawing any other style of art. I coax and try every subversive means to nudge them away from the flat, confining images of anim . Here and there I suggest little ways of making their paintings unique, a bit of shading, an interesting background, until they begin to look less like anim  and more like Kayla’s and Tiffany’s own imaginative expressions.

What is the teacher’s role in the imaginative classroom? Gianni Rodari described a creative, communal class in which teachers and students engaged in imaginative work and play together. The teacher encouraged children “to question, challenge, destroy, mock, eliminate, generate, and reproduce their own language and meaning through stories that will enable them to narrate their own lives” (Rodari, 1996, p. xix). In a creative writing assignment about Pinocchio, Rodari suggested a discussion of what it would be like to be made of wood:

What would you eat? What would sleep mean? Whom and what would you fear? What would the rain do to you? What would happen if you broke a finger or a leg? How long would you live and what would death mean? The metaphor of a wooden person can be varied and extended to a person made of marble, straw, chocolate, plastic, smoke, or marzipan. (Rodari, 1996, p. x)

Playing with metaphors is a part of imaginative learning teachers and students can share at every level. William Ayers (2004, p. 42) envisioned a similar shared engagement of imagination in the classroom:

Together students and teachers explore, inquire, investigate, search, ask questions, criticize, make connections, draw tentative conclusions, pose problems, act, seek the truth, name this and that phenomenon, circle back, plunge forward, reconsider, gather steam, pause, reflect, reimagine, wonder, build, assert themselves, listen carefully, speak, and so on.

The art class is an appropriate place for such shared engagement because, in that classroom above all others, everyone present is an artist. Shared interests and talents bring the players together for the purpose of creating images.

Theories of Imagination

Imagination and Aesthetic Satisfaction

Aesthetic processes are a way to sort and discern sensory input that imagination turns into images. My inquiry relies on the premise that images are at the center of imagination. Kearney (1988, p. 15) pointed out that in Western thought, the ability to imagine has been defined both as a *representational* capability, which “reproduces

images of some pre-existing reality,” and a *creative* faculty, producing images “which often lay claim to an original status in their own right.”

With the rise of Behaviorist psychology, imagination became separated from images. In philosophy and psychology, the belief developed that thought was based on language rather than on imagery. In the 1960s and 1970s, however, imagery again became a topic for experimental psychological research (Thomas, 2004, ¶15).

In Maxine Greene’s view, aesthetic perceptions provide openings for imagination. In these openings, we create meaning:

We need to understand what is involved as we move (as we should) from attending to the work in its integrity to moments of presence, of felt relation to the work, when we allow our imagination to play on what we have perceived, when we incarnate it and make it ours. (Greene, 2001, p.11)

Images derived from experiences are the vehicles for imagination. These images are taken out of the everyday routine, set apart, and made special. Greene remarked that, to attend to a work of art, we move into an aesthetic space “where the familiar becomes unfamiliar” (Greene, 2001, p. 69). Imagination moved into open spaces of freedom where wildflowers grow. These are the spaces where imagination can be released.

Paul Harris, a developmental psychologist, defined imagination as “a mode of thought that is dominated by free association and wishful thinking” (Harris, 2000, p. 2). His studies have indicated imagination is triggered by setting aside literalism, as children do in pretend play. When one partner makes a stipulation, the other player can explore the possibilities. The imaginary play then unfolds in a “causal chain,” like a narrative (Harris, 2000, p.19). In addition to pretend play, this theory can also be applied to

imaginative activities in an art textbook. For example, if the assignment calls for a drawing of a space colony on a planet far from the sun, the student artist will need to imagine details appropriate to the stipulated environment: cold, dark, inhospitable. Then the causal chain will unfold as she imagines appropriate food, clothing, and shelter for the colonists. This leads to working out tools and transportation, and possibly a brush with danger. Limitations—like “cold and darkness”—bracket the imagination at each juncture as the story unfolds in a drawing. Rollo May described the role of limitations in creating: “Creativity arises out of the tension between spontaneity and limitations, the latter (like the river banks) forcing the spontaneity into the various forms which are essential to the work of art or poem” (May, 1975, p. 115). In these views, suspending literalism and creating brackets for the experience spark imagination.

John Dewey suggested interaction with the environment sparks imagination. The memory of prior experiences and the stimulation of new ones set off imagination:

For while the roots of every experience are found in the interaction of a live creature with its environment, that experience becomes conscious, a matter of perception, only when meanings enter it that are derived from prior experiences.

Imagination is the only gateway through which these meanings can find their way into a present interaction; or rather...the conscious adjustment of the new and the old *is* imagination. (Dewey, 1934/1980, p. 272)

In Dewey’s definition, “an imaginative experience is what happens when varied materials of sense quality, emotions, and meaning come together in a union that marks a new birth in the world” (Dewey, 1934/1980, p. 267).

Roger Von Oech systematically studied ways to spark imagination. He identified “mental locks” that keep our thinking in the humdrum routine. These “locks” sound like warnings we may have heard in school: “Look for the right answer. Follow the rules. Avoid ambiguity. To err is wrong” (Von Oech, 1998, p. 14-15). To trigger imagination, he recommends a variety of “whacks on the side of the head”—ideas or events that jolt us out of the routine and force us to take a new look at the problem. Asking questions that lead to multiple “right answers” is an important step in imaginative thought.

After exploring what triggers imagination, it is appropriate to look at what smothers imagination. Dewey listed detriments to aesthetic experience as things that destroy unity or quash imagination:

They are the humdrum; slackness of loose ends; submission to convention in practice and intellectual procedure. Rigid abstinence, coerced submission, tightness on one side and dissipation, incoherence and aimless indulgence on the other, are deviations in opposite directions from the unity of experience. (Dewey in Simpson, Jackson, & Aycock, 2005, p. 140)

The creation of something new from the intersection of sensory experience, ideas, and meaning happens continuously in the art studio. The art textbook could be a vehicle for expanding imagination at this junction.

Books are appropriate tools for expanding imagination. Harris stated that reading, in all age groups, involves the imagination in ways similar to those of children’s pretend games. In both, we locate ourselves in the make-believe world and place imaginary events at the center of consciousness. In the process, “certain objects are rendered salient and cognitively accessible, whereas others fade into the background” (Harris, 2000,

pp. 48-49). In Harris' studies, verbal cues presented to stimulate creation of images prompted children to treat the problem as an imaginary world. Participants created images of

creatures and events that violate their everyday knowledge—fishes that live in trees and cats that bark. Yet precisely because children have knowingly entered an imaginary world, empirical considerations are set aside and do not interfere with their acceptance of the initial premise. (Harris, 2000, pp. 105-106)

In this process, the participant chooses salient features, which are brought to the forefront and enlivened with a response. The participant opens up to receive certain features, and meets them halfway by responding. Maxine Greene described a similar process as perceiving a work of art by “taking it in and going out to it” (Greene, 2001, p. 13). She described “an active probing of wholes as they become visible.” The action required is a “mental and imaginative participation...a consciousness of a work as something there to be achieved, depending for its full emergence on the way it is attended to and grasped” (Greene, 2001, p. 13). Imaginative participation involves both receiving and interacting with the text or images.

Eisner believed the way something is formed matters. Roger Chartier expressed a similar thought about the physical form of books in *The Order of Books*:

There is no text apart from the physical support that offers it for reading (or hearing), hence there is no comprehension of any written piece that does not at least in part depend upon the forms in which it reaches its reader. (Chartier, 1992, p. 9)

If form matters, then the design of a page is important to learning. Graphic design is the composition of text and/or images for purposes of communication. The design of the book has a bearing on its instructional utility. The book's graphic design performs four functions that influence learning: (1) it captures attention; (2) it communicates concepts; (3) it sparks imagination by offering alternative solutions; and (4) it invites participation.

The first function of graphic design is to attract attention. The design of a book can determine whether the student opens it. A book's design communicates a concept; the reader makes an almost instantaneous decision about whether that concept is of interest. Mary Stewart, in the art textbook *Launching the Imagination*, defined a concept as "a well-developed thought" (2002, p. 1-9). A concept may be described in both text and images. As it communicates concepts, an imaginative art textbook will provide opportunities for the reader to engage with the page. A well-presented concept can spark imagination. Stewart stated, "By developing rich concepts, we set the stage for the development of inventive objects and images. Dull concepts, on the other hand, generally result in dull images" (p. 1-9). Rich concepts, expressed in both text and images, engage the reader with the message, triggering imaginative responses that lead to learning.

Stewart pointed out that developing a concept is only the beginning of communication. To reach an audience, a concept must be communicated in a visually powerful composition. Graphic design elements—lines, shapes, textures, values, and colors—achieve power by their arrangement in a unified whole (p. 1-10). An art book communicates beliefs about the reader by the appearance of its pages. The cover and page layouts of *Launching the Imagination*, for example, feature generous areas of white space. According to the conventions of graphic design, white space indicates a view of

the reader as visually sophisticated. White space in the book invites interaction by providing space for the reader to jot notes. Even if the student is not permitted literally to write on the pages, the design communicates that the reader's ideas are valued here. Pages filled with text all the way to the margins suggest the author is the unquestionable authority, and close off interaction.

Art textbooks are teaching aesthetic beliefs and principles not only by their design but also by their content and approach. Eisner (2002b, pp.196-198) highlighted the aesthetic satisfaction gained from work in the fine arts. He emphasized that the way something is formed is important; the intrinsic satisfaction of creating matters; and taking time to enjoy the experience is valuable. Art textbooks can support these values by accentuating art processes rather than constantly privileging art products. When art textbooks guide students in experimentation, they teach that aesthetic satisfaction matters.

Imagination and Culture

Maxine Greene believed aesthetic education is essential to the development of students' imagination. Cultural development arises as individuals "seek greater coherence in the world" (Greene, 2001, p. 7) Ties between imagination and culture began with the origins of the human race. European cave art suggests its creators were able to imagine elaborate mental images of the world around them and to understand the importance of human life. Jolly (1999, p. 377) described early humans' use of imagination:

They attributed cause and effect. They speculated about unseen causes to link otherwise inexplicable events. They feared death...People who ventured deep into the earth, carrying stone lamps of burning bear grease, hollow blow-brushes and powdered pigments, were creating an order of the imagination.

Falk noted that elaborate development of the frontal lobes of the brain allows humans to possess active imaginations. The ability to measure time allows humans to anticipate future events and to try out various responses in their minds. Falk pointed out that the imagination is a powerful force that is almost always “on,” either in daydreams or night dreams, and that it will “entertain” itself with fantasies if it is not being used for something practical (Falk, 1992, p. 66).

Dissanayake (1995, p. 175) explained imagination is central to human understanding, enabling us to organize our perceptions: “Imagination, far from being an idle, fanciful, escapist type of activity, peripheral to the real nuts and bolts of practical life, is essential to the structure of rationality.” Imagination assists the brain in organizing the recurring patterns found in bodily movement, perceptions, storage of images, and interactions with objects. Without it, our experiences would be chaotic and unintelligible.

If imagination is essential to human understanding, then, what has the collective human imagination created across time periods and cultures? Dissanayake pointed out that human societies all over the world include “valued avenues and occasions for fantasy, make-believe, and imagination” as activities that are “positive and integrative” (p. 86). These activities are used as means of wish fulfillment, symbolism, and generating meaning for the participants. Artistic imagination confers emotion upon created images. These images may just as well be “healing as pathological, creative as defensive, real as unreal. [Their] psychological value must surely be in what is positively given and added to life, as much or more than in what is disguised, repressed, or confabulated” (p. 86).

Joseph Campbell explained why imagination crosses cultural boundaries: “The imagination is grounded in the organs of the body, and these are the same in all human

beings. Since imagination comes out of one biological ground, it is bound to produce certain themes” (1988, p. 49). Because we are all human, there are themes and myths that will appear across cultures and time periods. Harpur defined myths as “imaginative templates” that help us make sense of the world (2002, p. 75). He listed 13 archetypes that appear in myths the world over, including the Hero, Old Wise Man, Trickster, Great Mother, Significant Animal, Healer, and Divine Child (p. 39). He believed imaginative myths help us to see the larger narrative in which we live: “It is intrinsically healing and liberating for the soul to be told the stories, the myths, of its tribe” (p. 43). Imagination helps us to find where we belong in our society.

It is at school that we learn how to find a place in our community. Young artists search for ways to be part of a group—to “fit in”—and yet to stand out, to be unique. Stephanie Perrin, who believed that studying the arts supports healthy adolescent development, wrote about imagination and high school students. Young artists see themselves not as “teenagers—an identity with almost no positive connotations in this culture—but as musicians, dancers, painters, actors, or writers. These identities connect them to other artists and to their peers” (Perrin, 2004, p. 3). She pointed out that the study of the arts links students to several communities. One is the community “that reaches back in time” (Perrin, 2004, p. 4). Perrin summarized, “It is as if there is a line of hands joined over hundreds of years reaching into the present, and that this lineage is an active and living thing” (Perrin, 2004, p. 4). Further, adolescents can identify with a community of artists—both in the present and in the past—and still feel separate from ordinary society, satisfying their need to fit in and to stand out. (Perrin, 2004, p. 4). Through art study and art textbooks, students can find connections in their lives with artists through

the ages. These connections can help students imagine how they might live innovative lives.

It is at school that we learn our society's approaches to work and problem-solving. Does our culture reward creativity and imagination? Are our schools teaching children to think critically, to use open-ended approaches? To see multiple perspectives? Eisner wrote,

The imagination is, fundamentally, an important dimension of human consciousness and, at bottom, the engine of cultural and social progress. It is a resource distinctive to our species...I believe our schools should create the kind of environment and provide the kind of tasks that elicit and develop respect for wonder and stimulate the imagination (Eisner, 1991, p. 15).

An environment that develops appreciation for wonder and imagination is one that encourages many viewpoints and ways of learning.

Imagination and Multiple Perspectives

In addition to seeking many viewpoints, many forms of representation are accepted and rewarded in an imaginative school environment. Dewey advocated the nurturing of

an active desire to listen to more sides than one; to give heed to facts from whatever source they come; to give full attention to alternative possibilities; to recognize the possibility of error even in beliefs that are dearest to us. (Dewey in Simpson, Jackson, & Aycock, 2005, p. 181)

Eisner maintained that humans formulate understanding through a variety of means, and the forms through which knowledge is represented, are crucially important. His definition

of imagination emphasizes the importance of imagination to the advancement of culture: “The power to imagine is central to our culture’s development. It not only provides for cultural development, it provides for our own development; because, through culture, our own development occurs” (Eisner, 1998, p. 25-26). Rather than seeking new images, much in education today is concerned with the correct replication of what already exists. Standards, “teacher-proof” materials, and standardized tests provide a false sense of predictability. Eisner (2002a) called such materials “anti-convivial tools” because they define and limit what people should do. “Convivial tools,” on the other hand, expand the options and offer more choices. They do not restrict communication. They “stimulate ingenuity” (pp. 372-373). Human understandings should be secured and represented through many forms, not only through language and quantification. As Eisner commented, “Not everything that we want to say can be said in language. Not everything that we want to convey can be reported in numbers” (1991, p. 15). Eisner strongly believed the “modes of treatment” matter, that is, the forms of representing knowledge. When verbal and quantitative modes are the only representations taught, students leave school semi-literate, according to Eisner. “By defining the forms of representation that matter within the curriculum, the school significantly influences the kinds of meanings that students can learn to secure and represent,” Eisner pointed out (1998, p. 119). Joseph Campbell believed our society is in danger of losing the art of thinking in images. Campbell noted, “Our thinking is largely discursive, linear. There is more reality in an image than in a word” (1988, p. 74). School is based on the idea that language is first and foremost, yet a child thinks in images long before she can speak. Karen Gallas (1994, p. 116) pointed out that school does not value the thinking skills children bring with them

when they arrive. Imagination and intuition are marginalized in school. “We overload children with words and words and words about every conceivable subject, and these words represent the limited communication structure of the adult world,” Gallas wrote. In contrast, the thought processes of highly accomplished people like Einstein and Darwin involve “a creative process in which intuition, imagination, metaphor, and visualization enabled them to gain important insights” (p. 116). Einstein used science and creativity together. Einstein stated, “I am enough of an artist to draw freely upon my imagination. Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand” (Einstein, 1929). Eisner saw the value of presenting knowledge to students through many forms, especially through the representational forms in which they originated, for example, “listening to Stravinsky, seeing Picasso’s Cubism, reading Einstein’s comments on his own thought processes” (Eisner, 1998, p. 50). A curriculum so rich in resources, “designed to ground such material in time and in representational form, would multiply the number and types of ‘cognitive hooks’ or forms of scaffolding that students could use to advance their own learning” (Eisner, 1998, p. 50). An art textbook that presents multiple representations—artworks, art criticisms, poetry, music, readings—on a topic increases the connections the student can make and becomes a mind-expanding convivial tool.

Framework for Analyzing Art Textbooks

In evaluating art textbooks, I have synthesized a framework of questions that come from the imagination theories of Dewey, Greene, and Eisner. The four criteria are:

How does the book expand imagination through enjoyment of the creative process?

How does the book expand imagination through synthesis?

How does the book expand imagination through multiple representations of knowledge?

How does the book expand imagination by teaching aesthetic principles?

As Dewey wrote, “an imaginative experience is what happens when varied materials of sense quality, emotions, and meaning come together in a union that marks a new birth in the world” (Dewey, 1934/1980, p. 267). The first criterion for art textbooks will be: *How does the book expand imagination through enjoyment of the creative process?* Enjoyment of the creative process will be evident in the books by the presence of experiments, the valuation of process as much as product, extensions of the artwork, and delayed closure of the project.

With that in mind, the second criterion for art textbooks is: *How does the book expand imagination through synthesis?* In the books synthesis will show up in the form of open-ended questions, higher level thinking activities, and writing projects that deepen understanding of art. We should be *present with* the students, being what Greene called “in the world differently—feeling ourselves in process, in quest working together as seekers, as questioners in what we sometimes call the learning community” (Greene, 2001, p. 123). A good art textbook will provide us with what we need for the quest.

Eisner’s work encompasses all of the criteria, but he clearly expressed the need for schools to promote multiple solutions, and teach many ways of representing knowledge. “The meaning that representation carries is both constrained and made

possible by the form of representation we employ. Not everything can be ‘said’ with anything” (Eisner, 1998, p. 121). Therefore the third criterion for examining art textbooks is: *How does the book expand imagination through multiple representations of knowledge?* The book will meet the criteria well if it encourages multiple solutions and many types of assessments. Music, poetry, readings, dance, theatre—all of the arts connect to art textbooks. Poetry, especially, fits well with art. Liston (2001, p. 174) remarked that poetic language “allows an aesthetic and vibrant experience” of intellectual ideas, and “sets the stage for poetic thinking.” In that state, the walls between images, ideas, and sounds are melted away and the mind is open to imaginative thought.

Eisner believed that the way something is formed matters, and so the fourth criterion for evaluating art textbooks is: *How does the book expand imagination by teaching aesthetic principles?* Art textbooks are teaching aesthetic beliefs and principles not only by their content but by the way they model design. To be convivial tools, an art textbook needs to offer choices and open-ended activities to both teacher and student. These criteria are outlined in greater detail in chapter 6, the analysis of art textbooks.

Summary

Literature on imagination shows that imagination relies on images, which are generally derived from experience. Interaction with the environment sparks imagination. Books are appropriate tools for expanding imagination; reading involves the imagination in ways similar to pretend play. The form of a book is important; the book’s design captures attention, communicates a concept, sparks imagination, and invites participation. Imagination allows humans to comprehend the importance of life. It is central to human understanding, enabling us to organize our perceptions. Because imagination is grounded

in the sensory organs, which all humans share, some themes and myths appear across cultures and time periods. These myths help us to find our place in society. In a curriculum, human understanding could be represented in many forms, not only by language and quantification.

If I were to return to Wawasee, how would I teach the children there, having studied more about imagination? I would still encourage them to expand their imaginations, although I might focus on Kosslyn's first two ways of generating images: *recalling previously seen objects* and *combining objects in novel ways*. I would encourage the children to use imagination to solve real problems they might encounter in their lives, such as inventing a gate latch they could open without dismounting from their ponies. Because there are students there who are not Mennonite or Amish, I would still offer all students the pleasure of totally imaginary artworks—*visualizing novel patterns that are not based on real components*—on a voluntary basis, offering an alternate project besides. With regard to art shows, I would do as I have done since that first catastrophic art show: I would ask every student's permission before displaying their artwork.

The theory of imagination which guides my inquiry states that imagination is expanded by activities that allow enjoyment of the creative process, and value the process as much as the product. Activities that encourage extension of the creative work or delayed closure offer opportunities for expanding the imagination. Imagination is further expanded by open-ended learning and higher level thinking involving constructing, improving, proposing, planning, changing, adapting, deciding, evaluating, interpreting, and similar activities. Writing can expand imagination when it deepens understanding of art and takes place at the higher levels of thinking. Imagination may expand when

multiple solutions and representations of knowledge are encouraged. A book's design can encourage imaginative thought when it opens up opportunities for participation, and offers the unexpected, the new, and the unpredictable.

If some people fear imagination, it may be because it is a power without boundaries. It draws on the energies of memory, emotion, cognition, and creativity. There is no limit to what may be created in the mind. Black-eyed-Susans grow where no one planted them. Surprises and experiments happen in the art studio alongside the plans. There is joy in the journey. Examining art textbooks is the first step toward opening spaces for new kinds of instructional materials, asking, "Why not?" and creating textbooks never before imagined. First, however, we might look at the art textbooks we already have, and how they arrived in our classrooms in their present form. In the landscape of the park, the current books are like park benches and fountains—they were most likely there when we came, and those of us who use them had little influence over their design.



Figure 4-1. Lynda Kerr. *Fountain*. 2006. Watercolor on paper. 11" X 14." Collection of the artist.

CHAPTER 4

PARK BENCHES AND FOUNTAINS:

THE EFFECTS OF TEXTBOOK ADOPTION

Let us develop everyone's creativity so that the world will change

(Gianni Rodari, 1996, p. 113).

In sketching the park watercolor we cannot ignore the human-made elements like the park benches and the fountains. Park benches are a repeated shape, geometric, rectangular—like a textbook. We will have to be aware of their placement in the composition because they are all uniform. Too many shapes alike and we'll lose the variety. Like schools, if there is too much value placed on uniformity, the picture becomes constraining and loses its lively, imaginative qualities. The fountain in the park is a place for reflection and deeper understanding of art. We'll have to find our own ways to paint the water highlights and reflections because the pool is shallow and the textbook gives us very little information.

Literature on Textbook Publishing and Adoption

It takes a textbook two years or more to make its way from the author's desk to the student's desk in the classroom. During that journey, many influences besides the author will shape the book. Beyer and Apple contended that too little attention has been paid to textbooks. The textbook has a tremendous influence on curriculum, yet "very little critical attention has been paid to the ideological, political, and economic sources of its production, distribution, and reception" (Beyer & Apple, 1998, p. 159). Twenty-one states—Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Texas, California,

Idaho, Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon, New Mexico, and Utah—currently have statewide textbook adoption policies. California, Texas, and Florida account for almost one third of the American K-12 textbook market. Therefore, the political and ideological atmospheres of these states often determine the content and form of the books used by the entire nation (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991, p. 33; Loewen, 1995, p. 278; Chambliss & Calfee, 1998, p. 175). California adopts textbooks only for grades K-8, while Texas adopts for K-12. Texas, therefore, has a heavy influence on high school books across America (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2004, p. 20).

Textbooks have been seen as “instruments for transmitting knowledge and values to the young generation, and thus for reproduction or transformation of the social order” (Kalmus, 2004, p. 469). Textbooks have distinct features not found in other books. For one thing, educational texts are used in institutional settings, where there is one person who is assumed to know the “correct answer,” (the teacher) and others who are controlled and tested for the correct answer (the pupils). This gives the textbook greater authority than a book which is read for meaning-making. For another, a part of the socializing message may be in the hidden curriculum (social representation of gender roles, ethnic minorities, etc.). This may “escape the attention of pupils’ critical consciousness as it passes through the route of peripheral cognitive processing.” The institutional credibility that is assumed for textbooks may cause students to take the hidden message for granted (Kalmus, 2004, p. 471-472).

A textbook’s power to transmit social values is not absolute, however. Kalmus described challenges in measuring the influence of textbooks on socialization. She identified studies that assumed socialization is a cumulative process influenced by many

events, experiences, and discourses. Textbooks are only one of these influences. Textbook information, in addition, is interpreted and added to pre-existing beliefs and knowledge depending on its “similarity to existing knowledge and attitudes, the credibility and authority of the medium, and the context of the situation” (Kalmus, 2004, p. 470). Assumptions about textbook research often fail to take into account differences in interpretation by students. Social context and socio-psychological variables such as ethnicity, gender, social class, and personality may cause individual students to interpret the same text in very different ways (Kalmus, 2004, p. 470-471). Apple (2000) discussed three ways people can respond to text: dominant, negotiated, and oppositional. In the dominant reading, the reader “accepts the messages at face value. In a negotiated response, the reader may dispute a particular claim, but accept the overall tendencies or interpretations of a text. Finally, an oppositional response rejects these dominant tendencies and interpretations” (p. 58). Many responses will be a combination of these. The main idea is that the reader is not passive, but actively reads and constructs a response based upon his or her own experiences and attitudes (p. 58). Apple pointed out that “there may be institutional constraints on oppositional readings” (p. 58). They can, however, only govern the expressions. The institution cannot control the reader’s thoughts. Apple noted that texts can signify authority, legitimate or other, or freedom. Critical teachers can employ even conservative texts for “reflexive and challenging activity.” Apple asserted that, even though dominant institutions have the power to regenerate themselves through their material foundations—“and especially now with the Right being so powerful and with their increasing attention to politics at the local, county,

and state levels—we need never to lose sight of the power of popular organizations, of real people, to struggle, resist and transform [our institutions]” (p. 59).

One place our dominant institutions regenerate themselves through material foundations is in the state control of textbook selection. The literature shows state involvement in textbook regulation grew up alongside public education. Chambliss & Calfee (1998) outlined the history of textbooks. Before the mid-1800s, textbook development was much less organized than the system we know today. Children fortunate enough to be able to attend school had books designed to teach them how to read using moralistic or alphabetic themes. Parents provided the books, so often children in the same classroom had different books. Although the classroom might have had diverse age levels and reading abilities among the children, there was little disagreement about instructional methods. Children used the same books their parents had used, and both parents and teachers tended to uphold the moralistic content of the books. By the middle of the nineteenth century, universal elementary education increased the numbers of children in schools. As more children came to school with varying backgrounds and ages, schools divided them into grade levels. Publishers provided grade level textbooks with teacher editions to help teachers manage the larger classes. State governments began to mandate free textbooks for all students and to outline adoption procedures for choosing the books. In the late nineteenth century, family mobility was on the rise. Parents had to buy new textbooks in each new school district. States responded by providing free textbooks and adopting books to be used statewide. Massachusetts led the way, requiring all its districts to provide free textbooks to all students in 1882. By 1915, almost half of the states had legislation regulating textbook selection to some degree (pp. 166-167).

State governments felt justified in controlling the purchase of books because they viewed them as supplies. Tyson-Bernstein commented,

The textbook system in the United States was designed at the turn of the century to deal with turn-of-the-century issues—cost control, corruption, and the consolidation of curricular authority...Turn-of-the-century legislators tended to see textbooks as a commodity—like bleachers or blackboards—and sought to control costs and ensure durability. (1988, p. 4)

States also used textbooks to promote political purposes. In the aftermath of the Civil War, embittered Southerners distrusted Yankee publishers. Wanting their schoolchildren to have their own textbooks, Southern states set up adoption rules to keep anti-Confederate influences out of their schools. Northern publishers complied by publishing separate sets of texts for use in Northern and Southern states. Nearly 150 years later, all of the Southern states are adoption states. The Thomas B. Fordham Institute (2004) remarked in its report, “The textbook adoption process was, in effect, born to twist American history and frustrate the development of common civic purpose” (p. 6).

Apple and Christian-Smith (1991) summarized the adoption states’ justifications for continuing textbook adoption. The states say the system (1) controls costs; (2) ensures a degree of uniformity in textbooks; and (3) provides quality textbooks (p. 73). A nascent trend toward involving the public in debate about textbooks is visible in several mass-market publications. Interestingly, both conservative and liberal authors are challenging the textbook adoption process. In “Why don’t we fix our textbooks?” an article in the *Washington Post*, Jay Mathews (2005) challenged state adoption procedures. Quoting conservative writers like Chester E. Finn, Mathews identified the major beneficiaries of

this time-honored practice as the four major publishers and pointed out that they pay lobbyists to keep state legislatures from dismantling the adoption system. Dan Oko (2002), writing in *Mother Jones* magazine, outlined the strong influence of Texas conservatives on textbook publishers. Conservative groups have caused a widely used science textbook to be rejected and forced revisions to several other books based upon their objections to the authors' positions on the environment. Challenges to social science textbooks were imminent because conservative groups objected to books that showed women as professionals but not as homemakers. Several publishers have invited conservative groups to review their textbooks in advance of regular textbook selection procedures. Oko warned of the ramifications of such actions on the textbook publishing industry. The *South Bend (Indiana) Tribune* featured an article on parents who participated in textbook adoption. Compared to parents in times past, these parents were better informed about state standards and were scrutinizing the books to be sure they met the standards. Parents also commented on whether the books specifically mentioned facts about their state (Stowe, 2005).

Challenges to the traditional adoption process are also coming from the technology industry. The Software and Information Industry Association (SIIA) is working to change outdated adoption rules that prevent state education authorities from spending state funds on digital resources. SIIA published a policy brief in October, 2004, to help schools, states, policy makers, and SIIA members bring about changes in the adoption process. SIIA outlined some barriers that have prevented software from being purchased with state funds. These barriers involve textbook depositories, paper and binding specifications, pricing and payment regulations, and textbook reviewers who lack

technology skills. For example, some state laws require textbooks to be purchased and distributed from a textbook depository, a physical building for book storage. Web-based instructional materials do not have inventory that can be distributed from a depository. Specifications about paper weights and bindings are not applicable to digital media. Pricing and payment guidelines often specify one-time payments, whereas some digital resources charge annual subscription fees. Another problem has been textbook reviewers who lack background in educational technology. In some cases they never installed the software, or spent 20 minutes or less reviewing it. Mississippi regulations specified that first-edition textbooks to be reviewed had to be identified by having a hole drilled in them—a process not possible with software. About half of the adoption states are in the process of revising their policies to include digital-only media in adoptions (Branigan, 2004). According to Mark Tullis, vice president of business development for Learning.com, a Oregon-based online publisher that sells online technology education curriculum and assessment materials, state textbook directors are being encouraged by their state school superintendents to add digital media to state-adoption lists. Tullis explained, “State superintendents are traveling, talking to experts and other educators; they’re very bright people and want to prepare students for the future; they’re looking ahead five or ten years and are seeing new possibilities in how schools can be run and how digital materials can be used. They’re saying, ‘We do need to update our materials; we need to use media forms and delivery systems that students find to be more interesting and engaging’ ” (Tullis, personal communication, June 7, 2006).

Georgia was ahead of many states in the move to accept new media.

Approximately five years ago, the Georgia Department of Education changed its

definition of “textbooks” to include digital-only and online media, according to Gerald Boyd, Associate Director of Curriculum and Instruction Services, Georgia Department of Education (Boyd, personal communication, June 7, 2006).

Chambliss & Calfee described the tasks of a publishing house staff as they begin to work on a typical textbook series. For each level of the series, they identify the specific curricular, instructional, and comprehensibility goals. They diagram the parts of the book to follow the goals: the entire book, units, chapters within units, and lessons within chapters. They also design a diagram to display ancillary materials: student edition, teacher edition, software or video discs, assessment booklets, and enrichment materials. The design diagram will guide the entire production team of writers, illustrators, software developers, and editors as they write the prose and develop the activities. There may be a review and evaluation of the books for each set of goals. Teachers and students in real classrooms may have opportunities to try out the activities and respond with suggestions for changes in the area of comprehensibility, for example. Publishers make changes based on the information before the books go to press (Chambliss & Calfee, 1998, pp. 196-198).

Loewen (1995) stated that authors’ decisions are subordinate to the wishes of publishers. Two relatively unknown authors explained why a major publisher invited them to write a social studies textbook: “They didn’t want famous people, because we’d be more tractable” (p. 284). Loewen described the vapid character of most history textbook writing: “Textbooks exclude conflict or real suspense. They leave out anything that might reflect badly upon our national character. When they try for drama, they achieve only melodrama...Textbooks almost never use the present to illuminate the past”

(p. 13). Loewen also cited the sanitized view most editors want: “a McDonald’s version of history—if it has any flavor, people won’t buy it” (p. 284). Editors often caution authors not offend parents or textbook adoption boards, and authors usually comply (p. 284). In other cases, a senior author with an established reputation has more control over the content. Rosalind Ragans reported that she has maintained major decision-making in the writing and concept planning of all editions of *Arttalk* (Ragans, personal communication, July 23, 2006).

Apple described how publishers change knowledge. Entities like publishing houses, content consultants, and state and local educational authorities, whose purpose is to reproduce knowledge—rather than produce it—act as recontextualizing agents. Change occurs in three ways. First, *the knowledge changes position*. “It is no longer part of the professional discourse of researchers or part of the cultural discourse of oppressed groups, for example. This, thereby, alters power relations. In the new context, the knowledge reproducers have more power and the knowledge is integrated into a different set of political and cultural needs and principles” (Apple, 2000, p. 65). An example is the treatment of Glenna Goodacre’s bronze sculpture *Vietnam Women’s Memorial* in the middle school textbook *Art* (Turner, 2005a, p. 9) published by Scott Foresman. An earlier version of this book was titled *Portfolios* and published by Barrett Kendall (1991). When Barrett Kendall was purchased by Scott Foresman, the book was revised and renamed *Art*. In the *Portfolios* version, more information about the social context of the sculpture was provided. In the 2005 version, the sculpture is still the subject of an art criticism lesson, but the sculpture has been isolated from its context. The student is asked to critique the sculpture without information about the Vietnam War or the social milieu in

which it took place. Although the teacher's edition suggests some "universal themes" stated in obvious forms like, "Military and civilian volunteers from every country help their sick and wounded" (Turner, 2005b, p. 9), little information is given to explain the relationship of the sculpture to the Vietnam War. The discussion questions are so general they fail to locate the sculpture in a context or to bring out specific themes: "Tell about what the artist was saying. What symbols do you see, and what do they mean? Where in your community would you place this sculpture?" (Turner, 2005b, p. 9). In reading the text, I asked, where is the information that assists the student in understanding the roles of women in the late 1960s? Conflicting views of the Vietnam War during its time and since its end? Differing opinions about war memorials as public art? One of the nurses is looking upward, possibly searching the sky for a medical evacuation helicopter. Nothing in the Scott Foresman student edition or the teacher's edition gives any clues as to why she might be looking upward. Would most teachers know the medical evacuation helicopter might be the reason for her upturned face? Freedman stated, "Contexts provide the conceptual connections that make images and objects worthy of study and is as much a part of a work of art as its form, function, or symbolic meaning" (Freedman, 2003, p. 51). I thought about how the experiences of the teacher and the students contribute to the context. My view of the sculpture is colored by my experiences as a student war protester in 1971. The teacher next door will have a different view, telling about his heart-pounding experiences as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam, flying low over lush green forests with bullets winging by him. Today my Vietnamese students regularly go to Ho Chi Minh City to visit relatives; to them it means a vacation spot. Their parents avoid discussing the American war altogether. I thought about my student whose mother and

father are both lieutenant colonels in the Army. Where is the discussion of women's military careers then and now? The artwork carried many facets, many social dimensions that gave it meaning; I wonder how much richer our class discussions could have been if the textbook had provided us with more information.

The second change is the modification of the text by “*selection, simplification, condescension, and elaboration*” (Apple, 2000, p. 65). Apple pointed out that prevailing instructional approaches and the publisher's economic needs will cause authors and textbook adopters to break up knowledge into “bite-size chunks” that are “politically safe” (Apple, 2000, p. 65). There may be biases in the form of representation. For example, when electronic versions of print textbooks are adopted, *Georgia Guidelines for the Electronic Versions of Textbooks* state that the electronic versions are not required to be exact reproductions of the books. They may be text only; images are not required in the electronic versions (Georgia Department of Education, 2002). In school, images are too often considered expendable while words are privileged. As Eisner pointed out, “the form of representation we use to represent what we think influences both the processes of thinking and its products” (Eisner, 1998, p. 46). Imagine the effect on an art textbook if the image is removed and we are forced to rely on the author's verbal description of the artwork. The words chosen to describe the images mediate its meaning. The omission of images in the electronic versions changes the mediation of the text, and therefore changes its meaning.

In the third change, the text has been “*re-positioned and re-focused.*” The knowledge is now organized around different principles and its purpose has changed. The information may be included to maintain a power structure or for socialization purposes

rather than for intellectual development (Apple, 2000, p. 65). In my own experience working on an elementary art series, the editors instructed us to avoid choosing any artworks depicting snakes or guns. The snakes might offend Texas adoption committees, who view the snake as symbol of the devil because of the Bible story of Adam and Eve. This meant no Native American art could be included in which snakes are even symbolically part of the designs. The guns were omitted because California adoption committees might object due to gun control sentiments. As a result, historical paintings which showed American settlers carrying muskets could not be included. The purpose of textbooks—to help children understand the world—took a back seat to the publisher's economic need.

The literature paints a picture of textbooks as a special type of book, with unique, but not absolute, authority. The states have had a long involvement in textbook selection, justifying their oversight by reasons of finances, uniformity, and quality. Challenges to the textbook adoption process have arisen from both liberal and conservative sources, and from the technology sector. Critics say the adoption process reduces the quality of textbooks, making them too much alike, too shallow, and giving the large adoption states too much sway in deciding the content of the books. Suggested reforms would give more power to teachers and local systems to spend state funds, thereby choosing content at the local level and reducing the power of the large adoption states. Publishers have a great deal of control over the content of textbooks, acting as recontextualizing agents with the ability to change the power and purpose of the knowledge they reproduce. Textbook publishers keep their eye on the goal of producing books which will sell in the adoption

states. An examination of the adoption system will explore how it tends to squeeze the imagination out of art textbooks, leaving them uniform and shallow.

The Textbook Adoption Process

Imagine a public policy system that is perfectly designed to produce textbooks that confuse, mislead, and profoundly bore students, while at the same time making all of the adults involved in the process look good, not only in their own eyes, but in the eyes of others. Although there are some good textbooks on the market, publishers and editors are virtually compelled by public policies and practices to create textbooks that confuse students with non sequiturs, that mislead them with misinformation, and that profoundly bore them with pointlessly arid writing. (Tyson-Bernstein, 1988, p.3)

Such cynical views of the adoption process are widespread, but changes to the entrenched procedure do not appear imminent. The adoption process has influenced the textbook from the moment the author put down the first word. Once the book is printed and bound, how does adoption bring the book to the student? The textbook adoption process varies, but the following story might describe the path to adoption by a fictitious book in a typical adoption state. The imaginary book is called *An American Art Tome*, put out by Ersatz House, a fabricated publisher. Today Mr. Feat, an Ersatz House representative, is in a building across the street from the state board of education building, about to present *An American Art Tome*. He and other publishers are presenting their merchandise to a state textbook review board. The board is a small committee of volunteers appointed by the governor or the state superintendent of education. They are teachers, lawyers, parents, or other concerned citizens (Loewen, 1995, p. 278). In Texas,

the nomination form is brief. It asks for the prospective reviewer's academic experience, education and non-education experience, and professional memberships. The eligibility section simply asks whether the reviewer has been employed by, owned an interest in, or received funds from any publishing entity in the past three years (Texas Education Agency, 2006). Reviewers are not compensated, but they do receive travel expenses.

If *An American Art Tome* is placed on the statewide adoption list in an adoption state, Ersatz House has a greater chance of making a profit because the books will qualify for state reimbursement to local districts that buy them (Tyson-Bernstein, 1988, p. 38). If Ersatz House fails to get on the list, however, they will have lost their entry into a profitable market. Mr. Feat will work harder to get on the list if the economic value of the state's approval is greater. He will consider several factors. The fewer books on the list in one category, the better for Mr. Feat, because there will be less competition. If the student population in the state is larger, the stakes are higher, because more books may be purchased. Mr. Feat will also look at costs associated with gaining state approval. Texas may require Ersatz House to produce an edition of *An American Art Tome* in Spanish, to maintain an on-site sales staff, or to provide hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of free samples. If Ersatz House can pull off a big sale in a large adoption state, the company may recover the cost of the entire series in that one sale. Mr. Feat may be promoted, or offered a job with a larger publisher. On the other hand, if *An American Art Tome* fails to make the list, he may lose his job. If Ersatz House loses a large state adoption, they may even go bankrupt (Tyson-Bernstein, 1988, pp. 38-39).

Mr. Feat knows how high the stakes are, but he's a professional. He's been through this before. He draws the board members' attention to the form of the books,

rather than the content. He points out special features of the layout, such as eye-catching graphics and “critical thinking activities,” and puts in a plug for the ancillary materials like videos and reproducible tests. The board members have seen the books weeks ahead of this meeting. They have been given an extensive checklist for review. Examining textbooks, however, can be an overwhelming task. One of the board members, Ms. Callow, was taken by surprise when she had to clear space in her garage for the dozen boxes of books that were delivered before the presentation day. She was unable to finish the extensive checklist that was provided by the state adoption staff. Today, she flips through a few pages before the presentation. Researchers who have studied the methods of textbook reviewers have coined a term to describe the reviewers’ intuitive superficial examination: the “thumbing test” (Chambliss & Calfee, 1998, p. 177). Since Ms. Callow only had time to thumb through a few of the books, she listens carefully to Mr. Feat’s presentation and looks for several things she considers important. First, she turns to the index and looks for mentions of her own state’s historic events. Then, she looks for easy reading, newness, a dynamic color cover design, color illustrations, and ancillary materials that accompany the book, such as teaching aids or color posters (Loewen, 1995, p. 279). She glances at the test questions at the ends of two or three chapters and decides that the book is a quality text.

The next step in many states is public hearings. The public is invited to comment on books approved by the adoption committee. In Texas and California, as well as other states, organized groups take this opportunity to attack or promote certain books. As we have seen, special interest groups have had considerable influence over publishers at this level. Following the hearings, the textbook review committee examines the textbooks to

see if they meet state curriculum standards, and then makes recommendations to the state board of education. The board will create a state-approved list of books. Some books will be rejected, some adopted, and some will be adopted with changes requested of the publishers. California will enforce their social content requirements, and Texas will insist on patriotic, socially conservative themes. Some states, like Tennessee, put as many as two dozen books on the list, from which school districts may choose. Others, like Alabama, list only one book per subject (Loewen, 1995, p. 278). Texas will approve two to five books per subject (Apple, 2000, p. 61). Georgia allows school districts to choose from nine art textbooks on its adoption list (Georgia Department of Education, 2004). Good news for Mr. Feat—*An American Art Tome* has been approved! State funds can be used to purchase it and the other books on the approved lists.

The state may now require Ersatz House to post a bond guaranteeing delivery of the books to the state book depository by a certain due date. Perhaps Ersatz House has been trying to convince the state textbook director to add its Web-based media to the adoption lists. One of the obstacles may be the president of the book depository, Mr. Root. Web-based media would be delivered via the internet, bypassing the depository. The depository, a private company, stores and distributes textbooks for the state and collects a fee from publishers for doing so.

Fifteen states require publishers of state-adopted instructional materials to use a central in-state depository. Those states are: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, and West Virginia. Depositories charge publishers a commission, typically about 8% of sales. In some states publishers are allowed to ship

directly to schools from their own in-state warehouse, without using a central depository. Thirty-five states do not regulate how or where publishers store inventories or initiate shipments (Association of American Publishers, 2006). One of the most well-known book depositories was the Texas School Book Depository in Dallas. It was from a window on the sixth floor of that building that Lee Harvey Oswald is alleged to have shot President John F. Kennedy on November 22, 1963.

The state has allowed Mr. Root's family-owned company to maintain a monopoly on this business for several generations. Mr. Root understandably takes a dim view of other forms of distribution, and may be discouraging the state textbook director from adding Web-based media to the lists. The state textbook director finds it easier to maintain the status quo, so Web-based media is kept off the list, at least for now.

An American Art Tome is classified by the Book Manufacturers' Institute as a hard-cover textbook. There are Manufacturing Standards and Specifications for Textbooks (MSST) guidelines for hard-cover textbooks as well as for non-consumable soft-cover texts, consumable soft-cover texts, ancillary materials, and teacher's editions. Three groups collaborated to develop the MSST guidelines: The National Association of State Textbook Administrators (NASTA), the Book Manufacturers' Institute (BMI), and the Association of American Publishers (AAP). Together they formed the Advisory Commission on Textbook Specifications. Colonel E. W. Palmer of Kingsport Press began to work with publishers and state textbook directors in the 1930s to develop uniform specifications for textbooks. Texas textbook directors were the first to issue printed specifications to publishers in 1939. Controlled laboratory and in-classroom testing of textbook bindings began in 1957. Testing included sliding books down school hallways

to determine their resistance to abrasion. By 1971, machine coated specifications for paper were agreed upon by 17 paper mills. Advancements in adhesives necessitated modification of the binding specifications for hardbound textbooks in 1977, and again in 1984. In the 1990s, maximum bulk thickness for secondary hardbound textbooks was set at 1 ½” and paper weight was specified at 40 lb. text paper. Prior to printing, paper is tested for durability based on specifications for breaking strength, tear resistance, abrasion, folding endurance, internal bond, stability to light, and water spotting resistance (Book Manufacturers’ Institute, 2005). Additional specifications apply to overall size, margins, and the construction of the cover and binding. If the new edition of *An American Art Tome* arrives in the classroom much the same size and weight as other art textbooks, there’s a good reason. If it has many of the same artworks, however, and many analogous activities, and if its content is similar, then the publishers have taken the safe road and made it uniform to insure its success in the marketplace. Textbook adoption has squeezed the imagination out of it.

Uniform Park Benches: Similar Books

In teaching art year after year, there are some commonplace scenes we look forward to: opening the kiln lid to see newly fired glazed ware; papier mâché animal sculptures; excited art students on the first day of school, drawing in brand new sketchbooks. Familiar sights are reassuring, but in a textbook we look for new ideas and images. Some textbooks look more like television re-runs. There are certain artworks that have been used in so many textbooks veteran art teachers probably see them in their sleep: Winslow Homer’s *Breezing Up* comes to mind, along with Van Gogh’s *Starry Night*, sometimes in bad color reproduction. Both are wonderful works; it’s just that we

don't need to see them repeated in edition after edition. Then there are the projects that kept re-appearing: the middle school drawing assignment in which students must draw one of their shoes, and the perennial favorite, constructing a box out of slabs of clay. Like chain-store sofa paintings of park benches, these landscapes are very much alike.

It is no coincidence that textbooks suffer from uniformity. The high stakes structure of the adoption process makes risk-taking prohibitive. If a book is successful in several adoption states, other publishers hesitate to stray far from the proven formula (Loewen, 1995, p. 281). High production costs and low profit margins in the elhi market make publishers unwilling to venture into unknown territory with content and design. Apple and Christian-Smith described textbook publishing as a more routine process than other forms of publishing. Consequently it will be “more bureaucratic and will have decision-making structures that are more formalized” (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991, p. 30). Compared to fiction publishing, the goal in textbooks is to produce a limited number of high volume sellers. Formats are similar from one subject to another, and content is standardized so that revisions in future adoption years will be less costly (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991, p. 31).

The structure of the textbook publishing industry also creates an atmosphere that inhibits innovation. Spring pointed out that most of the once independent textbook publishers are now owned by corporate conglomerates. Names once synonymous with textbooks—Addison-Wesley; Allyn and Bacon; Prentice Hall; Houghton Mifflin; Little, Brown; Scott Foresman and Company—are all owned by larger corporations with major interests outside of publishing. Only McGraw-Hill and Harcourt Brace remain as independent textbook publishing companies (Spring, 2002, p. 174). Davis Publications is

an independent publisher of art textbooks. In a small company, decisions can be made quickly by a small group of people. In a large firm, the decision must move slowly through a comprehensive chain of command. Editors model new textbooks on the leading seller in the field, with a few new features to make it slightly different. After the book is written, the manuscript may be sent to several paid reviewers. They are most often leading scholars in their field, connected by contacts the editors have made in the academic world or public education. They may be authors of textbooks already in the field. By the time the new book has been reviewed and revised, it looks very much like other books of its kind (Spring, 2002, p. 174). Since any attack by a pressure group could cause school systems to steer clear of their book, publishers are always fearful of censorship issues. Keeping the book much like other books in its field becomes a way to protect the book—and the profits—from such attacks (Spring, 2002, p. 175).

The organization, artworks, and content of the high school art texts show many similarities among the books. Table 4-1 compares six aspects of four high school art textbooks:

The Visual Experience, 2nd ed. (Hobbs & Salome, 1995), Davis Publications, Inc.

Exploring Visual Design (Gatto, Porter, & Selleck, 2000), Davis Publications, Inc.

Arttalk, 3rd ed. (Ragans, 2000) Glencoe McGraw-Hill.

The Visual Experience, 3rd ed. (Hobbs, Salome, & Vieth, 2005) Davis

Publications, Inc.

The table shows that the books are all organized around the elements and principles of design. The authors have chosen many of the same artists, even identical artworks in some cases. *The Persistence of Memory*, *Preacher*, and *Sky Cathedral* show up in three

of the four books, as do Kollwitz's self-portraits. Clark and Folgo touched upon one explanation for similarities in artworks in textbooks. The works of established artists are in museums and there are photos of the works on file. Securing reproductions of established artists' works is easier for publishers. The work of contemporary artists tends to be in private collections or in the artists' collections. Generally it is more difficult and more costly to track down, transport, and photograph the work of contemporary artists (Clark & Folgo, 2006, p. 51). It seems that the proliferation of galleries in major cities and the many artists' Web sites on the internet would facilitate locating contemporary artists' work.

Some of the studio activities are similar in the textbooks. Besides the line drawing activity, variations of that familiar favorite, the paper collage, are included in all of the books. The chapter review questions in the three later books are similar. For example, in the color chapters:

Exploring Visual Design: 1. How do we perceive color? (Gatto, Porter, & Selleck, 2000, p. 91).

Arttalk, 3rd ed.: 1. Explain how the eye sees color. (Ragans, 2000, p. 169).

The Visual Experience, 3rd ed.: 1. Recall: How are we able to see objects? (Hobbs, Salome, & Vieth, 2005, p. 115).

The chapter review questions in many art textbooks tend to be knowledge and comprehension questions, involving recall of facts, terms, and basic concepts, or stating main ideas. These are "look-up" activities. The students complete them in a few minutes without changing their outlooks or deepening their understanding of art. More discussion of the review questions and assessments follows in chapter 6.

The effects of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* are already evident on the newest editions of art textbooks. Books with copyrights after 2005 are replete with non-art activities such as writing assignments and cross-curricular activities. *The Visual Experience*, 3rd ed. (Hobbs, Salome, & Vieth, 2005) features “Write About It!” artworks. In its 4th edition, *Arttalk*, (Ragans, 2005) debuts “Quick Write” at the start of each unit. In these activities, the student is asked to write a restatement or an interpretation of an artist’s quote. *Introducing Art* (Mittler, Ragans, Unsworth, & Scannell, 2007) includes “Quick Write” as well as activities that link art to math, science, language arts and social studies. Some of these non-art activities deepen understanding of art throughout the book, in which the student writes verbal descriptions of art elements and artworks; others are busy work designed to make the book more attractive to administrators and textbook reviewers looking for ways to raise test scores in their districts. As publishers jump on the bandwagon to include more non-art activities in art textbooks, less space is available for artworks and imaginative art content. This problem is discussed further in chapter 6.

“New and different” does not necessarily mean success in the textbook market. In the 1970s federal funds were provided for curriculum projects to create instructional materials based on the latest research on children’s cognitive development. The materials that came out of these projects incorporated many of the features that textbook reformers now demand, but the books did not sell. Teachers and administrators “at that time did not know about the new texts, disliked them, or found them too unusual or controversial” (Woodward, 1987, p. 525). More recently, Chambliss and Calfee (1998) reported that executive editors admitted each had in their past one “magnificent failure”—a textbook series that met important instructional and curricular goals, but failed to sell. “The editors

explained that magnificent failures deviate too markedly from the goals of the marketplace” (p. 182). Unlike other marketplaces, where products tout their uniqueness, the textbook market is one in which success depends upon conformity.

Feature	The Visual Experience (1995)	Exploring Visual Design (2000)	Arttalk (2000)	The Visual Experience (2005)
1. Table of contents arranged around the elements and principles of art	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2. Separate section for techniques	Yes	---	Yes	Yes
3. Identical artworks: Salvador Dali's <i>The Persistence of Memory</i> Charles White's <i>Preacher</i>	p. 296 p. 46	--- ---	p. 375 p. 94	p. 463 p. 68
4. Women artists' works: Janet Fish Kathe Kollwitz Alice Neel Louise Nevelson Georgia O'Keefe Faith Ringgold	--- p. 135* --- p. 169** --- p. 118	p. 72 p. 157 p. 179 p. 63** p. 77 p. 207	pp.17, 176, p. 174* pp. 251, 292, 74 p. 300 pp. 2, 30, 240 p. 36, 278	51 p. 126* p. 69 p. 445** pp.28,134,146 p. 175
5. Studio activity for line: Draw different types of lines (using crayon, pen, pencil, marker, etc.)	p. 28	p. 33	p. 76	p. 42
6. Brief descriptions of art careers without related artmaking activities.	pp. 186-197	Career portfolio in each chapter	pp. 388-409	pp. 326-349
				*Three of the four books feature self-portraits by Kollwitz. **Nevelson's <i>Sky Cathedral</i> is included in three of the four books.

Table 4-1. Similarities in Four High School Art Textbooks.

Shallow Fountains: The “Mentioning” Problem

When young artists are learning watercolors, a common mistake they often make is mixing too much water with the paint. The too-thin washes produce pale colors and a poor foundation for the next layer of color. The artists sometimes try to remedy the problem by adding a mishmash of colors without regard to the big picture. A similar difficulty appears in textbooks in the form of “the mentioning problem.” Shallow coverage of the subject, termed “the mentioning problem” by researcher Dolores Durkin at the University of Illinois, results in books that fail to provide adequate context to the student (Tyson-Bernstein, 1988, p. 27-28). Harriet Tyson-Bernstein defined the term as “textbook prose that flits from fact to fact, statement to statement, and topic to topic, without giving the reader the context that would make sense of factual information” (Tyson-Bernstein, 1988, p. 27). Art and other textbooks that suffer from “the mentioning problem” are heavy on facts and terms, but lack explanations that would help the reader see the significance or build the big picture. Tyson-Bernstein attributed this to the editors’ attempts to meet the content requirements of so many adoption authorities (p. 28). Linda Darling-Hammond noted that state adoption of texts leads to books that “almost never present a range of views, an analysis of ideas, a discussion of queries and controversies in a field, or the kinds of primary source data from which conclusions can be drawn” (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 51). The shallow coverage, like a thin wash of color, makes a pale, unimaginative textbook that is a poor foundation for knowledge. Piling on facts like random colors does not relieve the problem.

Chambliss and Calfee (1998) studied current practices in the textbook adoption system and acknowledged some of the practices that contribute to “the mentioning problem”:

Critics decry the gargantuan, hefty, all-inclusive textbooks, incoherent because of their adherence to readability formulas, the mindless workbook exercises that fail to promote “higher order thinking skills,” and the overloaded teacher manual that replace the teacher’s professional judgment. They fault adoption states for sending publishers detailed and conflicting directives that make it impossible to design a worthy product. They cite districts for selecting textbooks by using invalid, unreliable measures and for failing to report their selection criteria back to textbook publishers in a useable form. (p. 168)

Chambliss and Calfee analyzed how publishers responded to the criticisms. They found that most publishers were willing to improve the textbooks within the limitations of protecting profits. Publishers who were influenced by input from teachers, sales representatives, focus groups, and adoption committees were called *Responders*. Those publishers who took the opposite stance, that is, those who made their own design decisions with less reliance on input from outside sources, were called *Designers* (p. 171-172). Responders were more likely to use freelance writers and other outside firms for major parts of the production. Responders tended to collect feedback from teachers and sales representatives and incorporate it into the books. Publishing staffs and outside contractors frequently lacked common instructional and curricular goals. They often had little contact with each other during the development of the textbook, meeting only when a problem arose. As a result, textbooks often have mixed quality from chapter to chapter,

activities that may or may not match the content, and a “piecemeal flavor that is reflective of having been developed by diverse groups” (p. 173). Most responders did not try out textbooks in schools; those who did, did so informally. The process is analogous to a painting done by committee.

Designer publishers approached their tasks by establishing explicit goals and articulating them at the start. They made sure everyone involved in producing, adopting, and selecting the textbook was aligned with the goals. Designer publishers supervised the authors, even to the point of giving them a template to follow. Teams worked closely and the books were examined by experts for comprehensibility (p. 181). Input from teachers and others did not sway the teams from the stated goals. Chambliss and Calfee acknowledged that even a firm design plan will not produce an excellent textbook:

Despite establishing goals early on and using them to produce, adopt, or select textbook materials, no publisher, adoption state, or district that we studied completed all of the tasks according to the initial goals...The enormity of the enterprise, from conceiving a textbook series to placing it in the hands of children and teachers, almost guarantees that the initial design will be lost along the way.
(p. 180)

Chambliss & Calfee believed designers had a better chance of producing a coherent textbook, but even with careful design, at the point of textbook review, sometimes the “loudest and most persistent, rather than the most knowledgeable, insightful citizens may have held undue sway” (p. 185). With so many influences on the long road to textbook adoption, even a book with a good design is unlikely to make it through unscathed.

At the college level, professors have time and freedom to customize the instructional materials they use. Patricia Condon (1995), who taught a beginning art history course, found the conventional art history textbooks superficial. She objected to the “too neat narrative” that covered too many artists and went into too little detail. She wanted her students to “engage deeply” (pp. 70-71), so she designed a series of topical lectures with accompanying music, primary and secondary reading selections, and visual study guides arranged as collages. She found that her students enjoyed the course more and retained more information. Many a secondary art teacher would wish to customize the learning materials in this manner.

The mentioning problem is manifested in secondary art textbooks in several forms. One is the problem of space; publishers try to include too many artists or information in the limited space. In *Meet the Artist* features throughout the book, *Art* accompanies time lines with one-inch square photos and artworks. As seen in the George Braque example the time lines’ visuals are too small to be recognizable, and the captions do not provide specific information: “Americans in WWII,” “Biennale Exhibition” (Brooks, 2005, p. 85). Space limitations can cause important information that explains the artist’s work to be left out. In *The Visual Experience*, two compelling works by Käthe Kollwitz appear (Hobbs & Salome, 1995). Although her name appears four times in the text (pp. 135, 146, 147, and 291), there is no explanation or information about the roots of her work. Kollwitz was, above all, an activist whose personal suffering drove her work. Admittedly, the authors cannot include details about every artist, but to show high school students a galvanic image like *Death Seizing a Woman* without any background information seems a considerable omission. Similarly, Edvard Munch’s *The Scream* is

reproduced on page 121 and his name is mentioned on pages 121 and 286, but there is no information presented about his life or its bearing on the intense emotionalism of the painting (Hobbs & Salome, 1995). Only a sentence or two of analytical verbiage is given about the painting. This lack of context is surprising considering that Jack Hobbs, the lead author of this textbook, is a proponent of discipline-based art education (DBAE) and has written articles on DBAE, aesthetic literacy, and social relevance (*In defense of a theory of art education*, Hobbs, 1993; *Who are we, where did we come from, where are we going?* Hobbs, 1983). Poor Mr. Munch does not fare any better in the third edition of *The Visual Experience*; his painting is now smaller (Hobbs, Salome, & Veith, 2005, p. 178). Kollwitz in the third edition is represented only by two self-portraits and a brief analytical description of her portrayal of herself as she aged (p. 79). Her use of art to fight against poverty and death, her anti-war art, her motivation for her prolific volume of drawings and prints during her long life—all are omitted.

A second manifestation of the mentioning problem is in how the available space is allocated. In a Technique Tip sidebar for a rhythm and shapes paper collage, *Art* instructs students to “try to tear with the grain of the paper” (Brooks, 2005, p. 78), but there is no information given on how to find the grain of the paper, or, more importantly, what “grain” means. Few eighth grade students are likely to have prior knowledge of paper grain. On page 81, next to the opener for a pattern lesson, a Research sidebar instructs students to research and write about how the Industrial Revolution changed the steps in weaving cloth. The activity seems to be a stretch to make a connection to social studies. It is isolated from its context, does not change the student’s outlook, produce any worthwhile product, or lead to new information. If this activity had been omitted, there

would have been space for the simple experiment that reveals the grain of the paper and an explanation of why grain is important.

Another cause of shallow coverage is that sometimes textbook parts are written by authors and editors who do not have adequate backgrounds in art. *Arttalk*'s 4th edition introduced *Time* Art Scene, a feature contributed by *Time* magazine writers. In chapter 4, the feature on cartoonist Al Hirschfeld fails to mention that he hid his daughter's name, Nina, somewhere in his lively line caricatures of famous people. It is one of the most interesting things to know about this artist, because the students love to look for the name every time they see his distinctive drawings. Apparently the writer was unaware, because a fact many art teachers and students knew was omitted from both the student and teacher's editions (Ragans, 2005, p. 94). Rosalind Ragans reported she once finished writing a unit introduction on Albrecht Dürer and his prints, some of which were wood cuts. The editors at the publishing house were from Language Arts backgrounds and knew little about art. They wanted to condense and simplify the wording for a first grade book, so they described Dürer as "a woodcutter!" (Ragans, personal communication, July 31, 2006).

Summary

Because publishers are producing books for all of the adoption states, they must try to meet a myriad of skill and content requirements. In the book's limited amount of space, their goal is breadth, not depth. Textbook adoption places economic pressure on publishers. Publishers avoid taking risks, resulting in uniformity in content and design among art textbooks. Adoption also causes publishers to attempt to meet the standards of too many states in each book. The result is material covered "a mile wide and an inch

deep.” As standardized testing increases the number of facts students need to be able to recall on tests, the problem threatens to grow in the future. What will happen to imagination in art textbooks as publishers strive to meet the requirements of more state standards?

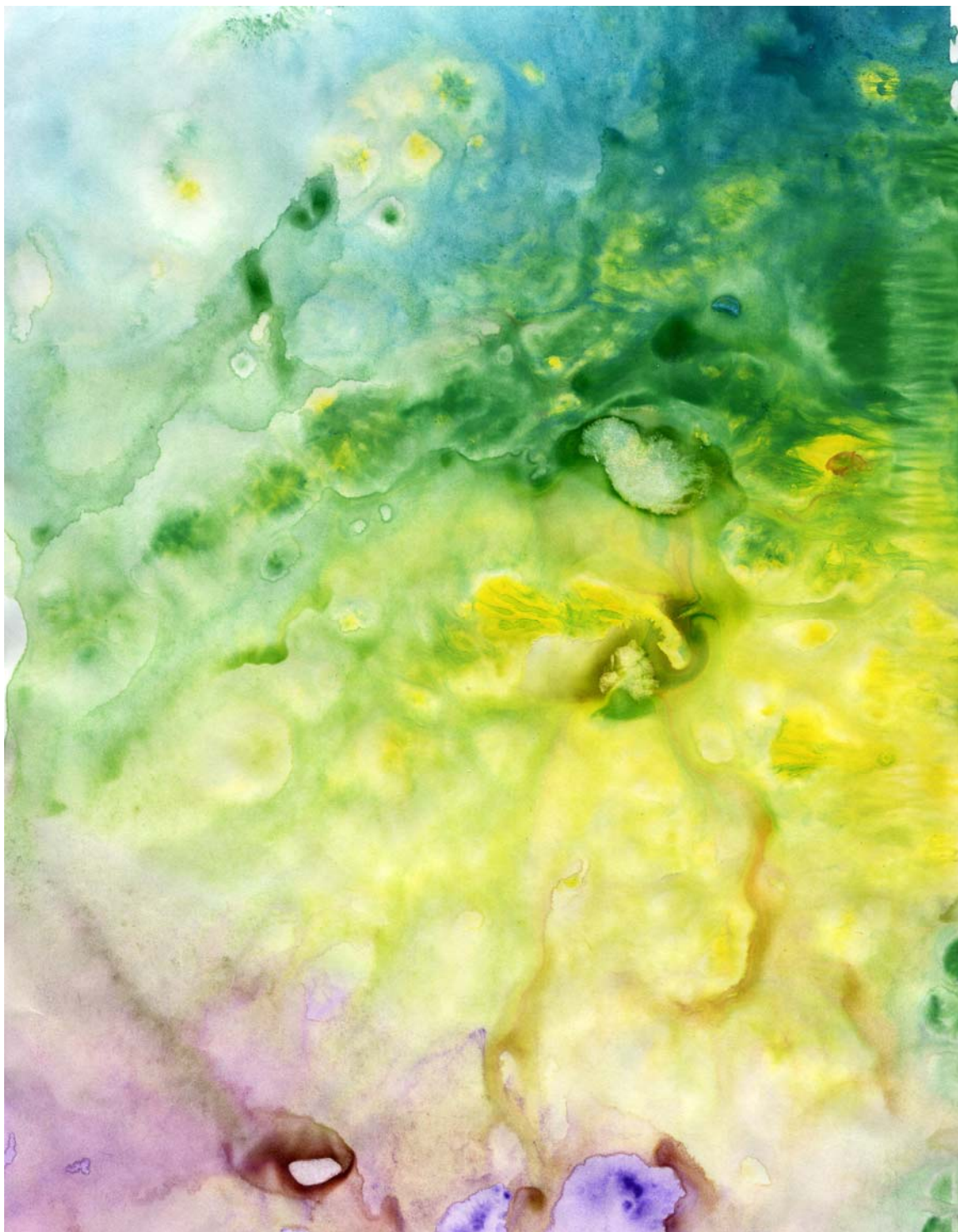


Figure 5-1. Lynda Kerr. *Meadow*. 2006. Tempera monoprint. 8.5" X 11." Collection of the artist.

CHAPTER 5

BORDERED FLOWER BEDS:

THE EFFECTS OF STANDARDS

People who look through keyholes are likely to get the idea that most things are keyhole shaped

(Norman Laliberte & Richey Kehl, 1969, p. 61).

In the sunlit art studio at Oak Bridge High School, the students and I are washing our paint cups when someone notices the beautiful swirls of color blending on the bottoms of the sinks. Several of us have the same thought at the same time. We reach for a stack of paper and begin pressing paper on the wet colors. Monoprints! No two alike! An electric excitement pervades the room! We make dozens and dozens of prints, stacking them on every available surface. After they've dried, everyone has ideas for what to do with them. Some look like fantasy landscapes; we draw on them, adding details with markers. The other prints evolve into various projects, including posters, collages, and colorful fish cut-outs that swim happily across the art studio wall. Learning experiences with imaginative perspective drawing, lettering, mixed media, and color theory all grew out of that spontaneous monoprint activity.

Another day, another room at Oak Bridge High; I've been sitting in a school improvement committee meeting. All day the topic has been how every department can help to raise the school's test scores in science. The science department chair has proposed that every teacher in the building be required to use the scientific method to teach his or her subject. The scientific method involves putting forth a hypothesis and following five prescribed steps to prove it, ending up at a pre-ordained place according to

standards set ahead of time. Closed-end learning defined by standards is believed to be the solution to the test score problem, not only here, but in many places across the United States. Around the table, eighteen of the twenty teachers on the committee agree. Only the career technology teacher and I argue passionately for open-ended learning. At the end of a long day, the principal accedes that the scientific method will be a voluntary, not a required teaching method at our school.

In this chapter I will look at the origins of the standards movement, corporate views of standards in public education, how the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* made standards the primary focus of public schools, and how standards have affected textbook publishing. I will explore the distinctions between standards and criteria as Dewey saw them. Finally, I will investigate how the National Visual Arts Standards slight imagination, and how standards have changed the design of art textbooks.

In recent years, education has been moving in a more and more positivist direction. There are those who would make school a place where standards, closed-end learning, and standardized testing threaten to smother imagination and individual thought in students and teachers. They would not allow lessons like the monoprints, in which spontaneous creative experiences take place, and students participate in decisions about the objectives. They would put a border around every flower bed in the park; perhaps around each and every flower. Concrete sidewalks with high fences would keep every walker on the most efficient route through the park, and the walk would be completed in a standard allotted amount of time. In such an environment, it will be up to individual teachers and students to find cracks in the sidewalk, holes in the fences through which

they might squeeze, and, slipping into the wild meadow, find their own meaning in the exploration.

Literature on Standards

Lisa Delpit told the following story:

(A Fictional Tale): The year 2092. The 100-year-old man lies on deathbed, contemplating his long life. His children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren surround him. He has lived a good life—there have been good times and bad times; he has accomplished much that he is proud of and had many experiences that he'd prefer to forget. One of his favorite grandsons looks into his eyes and asks, "Grandpa, is there anything you regret in your life?" The old man closes his eyes. Just when his family thinks he has drifted off to sleep, he opens them again and says, with an expression of deep, wistful longing, "Son, I just wish with all my heart that I could have scored higher on the state-mandated achievement tests." (2003, p. 14)

The absurdity of this story comes from the current disconnect between the purposes of education and the purposes of school. Education aspired to provide tools for thinking and understanding. The overarching goal of school now is teaching children how to pass standardized tests.

Except for Iowa, all of the states have standard-setting and testing programs in place. Deborah Meier (2000) described six basic assumptions underlying these state and national policies:

Goals: It is possible and desirable to agree on a single definition of what constitutes a well-educated high school graduate and to hold every school to the same goals.

1. *Authority:* Experts—educators, political officials, leaders from industry and the major academic disciplines—could be the ones to define “well-educated.”
Variations in state standards at the present time suggest the eventual need for a single national standard.
2. *Assessment:* A single national standard will allow us to measure and compare individuals and school across communities. Objective scores will permit public comparisons of students at the local, state, national and international level at any time.
3. *Enforcement:* Authority needs to be removed from self-interested parties such as parents, teachers and local school boards. A centralized system will resist pressure from people closest to the child.
4. *Equity:* Expert-designed standards, imposed through tests, are the best way to achieve educational equity. Schools with scarcer resources will need to focus their work on the essentials.
5. *Effective learning:* Clear-cut expectations, accompanied by automatic rewards and punishments, will produce greater effort, and effort is the key to learning.
Automatic penalties work for schooling much as they do for crime; consistency and certainty are the keys. (pp. 7-9)

These goals form the core of the current standards movement. Spring (2002) described the origins of the movement during a period of high unemployment, declining

productivity, and decreasing capital investment by U. S. industry. In 1983 an educational interest group, the National Commission on Excellence in Education, released a report, titled *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*. It blamed mediocrity in the public schools for the economic decline. The report, and other educational reports which claimed that poor academic quality of American schools was to blame for slow economic growth, was inaccurate. Unemployment was caused in part by the large number of baby-boomers entering the labor market, combined with American corporations' tendency to limit capital investment and keep wages depressed. At the same time, Japan's automobile manufacturing was growing more efficient, South Korea's steel production was up, and West Germany's manufacturing was increasing, creating more competition for U.S. industry. Spring summarized, "The cause was to be found in decisions made by business management. In fact, it takes twenty years for a high school graduate to affect the economy. A poorly educated high school graduate does not walk out of school and immediately bring down the economy" (p. 108). Although the public schools were being used as a scapegoat by these education reports, the standards movement emerged as a reform effort that emphasized traditional academic subjects, strengthening math and science courses, and changing the career structure of teachers (p. 108). In 2000, seventeen years after the great education crisis, Deborah Meier (2000) pointed out,

the American economy is soaring, the productivity of our workforce is probably tops in the world, and our system of advanced education is the envy of the world. In elementary school literacy...the United States still ranks second or third, topped only by one or another of the Scandinavian countries. While we rank lower in math and science tests, we continue to lead the world in technology and

inventiveness. If the earlier argument was right and economic prowess requires good schooling, then teachers in America ought to be congratulated, and someone should be embarrassed by the false alarm. Instead, the idea that the schools are a disaster, and that fixing them fast is vital to our economy, has become something of a truism. It remains the excuse for all reform efforts, and for carrying them out on the scale and pace proposed. (p. 11)

A current educational interest group with active affiliates in every state, The Business Roundtable (BRT), continues to sound the alarm that America's schools are failing, even in the face of data that shows otherwise. Kathy Emery and Susan Ohanian (2004) described the agenda of The Business Roundtable as it pushes for a business model of school management (p. 34). For the last fifteen years the BRT has lobbied state governments to establish "rigorous and measurable standards" in core academic subjects and adopt statewide testing. Standards are the centerpiece of the BRT's agenda because, according to their publication, *A Business Leader's Guide to Setting Academic Standards*, "standards drive curriculum, teacher training, and assessment" (p. 35). The publication's title makes an assumption that mercantile prowess constitutes curriculum expertise. The idea that business leaders should decide on curriculum was number two in the six basic assumptions Deborah Meier listed (Meier, 2000, p. 7-9). The BRT warns that public schools are failing and they won't improve unless corporations make them "feel the heat" (Emery & Ohanian, 2004, p. 38). The BRT has been active in Georgia since 1990 as the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education. The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution's* link with the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education is cited in Emery & Ohanian (p. 210). Statements that the public schools are "failing" are detrimental to imagination in

school because they are being used to justify a positivist approach to education that centers on standards, closed-end learning, and standardized testing.

Education was a key issue in the presidential campaign of 2000. Candidate George W. Bush needed a bold education plan that would distinguish his platform. He proposed an expansion of federal control over education by requiring states to set standards and establish accountability systems for core subjects in order to receive federal funds (Spring, 2002, pp. 10-11). As president, Bush titled his education bill the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. Its major goals are to increase achievement scores for all students, especially underperforming groups, and to close the achievement gap caused by racial and class distinctions. The bill attempts to do this through emphasis on test scores, a school choice plan, and teacher preparation (Meier & Wood, 2004, p. 3). While at first glance it seems a well-intentioned plan, since the fall of 2003, at least twenty states have officially protested the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, voting not to participate, to withhold local funding for implementation, or to resist specific provisions. As the consequences of the 600-page bill become evident, it has become clear that it is more likely to harm the public schools than to improve them. The bill burdens local systems with unfunded mandates and test score targets that are impossible to meet, and penalizes schools serving the neediest students. In addition, it creates incentives for schools to push out low achieving students to raise average test scores. It forces states to replace reflective, authentic assessments with rote-oriented standardized testing (Meier & Wood, 2004, pp. 4-5).

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* fails to address the cause of many inequalities in education—the huge differences in spending between poor schools and wealthy ones. Linda Darling-Hammond noted,

Unlike most countries that fund schools centrally and equally, the wealthiest U.S. schools spend at least ten times more than the poorest schools—ranging from over \$30,000 per pupil at the wealthiest schools to only \$3,000 at the poorest. These disparities contribute to a wider achievement gap in this country than in virtually any other industrialized country in the world. (Meier & Wood, 2004, p. 6)

Under the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, students in poor communities stand the greatest chance of losing imaginative teaching. Rigidly enforced, prescriptive curricula have often been forced upon high poverty, inner city school systems like those in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. School systems' mistrust of teachers, inability to find qualified teachers, and standardized testing all contribute to the use of these prescriptive curricula. "Furthermore what can be easily scripted, sequenced, and tested in a standardized fashion tends to represent only the most trivial aspects of the underlying knowledge sought," Darling-Hammond explained. State mandated textbooks make the problem worse by limiting the materials available to teachers. The students who need the most responsive, innovative kinds of teaching are given the most rigid, ineffective remedies (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 50-51).

Darling-Hammond emphasized that the biggest problem with the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* is that "it mistakes measuring schools for fixing them" (Meier & Wood, 2004, p. 9). The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* sets annual test score goals for the school, and the school is further required to meet score goals for subgroups such as

limited English proficient (LEP) learners and some types of special needs students. Schools must be labeled “failing” if they do not meet the target goals for each subgroup annually. The designations, however, are complicated, contradictory, and impossible to reach at 100% as the law requires. Schools serving poor, minority, special needs, and LEP students are penalized before they begin by the wording of the law (Meier & Wood, 2004, p. 10-12). The argument underlying the law is that low-performing schools will be motivated to improve if they are publicly labeled and shamed. This may occur in some cases, but in many other cases schools are labeled as failing when they are actually succeeding with the disadvantaged students the law is intended to help. Darling-Hammond stated, “ [The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*] creates incentives that can reduce the quality of education such schools can provide, while providing few real options for their students to go to better schools” (Meier & Wood, 2004, p. 13).

The use of standardized testing as the only measure of school quality takes away the community’s right to define a quality education, argued Meier (Meier & Wood, 2004, p. 71). Local alternatives are limited when schools must teach to a standardized test purchased from a testing company or textbook publisher. The Association of American Publishers reported that standardized test sales grew 12.4 percent from 2003 to 2004, with sales of \$923.9 million (Association of American Publishers, 2005). In the appropriately titled *Conflict of Interest*, Joel Spring (2002) highlighted the trend toward textbook publishers’ ownership of testing subsidiaries (p. 182-183). This allows the company to publish a textbook and a standardized test that are aligned in method and content. Since the textbook industry is concentrated in a few publishing companies, and subject to the influence of political forces as I discussed in chapter 4, this has

ramifications for public education across the country. Spring commented, “These economic interests, combined with the political pressures of state governments working together to influence textbook publishing, could cause knowledge to become standardized across the entire nation” (p. 183). Meier remarked that standardized tests have already been shown to put some children at a disadvantage—especially those outside the mainstream, like children of color, of the poor, those with disabilities, or limited English (Meier & Wood, 2004, p. 71). The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* forces local school systems to make education a one-size-fits-all enterprise that bypasses the needs of these children. Schools are put into the position of having to push out low performing students or risk being labeled “failing.” The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* does not allow families, teachers, nor communities to make important decisions about their schools. As Meier summarized, “It defines such parties as special biased self-interests, whose judgment is inferior to that of the bureaucrats at the Department of Education and the various testing services” (Meier & Wood, 2004, p. 71).

Preparing for standardized testing has not only taken away community efficacy, it has stolen time from the school day—time for imagination and play. George Wood reported that kindergarteners in Gadsden, Alabama no longer take naps; they need the time for test preparation. Galveston, Texas schools eliminated recess to make room for additional test prep time. Parents complained that their children “get less personal break time each week than office workers get on coffee breaks” (Meier & Wood, 2004, p. 42). Increasingly, across the nation, unstructured playtime in school is disappearing and schools are being built without playgrounds (Meier & Wood, 2004, p. 42). Susan Ohanian quoted former Atlanta superintendent of schools Benjamin O. Canada defending

the elimination of recess. Canada argued: “We are intent on improving academic performance. You don’t do that by having kids hanging on the monkey bars.” Ohanian condemned this attitude:

This is monkey business. Treating a kindergartener like a robot—or a Wall Street broker-in-training cannot come to a good end. Standardistos don’t offer a rich garden of delight; instead they want us to cut down the meddlesome Spanish moss of curriculum, replacing it with Astroturf, which knows how to keep its place.

(Ohanian, 1999, pp. 13-14)

Singer and Singer maintained that imaginative capabilities originate in pretend play (2005, p. 24). Make believe play is fostered by unstructured playtime like recess. Under the standards siege, however, recess, field trips, anything that does not directly result in higher test scores is in danger of being erased. Entire programs are endangered, especially electives like art, music, shop, and agriculture—often the classes that keep kids interested in coming to school each day.

Monty Neill (Meier & Wood, 2004) described educational practices already in use in a few states that could provide a basis for an alternative to the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. These practices are based on three sources of information:

- 1) *Classroom-based information*. Assessments come from each teacher’s collection of student work, teachers’ observations, student presentations, essays, projects, and portfolios. Teachers report, in both qualitative and numerical forms, student progress toward meeting state and local goals as well as goals the teachers and students have set. The states of Maine and Nebraska are currently developing

assessment systems that incorporate local assessments and minimize state standardized testing.

- 2) *Limited standardized testing.* In the alternative model, testing would be used for literacy and numeracy, and only as one means of checking on school-level data. Major discrepancies between test results and classroom information would be examined further. Standardized test scores alone would never be used to make major decisions about students or schools.
- 3) *School quality reviews.* Well-trained teams of independent reviewers would visit schools every five years, as is done in England, New Zealand, and the state of Rhode Island. The teams would visit classrooms, interview students, educators, and parents, and examine student work samples. They would survey academic, social, and community aspects of school life, and submit a report to the school and to the community. The school would respond to the review and plan improvements. Schools having difficulty would be visited more often, with emphasis on efforts to improve. Schools would set up systems for teachers to review each other's work and student work in order to improve teaching and curriculum. (pp. 110-111)

Two key ideas in this model stand out. One idea is returning evaluation to local control, which could make it appropriate to the needs of the children in that community. The other idea is putting standardized testing back into its place. Alfie Kohn asked,

What have the results of high-stakes testing been to this point? To the best of my knowledge, no positive effects have ever been demonstrated, unless you count higher scores on these same tests. More low-income and minority students are

dropping out, more teachers (often the very best ones) are leaving the profession, and more mind-numbing test preparation is displacing genuine instruction. (Meier & Wood, 2004, p. 86)

What other kinds of assessment could be used with standardized testing, making it one part of a larger evaluation picture? Monty Neill referred to research that showed formative assessment “may be the single most powerful means of improving learning outcomes available to teachers” (Meier & Wood, 2004, p. 108). Linda Darling-Hammond recommended changes to the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*’s accountability provisions, including multiple measures of learning and progress, attendance, and “value-added” approaches that assess the gains of individual students. She also called for assessing the progress of English language learners and special needs students throughout their school careers rather than only during the time they are “classified” in the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*’s subgroups (Meier & Wood, 2004, pp. 30-31).

At the center of the standards debate is something bureaucrats seldom talk about—individual students. Ohanian urged teachers to look for ways to resist the standards movement and keep meeting the unique needs of each student. Ohanian wrote,

Standardistos turn a deaf ear to our stories because without these stories we are invisible... Invisible and voiceless...I make the plea for schools that acknowledge and nurture students’ different strengths, schools able to come up with oddball plans for oddball students. Though my anecdotes about quite wonderful students, I tried to show why the Standardisto plan to abandon students, refusing them a high school diploma if they fail to pass a test on quadratic equations, is insane. Standardistos ignore the fact that we need our children to grow up to become

chefs, plumbers, child-care workers, musicians, and poets as well as engineers and certified public accountants. Most important, we need our students to grow up to become parents who nurture their children. Our nation of school teachers must not accept the Standardistos' one-size-fits-all curriculum plan. A teacher's individual curriculum choices become increasingly vital as our society devalues its children. (Ohanian, 1999, pp. 2-3)

The literature on standards paints a picture of a uniform, standardized education. Assessments are based on standards, and testing programs are based on a system that penalizes schools. The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, which set out to help schools, has had unintended consequences which punish schools serving many minority and special needs students. Some business leaders and media continue to assert that the public schools are failing and that tighter standards are the solution. Textbook companies have a vested interest in promoting standardized testing, with potential to make significant profits from publishing the tests aligned with the books. The pursuit of higher test scores has stolen local control and time from the school day that was once used for unstructured play—a vital component of imagination.

Fences and Gates: Standards and Criteria

The first sight an artist sees in beginning a watercolor landscape is that expanse of white paper, limitless and full of possibilities. To touch the paper with a brush is to enter a place of freedom. Its antithesis is the narrow pages and black lines of a coloring book. Coloring books were always frustrating to me. The authors never left enough white space around the picture for me to add the backgrounds, original characters, and captions I wanted to draw. The thick black outlines and closed shapes were difficult to draw over,

making changes impossible. When I was a young artist, busily at work on my grandma's living room floor editing images in the coloring book, adult visitors annoyed me with questions about why I did not color inside the lines or use "proper" colors. Like standards, the coloring books "fenced in" my expressions. Coloring books are as deadly to imagination as standards. Both restrict creativity and try to force the child's thought process into one narrow viewpoint. Emphasis on standards has had the effect of narrowing the view in art textbooks, causing the books to value the product over the process and interjecting non-art activities at the expense of art content.

When I became a mother, my children never had coloring books. Instead, my son and daughter enjoyed abundant supplies of large paper, paints, markers, chalk, and crayons—materials Eisner might have called "convivial tools" because they allow more options (2002a, pp. 373-374). As a teacher, I offer my students opportunities for experimentation and relishing the aesthetic process. Open-ended activities, experiments, and "convivial tools" are like criteria—they encourage inquiry and make space for imagination. Like gates, criteria can be open, allowing the student to explore new territory. In art class, we evaluate our work by criteria rather than standards.

The more detailed the standard, the more it limits the scope of responses. My son, Andrew, now a graduate student in computer engineering, observed that standards are necessary when dealing with machines, because machines are limited to receiving only the communications for which they are designed. Not so when dealing with people, who possess a myriad of ways to interact. How are standards different from criteria? How can setting goals open the door to more solutions, more conversations? Stating objectives does not, by itself, restrict inquiry. Creativity works within boundaries set by the artist.

As Rollo May (1975) wrote, ‘Creativity arises out of the tension between spontaneity and limitations, the latter, like the river banks, forcing the spontaneity into the various forms which are essential to the work of art or poem’” (p. 101). As an artist, I know that setting parameters for my work can increase the quantity and quality of my creative responses. In his book *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, creativity researcher Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1990) stated, “To experience flow, one must have clear goals to strive for...Selecting a goal is related to the recognition of challenges” (p. 209). The key is in how the goal is structured. Phrasing the goal so that it opens up, rather than closes down inquiry can encourage the generation of multiple learning paths.

In discussing the limitations of standards, Eisner (2002b) noted that the word connotes “mediocrity or something typical, as in ‘standard operating procedure’” (p. 168). Standards are considered objective because human judgment is not required for scoring. Yet, as Eisner remarked, student performance almost always has elements that defy quantification: “Measurement is one way to describe the world; measurement is a description of quantity. Some descriptions require prose—even poetry!” (p. 169). There are times when standards cannot be set in advance or are not appropriate for the work being considered. Dewey (1934) recommended the use of criteria in such cases. Dewey saw important distinctions between standards and criteria:

There are three characteristics of a standard. It is a particular physical thing existing under specified physical conditions; it is *not* a value...[S]tandards are measures of definite things, of lengths, weights, capacities...[S]tandards define things with respect to *quantity*. To be able to measure quantities is a great aid to further judgments, but it is not itself a mode of judgment. (p. 307)

When standards are applied to works of art, Dewey asserted, “nothing but confusion results” (p. 307). When the subject matter is qualitative, Dewey recommended the use of criteria. The purpose of criteria are “to be of assistance in the direct experience of others, as a survey of a country is of help to the one who travels through it, while dicta about worth operate to limit personal experience” (p. 309). The experience of the individual remains more important than someone else’s judgment about its worth. In Dewey’s view, criteria focus on how the work is experienced:

This discussion of form in relation to matter, of the meaning of medium in art, of the nature of the expressive object, has been an attempt on the writer to discover some of these criteria. But such criteria are not rules or prescriptions. They are the result of an endeavor to find out what a work of art is as an experience: the kind of experience which constitutes it. As far as the conclusions are valued, they are of use as instrumentalities of personal experience, not as dictations of what the attitude of any one could be. (p. 309)

When the science department chair wanted to apply the scientific method to all classes, she did not understand that aesthetic expression is not linear. In addition, artistic solutions are emergent rather than pre-defined. Wanda T. May (1993) contrasted a scientific process with an artistic expression:

Identifying specific steps and then directing or sequencing these in linear fashion...simply does not exist in aesthetic expression...The arts deal in invented, multiple realities or possible worlds, versions of realities and responses created with various materials and resources. Creating and comprehending these versions of reality demand active, focused attention and restless, problem finding and

solving ...Any solution to a problem that is merely anticipated is only tentative; it must work out in experience in order to be accepted. (p. 214)

Eisner explained that, for Dewey, the function of criteria is to promote inquiry and to deepen experience with the individual work:

What is this work as a work of art? What are its qualities, what are its features? How does it “feel”? *The aim of the process is not to confer awards or to assign grades or to make comparisons, but to promote a fuller reading of the work that will be useful to students and teachers alike for knowing what to do next.* (Eisner, 2002b, p. 170) (Italics in original.)

If standards are meant to be “fixed models of outcomes,” Eisner continued, then their value in creative domains is doubtful. “Criteria, however, are ideas that prompt a teacher or evaluator to inquire into the work at hand in order to discern its educational and aesthetic value. Criteria invite inquiry; they do not close it off” (2002b, p. 176). Criteria can provide information for the student and teacher about how to go to the next level of performance.

In art textbooks, criteria are appropriate for judging student work. Eisner (2002b) identified three aspects of aesthetics that could be used in judging art textbooks:

1. *Enjoyment of the process*: intrinsic satisfactions, taking time to relish the experience matter. Creative pursuits provide their own rewards. People who paint, sing, dance, or write poetry for their own enjoyment reap satisfaction that goes beyond external incentives. “Aesthetic satisfactions, when they develop, enable a person to lose a sense of distance and time; one seems to occupy a spaceless and timeless universe that in

retrospect yields high degrees of satisfaction” (p. 202). Art textbooks could encourage students to enjoy the process as much as valuing the product.

2. *Experimentation*: the way something is formed matters. “Form and content interpenetrate. The way in which something is spoken shapes its meaning; form becomes content” (p. 197). In artmaking, form and content are interdependent to an even greater degree. Open-ended outcomes raise the level of thinking; in Bloom’s taxonomy, the open-ended activities are the highest levels, with synthesis at the top. Art textbooks could encourage students to experiment with the materials.

3. *Sensory engagement*: somatic knowledge, relationships, rightness of fit are used to judge qualities of the work. “The body is engaged, the source of information is visceral, the sensibilities are employed to secure experience that makes it possible to render a judgment and to act upon it” (p. 201). Art textbooks could encourage students to notice the sensory qualities of the materials and to make judgments about the relationships of the elements of the work based on intuitive knowledge. Whether the work is sculpture or an essay on art criticism, an art textbook can help the student learn to apply criteria to the experience and see its artistic qualities. To recognize good criteria, we look for it to open up inquiry and deepen our experience with the work. It could assist us in creating and comprehending artistic expressions that involve multiple possibilities worked out in experience. Finally, the criteria could provide information that helps us to advance to the next step. Each experience can lead us to the next opportunity for learning. As Dewey put it, “Every closure is an awakening, and every awakening settles something” (1934, p. 169).

Weevils in the Meadow: Standards Come to the Art Studio

As Deborah Meier pointed out, we are “a nation in which textbooks are the primary vehicle for distributing knowledge in schools” (Meier, 2000, p. 26). Like all textbooks, recent art textbooks have come fully rigged with end-of-chapter reviews, tests, quizzes, and assessments that look like real standardized tests. It was only a matter of time until standards infested the art studio. The weevils in the meadow came in the form of the National Visual Arts Standards.

Some might say that the standards were an improvement; that arts teachers were in need of an ordering principle such as a standards document. As Hoffa characterized, arts educators are “rarely the darlings of their principals or deans.” Some administrators see the arts as “a luxury for the elite, or mere entertainment.” The arts are not measurable in terms of objective standards in the way other subjects are, and therefore can draw criticism:

In the arts, percept is as valued as concept and the affective is as valued as the cognitive. And because they are both pleasure giving and sense dependent, the arts are also easy targets for hustlers, zealots, and muckrakers who are out to cop a headline or arouse the surly rabble. (Hoffa, 1994, p. 18)

In Hoffa’s opinion, arts teachers themselves have added to the problem by a lack of uniform teaching and their non-conformity:

Although an orderly development of skills, perceptual acuity, and aesthetic sensibility is expected, the manner in which that progress is demonstrated can be very different from place to place or even from time to time in the same place...Moreover, the language that arts educators use among themselves

probably sounds untidy and imprecise to those outside the fold, and rightly so: “expressive” or “creative” or “sensitive” or “beautiful” are not the sort of words that other teachers often use, nor do they readily lend themselves to assessment on a true-false or multiple-choice test. And finally, teachers of the arts are not always the most docile, companionable, cooperative, or accommodating of colleagues in school environments—especially when their subjects are looked on as “frills” and they are made to feel like harlots at heaven’s gate; half fearing rejection while, at the same time, half looking forward to it. So if they occasionally act like pole cats stinking up a family picnic, it may be understandable—and perhaps even justified. (Hoffa, 1994, p. 18)

Bringing a group of these rugged individualists together to agree on an arts standards document would have been a difficult feat had not a carrot and a stick provided impetus.

The impetus was federal legislation known as the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act*. Under its terms, the federal government held up a carrot, promising the arts equal respect with other subjects on the condition that national standards were developed for art, music, theatre, and dance education. The stick was ineligibility for financial support under the legislation. The four national arts education associations immediately set to work writing standards, and after a lengthy process, the product was the *National Standards for Arts Education*. (Hoffa, 1994, p. 16).

The intellectual framework for the standards was a paper that had been presented over two decades earlier by Manual Barkan at the 1965 Penn State art conference. The paper had become the backbone of the Getty Center’s discipline-based art education (DBAE) program, which called for equal attention to art production, art criticism, art

history, and aesthetics. The paper became the basis for the *National Standards for Arts Education*'s three emphases: "creating and performing;" "perceiving and analyzing;" and "understanding cultural and historical contexts" (Hoffa, 1994, p. 20-21).

When Secretary of Education Richard Riley rolled out the *National Standards for Arts Education* at a news conference in 1994, he immediately undercut his own fanfare by repeating that the standards were entirely voluntary. By presenting them as voluntary, he handed the responsibilities for funding arts programs over to state education agencies and local districts, and virtually assured that they would not be uniformly applied (Hoffa, 1994, p. 21). The standards became a document without teeth; a document lacking a unified voice for their national implementation.

The National Standards for the Visual Arts

Below is the full text of the National Standards for the Visual Arts for grades 5-8 and grades 9-12 (Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 1994).

The National Standards for the Visual Arts, Grades 5-8

Content Standard 1

Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

Achievement Standard

- Students select media, techniques, and processes; analyze what makes them effective or not effective in communicating ideas; and reflect upon the effectiveness of their choices
- Students intentionally take advantage of the qualities and characteristics of art media, techniques, and processes to enhance communication of their experiences and ideas

Content Standard 2

Using knowledge of structures and functions

Achievement Standard

- Students generalize about the effects of visual structures and functions and reflect upon these effects in their own work
- Students employ organizational structures and analyze what makes them effective or not effective in the communication of ideas
- Students select and use the qualities of structures and functions of art to improve communication of their ideas

Content Standard 3

Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas

Achievement Standard

- Students integrate visual, spatial, and temporal concepts with content to communicate intended meaning in their artworks
- Students use subjects, themes, and symbols that demonstrate knowledge of contexts, values, and aesthetics that communicate intended meaning in artworks

Content Standard 4

Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

Achievement Standard

- Students know and compare the characteristics of artworks in various eras and cultures
- Students describe and place a variety of art objects in historical and cultural contexts

- Students analyze, describe, and demonstrate how factors of time and place (such as climate, resources, ideas, and technology) influence visual characteristics that give meaning and value to a work of art

Content Standard 5

Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others

Achievement Standard

- Students compare multiple purposes for creating works of art
- Students analyze contemporary and historic meanings in specific artworks through cultural and aesthetic inquiry
- Students describe and compare a variety of individual responses to their own artworks and to artworks from various eras and cultures

Content Standard 6

Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

Achievement Standard

- Students compare the characteristics of works in two or more art forms that share similar subject matter, historical periods, or cultural context
- Students describe ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are interrelated with the visual arts Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 1994, pp. 49-51).

The National Standards for the Visual Arts, Grades 9-12

Content Standard 1

Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

Achievement Standard*Proficient:*

- Students apply media, techniques, and processes with sufficient skill, confidence, and sensitivity that their intentions are carried out in their artworks
- Students conceive and create works of visual art that demonstrate an understanding of how the communication of their ideas relates to the media, techniques, and processes they use

Advanced:

- Students communicate ideas regularly at a high level of effectiveness in at least one visual arts medium
- Students initiate, define, and solve challenging visual arts problems independently using intellectual skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Content Standard 2

Using knowledge of structures and functions

Achievement Standard*Proficient:*

- Students demonstrate the ability to form and defend judgments about the characteristics and structures to accomplish commercial, personal, communal, or other purposes of art
- Students evaluate the effectiveness of artworks in terms of organizational structures and functions
- Students create artworks that use organizational principles and functions to solve specific visual arts problems

Advanced:

- Students demonstrate the ability to compare two or more perspectives about the use of organizational principles and functions in artwork and to defend personal evaluations of these perspectives
- Students create multiple solutions to specific visual arts problems that demonstrate competence in producing effective relationships between structural choices and artistic functions

Content Standard 3

Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas

Achievement Standard*Proficient:*

- Students reflect on how artworks differ visually, spatially, temporally, and functionally, and describe how these are related to history and culture
- Students apply subjects, symbols, and ideas in their artworks and use the skills gained to solve problems in daily life

Advanced:

- Students describe the origins of specific images and ideas and explain why they are of value in their artwork and in the work of others
- Students evaluate and defend the validity of sources for content and the manner in which subject matter, symbols, and images are used in the students' works and in significant works by others

Content Standard 4

Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

Achievement Standard

Proficient:

- Students differentiate among a variety of historical and cultural contexts in terms of characteristics and purposes of works of art
- Students describe the function and explore the meaning of specific art objects within varied cultures, times, and places
- Students analyze relationships of works of art to one another in terms of history, aesthetics, and culture, justifying conclusions made in the analysis and using such conclusions to inform their own art making

Advanced:

- Students analyze and interpret artworks for relationships among form, context, purposes, and critical models, showing understanding of the work of critics, historians, aestheticians, and artists
- Students analyze common characteristics of visual arts evident across time and among cultural/ethnic groups to formulate analyses, evaluations, and interpretations of meaning

Content Standard 5

Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others

Achievement Standard

Proficient:

- Students identify intentions of those creating artworks, explore the implications of various purposes, and justify their analyses of purposes in particular works

- Students describe meanings of artworks by analyzing how specific works are created and how they relate to historical and cultural contexts
- Students reflect analytically on various interpretations as a means for understanding and evaluating works of visual art

Advanced:

- Students correlate responses to works of visual art with various techniques for communicating meanings, ideas, attitudes, views, and intentions

Content Standard 6

Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

Achievement Standard

Proficient:

- Students compare the materials, technologies, media, and processes of the visual arts with those of other arts disciplines as they are used in creation and types of analysis
- Students compare characteristics of visual arts within a particular historical period or style with ideas, issues, or themes in the humanities or sciences

Advanced:

- Students synthesize the creative and analytical principles and techniques of the visual arts and selected other arts disciplines, the humanities, or the sciences (pp. 69-72).

Proponents of the National Standards for the Visual Arts hoped it would bring increased reliability, consistency, and meaning to art assessments (Boughton, 1997, p. 207). Critics worried that it might lead to “a kind of standardization that would make

what happens in one art or music room indistinguishable from what takes place in any other” (Hoffa, 1994, p. 24). The *National Standards for Arts Education* states that they “speak of competencies, not a predetermined course of study.” They assert that standards are needed so that we can determine how well our schools are doing and to provide “a broad framework for state and local decision making” (Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 1994, p. 11).

The introductory pages of the standards book (Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 1994) discuss the benefits of an arts education. They state that such an education, among other things, develops “intuition, reasoning, imagination” and teaches students to “trust the unmediated flash of insight as a legitimate source of knowledge.” Students learn to “use ambiguity and subjectivity.” In addition, “as students, imagine, create, and reflect, they are developing both the verbal and nonverbal abilities necessary for school progress” (pp. 6-7). At first glance, it would seem that the standards value imagination. In the actual text of the visual arts standards, however, no form of the word “imagine” appears at all. Although the standards book describes middle grades students’ visual expressions as “more individualistic and imaginative” (p. 49), most of the action verbs throughout the grades 5-8 achievement standards tend to hover at or below the middle levels of Bloom’s taxonomy (Comprehension /Application /Analysis): apply, select, analyze, generalize, compare, demonstrate, use, know, describe. Higher level verbs such as create, invent, or imagine were not included, but one standard read, “intentionally take advantage of the qualities and characteristics of art media...” (p. 50). In the grades 9-12 introduction, imagination is not mentioned, but students “develop deeper and more profound works of visual art that reflect the maturation of their creative

and problem-solving skills” (p. 69). Again, most of the action verbs in the achievement standards are in the Comprehension /Application /Analysis categories. Higher level verbs appear only seven times: conceive, initiate, synthesize (2), create (2), evaluate (pp. 69-72). Although the actual impact of the national standards on art education practice is uncertain, if this document is to be used to evaluate schools and frame state and local decision making, could we not aim for higher levels of thinking rather than the middle? If we believe in imagination, could we not say so in our standards?

Textbook publishers quickly embraced the *National Standards for Arts Education*. Publishers included the full text of the standards for visual arts in the front sections of teachers’ editions of art textbooks, and emphasized how the books were correlated to the standards. *Arttalk*, (3rd edition) affirmed that it “helps teachers design their lessons around the National Standards” (Ragans, 2000, p. TM5). A sidebar at each chapter opener in the teacher’s edition listed the relevant national standards by number and letter, referencing which standards were addressed in that chapter (TE, Ragans, 2000, p. 5). Adherence to the standards became additional “features and benefits” to help sell the art textbooks.

In Chapter 4 I discussed the effects of standards on the design and adoption of textbooks. The Georgia Department of Education uses the same evaluation form for social studies textbooks and fine arts textbooks. The first section of the *Grades K-12 Social Studies and K-12 Fine Arts Textbook Recommendation* form is an 11-point checklist on how well the book meets standards. Textbooks are rated “Not acceptable” or “Acceptable” on such questions as:

1. The materials correlate with Quality Core Curriculum (QCC) or Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) Draft Version standards...
3. The statement and explanation of standards provide for the design and presentation of effective instruction...
5. Standards are introduced and are modeled, taught, and practiced before they are applied in sections (Georgia Department of Education, 2004).

The form shows how publishers are forced to make the books meet the standards of a large adoption state like Georgia. At the same time they are expected to thoroughly cover the standards, the books are supposed to encourage innovation, originality, judgment, and imagination:

9. The materials require the students to use higher level cognitive skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation, etc.) (Georgia Department of Education, 2004).

Considering the limitations imposed by standards, this seems a contradictory and Herculean task for textbooks to achieve.

Standards also affected how art textbooks view the process of creating, and process vs. product. Imagination and experimentation require time. The standards movement insists that the material be “covered” in a prescribed time frame. The result is undue emphasis placed on the product, while ignoring the process. Beth Kephart pointed out, “Imagining takes time. We can’t reasonably imagine inside the press of schedules, under the weight of obligation, within the claustrophobia of competition” (Kephart, 2004, p. 45). Experimentation is glossed over in some art textbooks. A ceramic studio project in *Art* (Brooks, 2005, p. 163) moves quickly through building the vessel using the coil or

slab method, outlining the face, modeling the features, and adding patterns—in only four sentences! The instructions fail to suggest the myriad of interesting experiments that could have happened with clay stamping, incising, carving, casting, and draping. Not to mention the things that could be done with handmade clay tools. Many art textbooks are missing opportunities to suggest exciting experiments with the materials and techniques. As Eisner advocated, the way something is formed matters. Intrinsic satisfactions matter. An artist takes time to relish the experience of creating. An art textbook that encourages experimentation in its studio lessons is *The Visual Experience* (3rd edition). Experimentation is a part of the process in *The Visual Experience*, as in this monochromatic collage lesson: “1. Experiment with combining cut or torn paper in various ways to create a composition that is no larger than 3 ½” square and no smaller than 2” square” (Hobbs, Salome, & Vieth, 2005, p. 142). The lesson could have been improved, however, by suggesting some specific experiments with composition or shapes. Students are often at a loss for ideas when told only to “experiment.” The studio lessons were provided by Ken Vieth, author of *From Ordinary to Extraordinary*, a trade book of highly imaginative studio projects which is a popular book among secondary art teachers. *From Ordinary to Extraordinary* (1999) and *The Visual Experience* were both published by Davis Publications. Some art teachers may have been disappointed to find that some of the studio lessons in the textbook were duplicates of those in the trade book rather than new ones.

Besides causing the product to be valued over the process, standards have also caused publishers to insert non-art activities. Considering the limited space in the art textbook, this has serious implications for the valuation of art content. As school systems

worry about how to raise test scores in academic subjects, all other subjects are in danger of becoming enslaved to the testing frenzy. *The Visual Experience* (3rd edition) features sidebars called *Write About It!* Some are redundant with the art criticism activities, for example, in the studio lesson Family Structure in Abstract Sculpture *Evaluate It* asks, “How do your shapes symbolically represent each family member?” In the adjacent column, the *Write About It!* sidebar instructs: “Describe in a short essay how your shapes represent your family members” (Hobbs, Salome, & Vieth, 2005, p. 83). The middle school series *Art* (2005), published by Scott Foresman, refers to the student artist’s sketchbook as a “sketchbook journal” throughout. Since “journal” is a popular buzzword used in language arts classes, this looks like an attempt to make the books seem more “academic” at the expense of using the correct art term, “sketchbook.” Glencoe McGraw-Hill added a *Quick Write* activity to each chapter opening page in their middle school series and in *Arttalk* (4th edition). Students are asked to re-write or interpret a quotation from an artist. In the previous edition of the middle school books, that premium space was used for Portfolio Ideas. The publisher has recontextualized knowledge as Apple described (Apple, 2000, p. 65), communicating to students that writing skills are superior to assembling a quality portfolio. The information has been re-focused: the school convention that words are valued over images has been reinforced. In *Introducing Art*, the chapter opener *Before You Read* feature asks students to perform rote language arts work. For example in chapter 1, they are to copy glossary definitions (Mittler, Ragans, Unsworth, & Scannell, 2007, p. 3). In chapter 2, students are to write an outline of the chapter, copying the titles, headings, and subheadings of the text (p. 13). By locating this feature on the chapter opening page, the publisher has granted premium value to it. The

publisher has again recontextualized knowledge, making verbal test preparation more important than art content knowledge. The headlong pursuit of test scores is only important to the adults involved. For children, the pursuit is changing school from a garden of learning into a barren landscape.

Summary

Suppose the monoprint activity had been forced to fit into a set of restrictive standards: *Each monoprint will contain four (4) analogous colors arranged in a symmetrical composition. Each student will have 4.5 minutes to create eight (8) monoprints using five (5) geometric shapes each...* Not only the spontaneity would have been lost, but also the creative experience and the enjoyment of learning that came out of it. In addition, the artists would have felt no connection to the work; the products would have been worthless to the artists at the end of the session. There would have been no interest in discussing further uses for the monoprints. Restrictive standards take away the creative experiences as well as the personal signature of the artist.

Business leaders look to standards as the primary measure of the quality of American schools. The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* has forced schools to emphasize preparation for standardized testing and narrow the curriculum to quantifiable content. The formulation of the National Visual Arts Standards was an attempt to raise the status of the arts, but it failed to articulate the value of imagination and higher level thinking skills. Focus on standards and test preparation has caused art textbooks to devote more space to non-art activities such as glossary and writing skills.

What if art textbook authors were guided not by standards but by criteria? In opening up inquiry, the activities in the books might aim for higher levels of thinking—

imagining, creating, inventing. Rather than focusing on efficient production of an art product, they might suggest experimenting with the art materials along the way to creating. The imaginative author might suggest ways to look at a problem from many sides, unveiling multiple viewpoints and inciting questions like *What if...?* and *Why not?* What would imaginative art textbooks look like? To find them, we will need to leave the sidewalk. Let us follow the trail into the meadow and look at them through a magnifying glass in the next chapter.

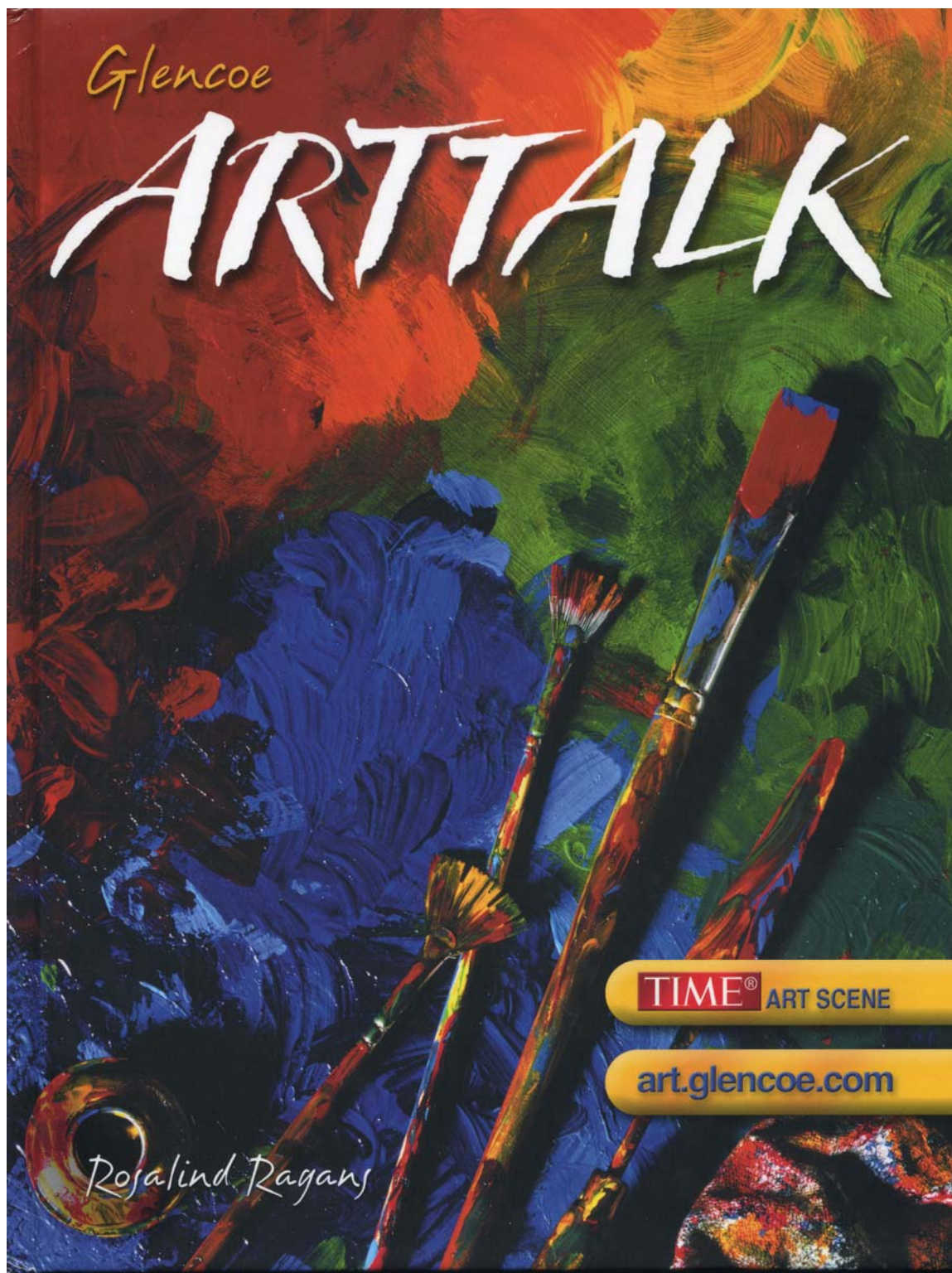


Figure 6-1. Front cover, *Arttalk*. Copyright 2005 by Glencoe/McGraw-Hill. Reprinted with permission.

CHAPTER 6

OFF THE SIDEWALK, INTO THE MEADOW:

AN ANALYSIS OF FOUR ART TEXTBOOKS

A book symbolized intellectual freedom...
Books are the primary conveyances of all abstract ideas
(Barbara G. Walker, 1988, p. 121).

In the scenery of art textbooks, I have brought four books to the foreground where we may examine the details and put them into perspective. Three of the books stand out for their ways of engaging students' imaginations. They are: *Arttalk* (Ragans, 2005), a basic level high school text published by Glencoe McGraw-Hill; *Art: Of Wonder and a World* (Morman, 1978), a middle school text published by Art Education, Inc.; and *Launching the Imagination* (Stewart, 2006), a high school text used in advanced placement art classes, published by McGraw-Hill. *Arttalk* balances art history, basic aesthetic concepts, and studio activities. The concepts are illustrated by artworks from many cultures, as well as many women artists. The book clearly explains many basic art techniques and media. *Arttalk* is a solid foundation for high school students beginning the study of art. *Art: Of Wonder & a World* stands out for its open-ended, imaginative activities and outlook. In *Launching the Imagination* the author created a structure for students to use their imaginations to extend their own artworks. A wide variety of creative works are included in the term "art." These authors have shown us many ways an art textbook can leave the beaten path and venture into the indeterminate and the imaginative.

A fourth book provides contrast with a more pedestrian approach to art education. *Art* (Turner, 2005), a middle school text published by Scott Foresman, represents missed

opportunities for imaginative learning. *Arttalk*, *Launching the Imagination*, and *Art* are currently in use in schools, so it is appropriate to study them. *Art: Of Wonder & A World* is no longer on the market. It is, however, one of the most imaginative and aesthetically stimulating of all of the textbooks I have studied. I believe it has much to teach us about the future design of art textbooks.

How the Books Will Be Analyzed

Maxine Greene believed the education of imagination takes place through encounters with the arts (Greene, 2001, p. 74). Part of that education happens in art classes through experiences guided by the art textbook. In evaluating art textbooks, I have synthesized a framework of questions that come from the imagination theories of Dewey, Greene, and Eisner. The four criteria are:

How does the book expand imagination through enjoyment of the creative process?

How does the book expand imagination through synthesis?

How does the book expand imagination through multiple representations of knowledge?

How does the book expand imagination by teaching aesthetic principles?

The first criterion for art textbooks is: *How does the book expand imagination through enjoyment of the creative process?* This theory comes alive in the books by the encouragement of experimentation, the valuation of process as much as product, extensions of the artwork, and delayed closure of the project. Experimentation opens up spaces for imagination to play. Dewey (Simpson, Jackson, & Aycock, 2005) characterized the artist's "mental playfulness and seriousness" (p. 193):

To give the mind free play is not to encourage toying with a subject, but is to be interested in the unfolding of the subject on its own account, apart from any subservience to a preconceived belief or habitual aim. Mental play is open-mindedness, faith in the power of thought to preserve its own integrity without external supports and arbitrary restrictions. Hence free mental play involves seriousness, the earnest following of the development of subject matter (p. 193).

The artistic approach includes playing with ideas, waiting to see what outcomes result from inquiries, speculating about conclusions, trying out applications, and wondering “what if?” (p. 193-194). Pre-determined answers close off inquiry too soon, stunting the imaginative opportunities. So, too, does a rush to produce an art product. Efficient production is the goal of factories, not artists. In an imaginative textbook, the process will be as important as the product. Greene (2001) described the value of the process: “Like the artists, we are always in process, always exploring our texts, our raw materials, always seeking ways of reaching others and moving others to come alive, to think about their thinking, to create meanings, to transform their lived worlds” (p. 70).

Besides slowing down to enjoy the experience, we also slow down to increase the inventiveness of the responses. Cognitive researchers found that constant questioning of works and postponing final meaning resulted in more innovative projects. Creative ideas are not predetermined, but evolve during the artmaking process, and may evolve further after the work has reached one or more stopping points. In research studies, when people were instructed to create forms and invent a function for them, more creative ideas emerged than when they were given specific functions and told to develop forms to go with them (Walker, 2001, pp. 134-135). By encouraging the student to delay closure and

extend the creative process, the art book teaches the student to value the means as much as the end, to question the work, and to discover meaning in the process. Eisner (2002b) believed that taking time to enjoy the aesthetic experience is central to learning:

Experience, the medium of education, is a made process, and it is made by the ways in which people attend to aspects of the world they care about. If there is any lesson the arts teach, it is the importance of paying close attention to what is at hand, of slowing down perception so that efficiency is put on a back burner and the quest for experience is made dominant...The arts are about savoring. (p. 207)

Eisner asked: do we try to eat a gourmet meal efficiently, or make love efficiently? No, some things are savored for their pure sensory enjoyment. Eisner pointed out that intrinsic satisfaction is the only reasonable predictor that an individual will pursue an activity voluntarily (2002b, p. 203). An encounter with art can bring intrinsic satisfactions of many kinds. If the art textbook fails to teach aesthetic satisfaction, it has missed an opportunity to show the student how to savor one of life's joys.

Eisner believed the arts encourage improvisation. "Problem solving objectives are objectives in which the criteria to be met are specified, but the form the solution is to take is not" (p. 160). Open-ended, emergent learning is highly valued in the arts. Therefore, the second criterion is: *How does the book expand imagination through synthesis?* In the books this will show up in the form of open-ended questions, higher level thinking activities, and writing projects that deepen understanding of art. Eisner described the importance of being "flexibly purposive" in arts work. In his view, "artistic activity is opportunistic. When new openings emerge, they are exploited." Goals may shift during the process; an inquiry process is underway; "individuals are immersed in tasks in which

they are trying to bring something to a resolution but who are not rigidly pinned to aims that initiated the inquiry” (p. 206). Eisner described the capacities of art forms to speak to us through relationships: for example, shapes and colors in a painting, or movements in dance. The viewer needs to attend to relationships and “see how an array of forms congregate as a whole” (p. 201). There is no rule or chart that will give an indisputable answer. The judgment depends upon feel. To find this “rightness of fit” one needs to use somatic knowledge:

The body is engaged, the source of information is visceral, the sensibilities are employed to secure experience that makes it possible to render a judgment and to act upon it...And for good work to be achieved, attention to relationships among the “parts” of the material produced must be addressed experientially...(p. 201).

I think of James, a devoted cartoonist in my Comprehensive Art class. As he designs his characters, his face unconsciously reflects their expressions—tongue protruding, brows up, eyes wide, then squinting. His entire body participates in the drawing. He feels the character. An art book could make students aware of how their bodies participate in artmaking. If the art textbook increases awareness of the senses, then the artist’s perception becomes sharper.

Activities and assessments in the art textbooks could be at the higher levels of Bloom’s taxonomy. Once again, the two highest levels are: *Level 5: Evaluation*: (present and defend opinions by making judgments about information, validity of ideas or quality of work based on a set of criteria): criticize, determine, compare, recommend, agree, support, prove, estimate, dispute, decide, appraise, perceive, conclude, measure, assess, value (Barton, 1997).

Level 6: Synthesis: (compile information together in a different way by combining elements in a new pattern or proposing alternative solutions): imagine, create, invent, solve, originate, theorize, improve, design, formulate, modify, adapt, change, propose, predict, build, estimate, plan, compile, discuss, compose, make up, maximize, elaborate, make happen, construct, suppose (Barton, 1997). Writing activities in art textbooks are opportunities to go beyond listing and labeling. As Greene (1995) wrote, “It is never enough simply to label, categorize, or recognize certain phenomena or events. There has to be a live, aware, reflective transaction if what presents itself to consciousness is to be realized” (p. 30). Writing in an art textbook is an opportunity to lead to deepening the student’s understanding of art.

Eisner’s work encompasses all of the criteria, but he clearly expressed the need for schools to promote multiple solutions, and teach many ways of representing knowledge. “The meaning that representation carries is both constrained and made possible by the form of representation we employ. Not everything can be ‘said’ with anything” (Eisner, 1998, p. 121). Therefore the third criterion for examining art textbooks is: *How does the book expand imagination through multiple representations of knowledge?* The book will meet the criterion well if it encourages multiple solutions and many types of assessments. Dewey (Simpson, Jackson, & Aycock, 2005) encouraged teachers and students in

an active desire to listen to more sides than one; to give heed to facts from whatever source they come; to give full attention to alternative possibilities; to recognize the possibility of error even in beliefs that are dearest to us (p. 181).

Eisner argued that words and numbers are not the only means through which knowledge is obtained or represented. School too often privileges verbal and numeric types of representation. When ideas are rendered in other forms, such as those found in the arts, students must be taught to “read” those as well. If students are deprived of opportunities to acquire those literacies, the result is “a diminution of the varieties of life that students are able to lead” (Eisner, 2002b, p. 205).

The imaginative art textbook is, in a way, always new, because it fosters open-ended experiences. Maxine Greene (2001) described these experiences as brought to life, always to new life—because each work, each enactment, each representation is in a sense always new. That is why we cannot predetermine what will happen, or package it, or test for results. It is always an adventure, reaching toward the unpredictable, reaching toward possibility. (p. 68)

Just as each group of actors or artists is different, so is each group of creative students. Susan Ohanian (1999) explained in practical terms why standards—or a textbook—won’t work the same way twice: Standardists present their lists of essential knowledge for everyone to know. “I tell you my lists worked this year with these individual children. And knowing you can’t step into the same river twice, I don’t count on their working for next year’s group. Each year is a new beginning” (p. 44). If we could only ask one question about an art textbook, perhaps the one to ask would be: is it always new? In an imaginative textbook the activities can be done over and over with new results each time.

Art textbooks are teaching aesthetic beliefs and principles not only by their content but by the way they model design. So the fourth criterion for judging art textbooks is *How does the book expand imagination by teaching aesthetic principles?*

Eisner believed the way something is formed matters. Roger Chartier expressed a similar thought about the physical form of books in *The Order of Books*:

There is no text apart from the physical support that offers it for reading (or hearing), hence there is no comprehension of any written piece that does not at least in part depend upon the forms in which it reaches its reader (Chartier, 1992, p. 9).

If form matters, then the design of a page is important to learning. Graphic design is the composition of text and/or images for purposes of communication. The design of the book has a bearing on its instructional utility. The book's graphic design performs four functions that influence learning: (1) it captures attention; (2) it communicates concepts; (3) it sparks imagination by showing alternative solutions; and (4) it invites participation.

The first function of graphic design is to attract attention. The design of a book can determine whether the student opens it. A book's design communicates a concept; the reader makes an almost instantaneous decision about whether that concept is of interest. Mary Stewart (2002), in *Launching the Imagination (1st edition)*, defined a concept as "a well-developed thought" (p. I-9). A concept may be described in both text and images. As it communicates concepts, an imaginative art textbook will provide opportunities for the reader to engage with the page. A well-presented concept can spark imagination. Stewart stated, "By developing rich concepts, we set the stage for the development of inventive objects and images. Dull concepts, on the other hand, generally result in dull images" (p. I-9). Rich concepts, expressed in both text and images, engage the reader with the message, triggering imaginative responses that lead to learning.

Stewart pointed out that developing a concept is only the beginning of communication. To reach an audience, a concept must be communicated in a visually powerful composition. Graphic design elements—lines, shapes, textures, values, and colors—achieve power by their arrangement in a unified whole (p. I-10). An art book communicates beliefs about the reader by the appearance of its pages. The cover and page layouts of both editions of *Launching the Imagination*, for example, feature generous areas of white space. According to the conventions of graphic design, white space indicates a view of the reader as visually sophisticated. White space in the book invites interaction by providing space for the reader to jot notes. Even if the student is not permitted literally to write on the pages, the design communicates that the reader's ideas are valued here. Pages filled with text all the way to the margins suggest the author is the unquestionable authority, and close off interaction.

In my inquiry I have applied each of the four criteria to the books in the following order: *Arttalk*, *Art*, *Art: Of Wonder & A World*, and *Launching the Imagination*. My reasons for examining the books in this order follow. *Arttalk* is first because it is a basic, all-purpose book used in the first year of high school. The book covers art history, aesthetics, artmaking, and art criticism clearly, and is therefore a good basis for comparisons to the other books. *Art* represents a missed opportunity for a similar basic book, and is therefore placed second. *Art: Of Wonder & A World* is very imaginative and at the high end of the scale in open-ended activities, and so is placed third to highlight the contrast with the newer books. *Launching the Imagination* takes a specialized approach to imagination in its extensions to projects, so it is placed last. For each criterion I have

described one or more representative examples from the text of the books, and I have included scans of pages from the textbooks to show key points.

Strolling in the Meadow: Enjoying the Creative Process

Imagination can flourish in a place where intrinsic satisfaction is valued. In such an atmosphere, experimentation is encouraged and the process is as important as the product. The activities slow us down and help us to notice the scenery along the way.

Experimentation is encouraged in *Arttalk* (Ragans, 2005) in Studio Project 4-3, *Digital Image Using Line* (pp. 88-89). In *What You Will Learn*, a synopsis states “you will emphasize the expressive qualities of this line by altering its color, value, texture, and/or width.” The instructions encourage experimentation by suggesting the student (1) take several digital photos, (2) use the line properties tool to change effects, and (4) use the filters, and (4) use the preview to apply effects and make changes. *Evaluating Your Work* encourages extending the creative process by asking, “What would you do differently if you were to redo this assignment?” The drawing activity using *Traditional and Digital Media* (p. 60) also encourages experiments. The motivator is somewhat general: “Create a design based on a mood or a feeling using a pencil and brush.” There are suggestions for changing length, thickness and texture of the lines to create a composition in both types of media. The student is encouraged to experiment in this project.

Experimentation in *Art* (Turner, 2005) is thin. A *Technique Tip* (p. 92) gives a brief directive on unity, mood and color experimentation: “As you plan a composition, take extra time to make sure your colors match the mood you want to set. Paint several different color schemes on a sheet of paper and study them closely.” The lesson could

have been improved by the addition of suggestions for colors that create sadness, happiness, or other moods, and ideas for various color combinations. In *Studio 6: Create a Value Drawing*, several steps are given, but the instructions are minimal and the student is not made aware that he or she is experimenting with light. Another *Technique Tip* (p. 46) on Mixing Colors has an opportunity to offer ideas for color experiments, but again, the instructions are cursory: “Experiment with mixing colors by first combining two primary colors to make a secondary color. To mix intermediate colors, combine a secondary with a primary color next to each other on the color wheel.” Throughout this book, experimentation was not mentioned in the studio projects. Instructions are terse and there seems to be a rush to produce a finished art product.

Joyful experimentation abounds in *Art: Of Wonder & A World* (Morman, 1978).

In the media chapter *What’s in a Material?*, Morman suggests:

--Invent your own binder for paint. Prehistoric painters used animal fat. Then find your own pigment, such as rust, coffee, soot, powder, fruits, vegetables. You may need to grind the pigment with a coffee grinder or a smooth stone. Make a painting on paper, wood, fabric. What else? (p. 31)

This author gives specific ideas to help students get started. She also weaves in information such as the fact about the animal fat to relate the activity to art history in a natural way. In a chapter on line, *A Thousand Lines—A Thousand Ideas*, a unique experiment with printmaking challenges students:

--Do a portrait of the person across from you, using only a 3” piece of corrugated or chip board and a dish of ink. Stamp with the edge of the cardboard to make lines and create form (p. 48).

Interestingly, the activities in the line chapter are not limited to the expected drawing tasks, but are mixed, including printmaking, sculpture, and using “string to make a continuous line design of the front of your house” (p. 48).

Experimentation in *Launching the Imagination* requires imagining as well as doing. Student projects are described on the CD that accompanies the textbook. In the textbook itself, experiments appear in various forms. For example, in a discussion of materials, planes, and volume, students are pictured wearing bristol board helmets they have constructed from various polyhedra shapes (p. 195). On the same page, key questions initiate thought concerning planar and volume experiments:

- Consider the limitations of the material you are using. Can it be cut or scored and folded to create curving planes?
- What are the structural and compositional advantages of curved or twisted planes versus flat planes?
- What happens to your design when you pierce or slot together any or all of the planes? (p. 195)

To experiment or consider these questions, students must imagine the effects of these actions on the materials. These questions also encourage delayed closure and extension of the design phase.

Process is as important as product in *Arttalk*. In an architecture section, an activity on *Redesigning a Familiar Building* advises students to go through several steps.

They are to:

Study the building by making sketches from different points of view;

Identify and list materials used in construction of the building;

Think about the materials and list some materials that would harmonize with the environment;

Draw one face of the building in pencil;

Redesign that face using improved materials;

Paint the new face in watercolors. (p. 54)

The computer option follows a similar procedure using the copy and paste function and brushes, textures and gradient features. In *Studio project 8-1, Found Objects Jewelry*, the student is instructed to be flexible in the design process:

(Step 2) Experiment with arranging your found items in interesting ways.

Attempt to “view” a grouping that might be suitable for a pin or a suspended necklace.

Make sketches that appeal to your design sense.

Determine whether additional items are needed to complete an idea for which you are missing components.

(Step 3) Choose your best design.

(Step 4) Problem-solve ways to attach your items. Possible solutions might include drilling holes and “sewing” with wire, super-strength adhesives, wire jump rings, and so on. Be flexible if an idea is not successful, and rethink your strategy. (p. 215)

Several ideas are suggested for attaching the pieces. The pace of the project is not rushed; it places as much value on the process as on the product.

In *Art*, it was difficult to find any lessons that emphasized the process. In Unit 2, Principles of Design, the *Studio 2 Setup: Emphasis and Contrast* discusses a painting by

Nicolas Tartikoff. The text puts bullet points on four ways the artist emphasized the cat in the painting. The *Technique Tip* describes outlining, an activity unrelated to the emphasis techniques in the lesson: placement, framing, diagonal positioning, and foreground objects (p. 72). Outlining the dominant object with a wide-tip marker would not be effective in artwork unless one was drawing a coloring book page. The studio lesson on the next page repeats the *Technique Tip* in more detail (p. 73). Here was an opportunity to offer students practical ideas for creating emphasis in a color drawing using the concepts taught in the chapter—placement, framing, diagonal positioning, and foreground objects. Instead, students are taught to make a thick black outline around the object of emphasis. A few years from now, their high school art teacher will have to work very hard teaching them not to flatten objects by making black outlines.

In the *Studio 3: Draw with Altered Proportions* project, students use a “shiny, reflective ball” to draw a distorted self-portrait (p. 77). Artists call this effect a fish-eye drawing, after the photographic effect of a fish-eye lens on a camera. The author does not use the term “fish-eye” in the description. Drawing with distortion is challenging, therefore this lesson needs some experimentation suggestions. The lesson could have been improved by breaking it into steps. The entire drawing stage is covered in two sentences: “Look at your reflection in the shiny, reflective ball. In the circle on your paper, draw what you see with a felt-tip pen.” Few students, even in high school, will be satisfied with this type of drawing on the first try; a series of pencil sketches would have been more appropriate for beginning. The illustrations for this lesson do not communicate the idea of an exaggerated self-portrait to the extent that they could have.

In every chapter of *Art: Of Wonder & A World*, process is valued. A page from *A Tree is not a Tree*, a chapter on shapes, suggests activities that build awareness of the process of making a shape into an image:

- Take successive bites out of an apple. Draw the apple at each stage. Then transform the apple shapes into images.
- Print your thumbprint on a piece of acetate. Project it as a slide and trace the enlarged design on paper. Transform it into a map or a neighborhood. What else?...
- Pose a student inside a 3X4' frame so that arms, legs, head touch the sides. Let your 18X24" paper represent the frame. Then draw the spaces around the figure, starting each time at the edge of the paper. (p. 76).

Each activity is a process of successive actions that draw the artist's attention to the steps that transform shapes into images. Artworks by Miro and Escher that focus on shapes and transformations are shown. Even the chapter title—*A Tree is not a Tree*—stirs the imagination and invites probing. A chapter on rhythm, 5: *The Beat is the Same*, suggests some listening exercises along with searches for visual rhythms in the landscape:

LISTEN

- to your own breathing. Does it change when you run or get excited?
- to gym class doing exercises
- to feet scurrying, shuffling through school halls (p. 46).

An accompanying drawing prompt allows the process to go in several directions:

- As one or two students dance, do gesture sketches of the movement. Let figures overlap. Or just keep drawing the movement without closing individual figures.

Develop one such study into a finished painting, using colors and patterns that suit the rhythm (p. 47).

Process and product receive equal emphasis throughout *Art: Of Wonder & A World*. The emphasis on process shows up in both the text and the *Key Questions* in *Launching the Imagination*. In *Chapter 14, Interdisciplinary Arts, The Visual Book*, questions guide the student in reading potential texts repeatedly to assess verbal patterns and word resonance (p. 355). Regarding the student's design, *Key Questions* ask, "Will a change in tempo increase impact? Try adding some blank pages to slow down the tempo or putting multiple frames on a single page to speed up the tempo" (p. 358). In each set of questions, the student is encouraged to take the design farther, to analyze, extend, and make changes along the way.

Arttalk, Art: Of Wonder & A World, and *Launching the Imagination* allow, in many places, what Dewey advocated—mental free play and unfolding of the subject without preconceived notions or habitual goals.

Under the Open Sky: Synthesis

When activities are open-ended, the imagination is freed. The number of possibilities multiplies! Thinking goes to a higher level—creating, inventing, choosing, interpreting, synthesizing. Student writing at this level could be reflective, serving to deepen understanding of art.

Open-ended activities appear in many of *Arttalk's* studio projects. *Studio project 5-1, Free-form Clay Sculpture* guides students to let the material suggest the form. After shaping the clay to a vertical form, the student is advised to:

(Step 3) Place the resulting form on a turntable. Study it from all directions. Let the existing form of the clay guide you. Look for linear edges that flow through the form. Avoid looking for a recognizable object.

(Step 4) Begin to carve the form you visualize, using large wire sculpture tools.

Use smaller clay tools to refine the planes. (p. 123)

As Dewey wrote, “The physical process develops imagination, while imagination is conceived in terms of concrete material” (Dewey, 1934/1980, p. 75). The imagination and the material work together. The process is open-ended, and depends greatly on the somatic knowledge that Eisner described. Another *Arttalk* studio project keeps a drawing open-ended. In a drawing of a model, *Studio project 5-2, Contrast Drawing* recommends:

(Step 2) Transfer your study onto a sheet of drawing paper. Do not worry if you are unable to capture your subject’s exact likeness. Your chief goal is to make a dramatic statement through contrast. Decide which aspect of the subject you will emphasize through the use of light and dark. (p. 125)

In a closed-end approach, the objective would have been to make an accurate portrait of the model. The expressive qualities would have been secondary.

There is a difference between an open-ended activity and one that gives so little structure it loses meaning. In the textbook *Art, a Sketchbook Journal in Lesson 2, Painting*, instructs students to

Paint with watercolors. Use one sheet of paper to practice painting watercolor washes. Paint subjects on another sheet. Make notes about the techniques you discover. (p. 113)

The previous unit gives no information about “watercolor washes,” nor are they listed in the index or defined in the glossary. This lesson could be made more substantial by adding:

- a) more information about *how* and *why* he or she is to “paint with watercolors” or “paint subjects.”
- b) suggestions for subjects likely to produce successful watercolor washes.
- c) details and examples of the technique notes the student might discover.

A middle school student is not likely to discover techniques with inadequate information. This *Sketchbook Journal* appears next to a two-paragraph description of Color Field painting, titled Painting and Expression. The text describes the technique of one Color Field artist as if all artists in this movement used this technique: “During the 1960s, a group of painters developed a style known as Color Field. To achieve this style, the artist brushes or pours thin paints onto large canvases. The wet blending of colors creates soft edges” (p. 113). The explanation of Color Field painting leaves the student with more questions than information. My students have a valid question when they ask why artists would become rich and famous for filling a canvas with one or two colors. The *Art* text does not address this question. Examine the ways the other books handle this open-ended topic. *Arttalk* refers to a style discussed previously, Op art:

As artists experimented with a variety of new styles, they occasionally selected just one element of art to focus on in their work. An example, Color Field painting, is art created using only flat fields of color. It is created without the precision of Op art and also without its interest in illusion. It is color for the pure sensation of color...(Ragans, 2005, p. 380)

In the explanation of Color Field paintings, *Art: Of Wonder & A World* approaches color from many angles in *Chapter 11, Color is Dynamite* (pp. 60-61). Black and white reproductions of paintings by Helen Frankenthaler and Morris Louis are shown. In *What do you think?* Morman describes the different techniques used in Frankenthaler and Rothko's Color Field paintings, finally asking, "Can you discover the works of other painters who invite you to enjoy color?" The answer is implied in the question—that the purpose of Color Field paintings is to enjoy the pleasure of color. Morman invites students to learn about Color Field painting experientially:

On an old sheet, do a color field painting. Experiment with dyes, as Morris Louis did in his painting. Use sponges, rags, squeeze bottles. (Morman, 1978, p. 61)

Morman's prose communicates the pleasure: "Color is magic. Color is ritual. Color is symbol. Color is dynamite!" (p. 60). If only there had been color reproductions for these pages, the pleasure of Color Field paintings could have been communicated in a striking visual way as well as verbally. *Launching the Imagination* discusses color as a design element, but does not mention Color Field painting.

Although *Art* suggests some watercolor experiments in a *Technique Tip* (p. 114), such as sprinkling wet areas with salt and scratching into wet paint, openings for imagination are scarce in the studio lesson instructions. The studio lessons all fit on one page. Instructions are terse, usually numbering only four to six sentences, and head straight to the product without detours for alternative solutions. For example, in *Studio Setup 6, The Impact of Proportion*, the main idea in the text is that the Mayans designed buildings with monumental proportions to communicate power and instill awe in the people (p. 188). One photo of a Mayan building and three bulleted items describe the

features, such as wide staircases. On the next page, *Studio 6: Design a Mayan-style Movie Theatre*, students are instructed to repeat those features in their theatre design.

Step 2 further delineates the features to be included:

Add elements from Mayan architecture, such as sides with steps, wide staircases, and horizontal bands of stone. (p. 189)

Alternative elements are not suggested. Since the students have such limited information about Mayan architecture, and such defined instructions, all of the drawings are likely to turn out very much the same. The core concept of the art lesson has been missed here—of all buildings, why would a movie theatre need to communicate power and instill awe?

In another studio project, *Studio 3: Make an Animal Vessel* (p. 227), the familiar slab container seen in so many other art textbooks reappears. Again the instructions are brief, delivered in only six sentences. Space for imaginative alternatives could have been provided in suggestions for varying the shapes of the slabs, bending the slabs, incising, or combining with other techniques. Why could we not make an imaginary animal, or an animal combined from two real animals, like a cow-fish? The illustration for step 3 is also misleading. The fired vessel is shown the same color as the unfinished piece, possibly causing the student to think the greenware should be painted. (See Fig. 6-6).

The open-ended outlook in *Art: Of Wonder & A World* is evident in both the text and the student activities. In *Chapter 4: What is Today's Artist Saying?* on contemporary art, Morman informs students about unusual canvases:

Even the traditional two-dimensional shape of the canvas wash challenged!

Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns began combining the broad brush strokes of Abstract Expressionism with actual objects fastened on or hanging from their

canvases. Because they were interested in the symbols of the world around them, almost anything—radios, road signs, tin cans, photos, stuffed animals—became part of their expression in these huge works of art called “combines” or “assemblages.” (p. 24)

Students are encouraged to pursue open-ended activities in *Look* and *What do you think?*

Throughout the book, the suggestions in *Look* and *Listen* are so open they do not even have punctuation at the ends, but instead are left unclosed, leaving an almost irresistible invitation to add more ideas:

LOOK

--at the forms, colors, movements of a busy street

--at the repeated wire lines in a stack of shopping carts

--at the distortion of forms seen on curved windshields or in water reflections

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

--The computer has become the heart beat of industry. Too often we have become mere numbers fed into it. Think of all the numbers that identify you. Design a response to this in any art medium. Try a tape recording, a self-portrait using “your” numbers, a dance, a number poem (p. 25)

The definition of art is wide here: sound, portrait, movement, and poetry all become media. In the *Try This* section, one of the artworks involves unorthodox treatments for a canvas:

--Try a new outside shape for a painting. Build up the surface with layers of cardboard or pull the fabric in folds over the canvas stretchers. Try cutting

openings within the picture. Add objects. You might use an old T-shirt pulled over a frame, or stuff it as your canvas. (p. 25)

In the creative activities, Morman presents open-ended challenges for student artists, taking them beyond the expected uses of the materials. Even Morman's definition of an artist is unusually broad:

The artist is a person who sees, truly sees, the riot of color in a garden, as well as the ugly problems of our world. Artists are never content to say with paint, "This is a red barn." They get into their subject, or simply into the paint, stone or plaster, and say something NEW. (p. 42)

Throughout *Art: Of Wonder & A World* the student is presented with a wealth of ideas which expand the concept of art and make room for imagination to play.

In *Launching the Imagination*, Stewart analyzes the qualities that cultivate creativity. Open-ended thinking habits are described in seven characteristics that can be developed: receptivity, curiosity, wide range of interests, attentiveness, connection seeking, conviction, and complexity. Curiosity is encouraged:

Curiosity

A good designer brings an insatiable curiosity to each project. Researching unfamiliar topics and analyzing unusual systems is a source of delight rather than a cause for concern. Like a child, the designer is eager to learn new things and explore new places. "How does it work?" and "How can it work better?" are frequently asked questions. (p. 117)

Under *Wide Range of Interests*, the student is urged to consider the number of words that can be made from the letters in the word *image*, such as age, game, gem, etc.

Then try the same game with the word *imagination*: gin, nation, gnat, ton, tan, not, man, again, etc.

With more components, the number of combinations increases. Likewise an artist who has a background in literature, geology, archery, music and history can make more connections than a single-minded specialist. (p. 117)

Chapter 5 is devoted to *Problem seeking and Problem Solving*. Detailed explanations and examples define convergent thinking and divergent thinking, and show when each is most effective:

Convergent thinking applications

Convergent thinking is most effective when:

- The problem can be defined clearly.
- The problem can be solved rationally.
- The problem must be solved sequentially.
- Firm deadlines must be met...

Divergent thinking applications

Divergent thinking is most effective when

- The problem definition is elusive or evolving.
- A rational solution is not required.
- A sequential work method is not required.
- Deadlines are flexible. (pp. 134-135)

A student can use open-ended thinking most creatively when he or she is aware of what it is and how it can be used in art. Clark and Zimmerman (2004) found that talented art students were aware of their talents, interested in advancing their skills, and reflective

about the role art played in their lives (pp. 77-78). *Launching the Imagination* views the student as a person who wants to increase his or her creative abilities and is looking for active, conscious ways to do so. Open-ended activities are the landscapes where creative abilities and imagination can expand.

Higher level thinking takes place when students have opportunities to make judgments and choices, combine elements in new ways, invent, design, and predict. Imagining is a key thought process in these activities. In *Arttalk*, Ragans (2005) asks students to use higher level thinking in evaluating artworks. In Picabia's *Figure Triste* (p. 149), the caption leads into the work with alternative translations of the title. After pointing out shapes and colors in the painting, the caption asks the student to evaluate whether the color scheme enhances the mood, and to explain the answer given. The entire caption supports the question well with analytical information. *Arttalk's* captions are exceptionally well-written, providing both engaging information and high level questions.

In *Arttalk*, interpretation (another higher level thinking skill) is encouraged by the choice of ambiguous artworks like Leo F. Twiggs' *East Wind Suite: Door* (p. 10). (See Fig. 6-1). *Arttalk* also advances higher level thinking throughout the book with student self-evaluations in the creative work. In the activity *Using Color Schemes*, students paint letter designs using a color scheme either in paint or on a computer. They are asked to evaluate the effect of the color schemes on the basic designs (p. 149).

Although one would expect the *Sketchbook Journal* to be a place for higher level thinking, in *Art* many of the instructions use the verbs found in the Knowledge and Application (lower) levels of Bloom's taxonomy such as "identify" and "label." In the

Sketchbook Journal for Lesson 3: Form the student is instructed to identify geometric and organic forms (p. 25). In the *Sketchbook Journal for Lesson 4: Space*, the student is asked to draw simple objects and label the positive and negative spaces (p. 29). In *Lesson 5: Rhythm*, the *Sketchbook Journal* activity involves drawing three boxes and showing the rhythm of music in each box with line, color, shape, and pattern. The student is to “label the rhythm of a different song in each box” (p. 87).

LESSON 2

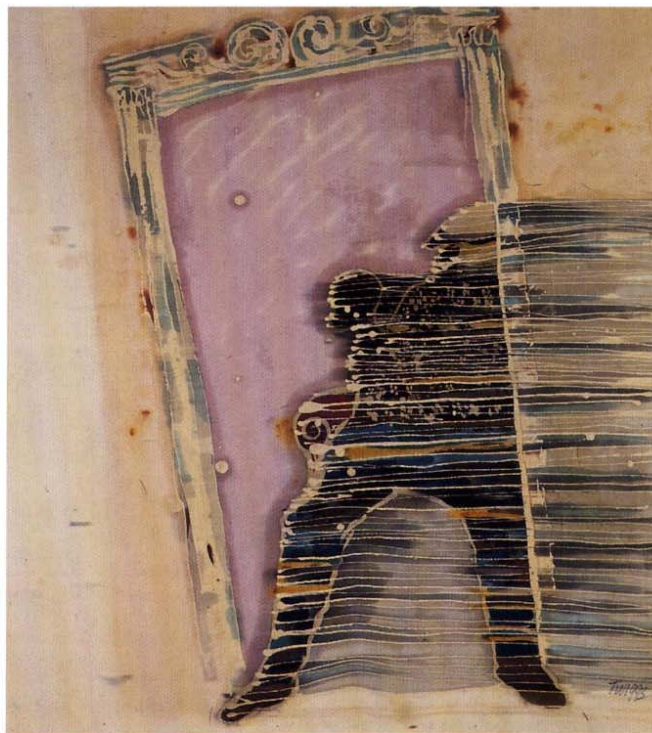
Vocabulary

folk artists
artists
action painting

Why Do Artists Create?

The urge to create is universal. Artists are driven by their sense of wonder and curiosity. The creative impulse is often suppressed if one becomes afraid of making mistakes. Artists exhibit the courage to take risks. They are able to see their surroundings in new and unusual ways. They are willing to work intensely for long periods of time to achieve their goals. *Artists who are self-taught and therefore have had little or no formal schooling in artistic methods* are called **folk artists**. Most artists learn skills and techniques from other artists. Eventually artists develop their own unique styles.

The impulses that drive artists to create vary. Both Leo Twigg and Roger Brown created art in response to a devastating natural catastrophe: Hurricane Hugo. Twigg, who lives in South Carolina and witnessed the hurricane, used strong lines to represent the force of the winds (**Figure 1.7**). Brown, who lives in Chicago, responded to the same tragedy in a different way. He illustrated only the aftermath of the hurricane. He turned the event into a giant postcard in which he depicted the fury of the storm by showing the trees in neat rows, broken off at exactly the same level (**Figure 1.8**).



► **FIGURE 1.7** Identify the door named in the title. Look at the dark shape near the center of the painting. How many figures are standing in the door? What part of this work tells you about the destructive force of the hurricane?

Leo F. Twigg, *East Wind Suite: Door*, Hugo Series, 1989. Batik: Dyes and wax resist on cotton. 61 × 51 cm (24 × 20"). Private Collection.

Art: Of Wonder & A World brings higher level thinking out of the box in its rhythm activities:

--Why not plan a program of dance and music from the varied ethnic roots of your whole class? Bring your parents into the planning and the performing. Find folk dances musical instruments and songs from each student's ethnic heritage.

(p. 47)

--Build a line rhythm that can be expressed in a sound. Start at one edge of your paper and draw lines that reach the other side. Let your lines show change in rhythm and intensity as you build. Don't let your lines intersect. Fill the paper.

(p. 47)

These activities draw upon the higher level thinking skills of compiling, planning, formulating, proposing, adapting, imagining, changing, and assessing. In a chapter on space, *Chapter 18: A Dozen Right Answers*, students use higher level skills of estimating, theorizing, originating, and inventing in a *Try This* project:

--Plan a painting, drawing, assemblage or design that breaks away from the usual rectangular surface. Open its space *within* the frame. Could you add a layer behind or a soft sculpture relief on the top? Could you design it in a box form?

What if...? (p. 88)

Besides suggesting alternatives, higher level thinking can be stimulated by analyzing artworks. In *Launching the Imagination*, diagrams show the compositional direction of artworks (p. 91). Symbols illustrate four ways to create asymmetrical balance.

Interpretation is at Level 5, Evaluation, in Bloom's taxonomy. Interpreting diagrams and symbols prepare the student for the next step, the highest level, Synthesis.

In *Chapter 5: Problem seeking and Problem Solving in Launching the Imagination*, a comprehensive section on brainstorming guides students in generating ideas. The idea-starters include the use of words, including a concept map, journaling, sketching, and making connections between objects and ideas (pp. 137-139).

Brainstorming involves a complex blend of activities at the two highest thinking operations, evaluation and synthesis, as ideas are generated through connections and compilations and then sorted by judgments.

For creative people, higher level thinking often crosses the boundaries and becomes creative play. Walker (2001) described the mixing of brain-work and play that results in advanced creativity:

Play involves experimenting, pretending, and trespassing boundaries, but seems always to be conducted in an atmosphere of great seriousness. By framing artmaking as play, both professional and student artists psychologically remove threat and are thereby better able to tackle difficult projects, break boundaries, take risks, and become more inventive. (p. 137)

When art textbooks suggest higher level thinking activities, they simultaneously sharpen the creative skills and increase the enjoyment of artists in class.

Student writing assignments in art textbooks have increased in recent years due to the pursuit of higher test scores. This phenomenon is a two-way street. On one hand, art and writing have always been closely connected. Contemporary Chinese artist Hung Liu wrote, “A really intelligent artist is a scholar first, perhaps a poet or writer second, and an artist third or fourth” (Bernstein, 1994, p. vi). On the other hand, some textbook

publishers have attenuated art content to fit in writing tasks that do not advance art learning. Writing activities in an art textbook could deepen understanding of art.

In *Arttalk*, each chapter closes with a one-page feature called *Time Art Scene*. With a red border intentionally evocative of a *Time* magazine cover, the topics tie the chapter content to another subject, such as math, language arts or science. *Chapter 4: Line* features cartoonist Al Hirschfeld and engages students with writing a descriptive paragraph about a personality from music, television, sports, or film (p. 94). The three steps give students general advice on writing, although specific suggestions for use of vivid adjectives or similes are lacking. An art teacher who is a good writer might make a success of this lesson with the existing information; otherwise, an English teacher might have to be called in! A stronger tie to the expressive qualities of words could have been made by referring to the word list used in an earlier activity in this chapter, “Using Imagination to Draw Lines Expressively” found on page 78. In this activity the student chooses two vivid words from a list and illustrates them using line movement. The word list could have been useful for both activities. The fourth edition of *Arttalk* has added a *Quick Write* feature to the unit openers. The *Quick Write* for *Unit 5: Handbooks* accompanies a Japanese screen and a quotation on Japanese art by Van Gogh. Among the *Quick Writes*, this is one of the most elegant, not only for the beauty of the artwork and the quote, but also because it calls on higher level inference skills (p. 411). The Van Gogh quotation communicates the value of studying nature rather than quantification. The graphic design for the unit openers features is sophisticated, featuring artwork that crosses the gutter and large amounts of white space.

Many of the *Sketchbook Journals* in *Art* ask the students to “make notes” about the sketches: “Paint with watercolor...Make notes about the techniques you discover” (p. 113); “Make sketches of one or more family members...Make notes about how the figures you drew work together in a single drawing” (p. 191). While it is commendable to encourage the use of words and images together in sketchbooks, these instructions need to be more specific to be meaningful to most middle school students. Creative prompts and examples would make the sketchbook activities more artistically valuable. Making lists is, in itself, not a creative use of words. For example, instead of this:

Draw three sketches of yourself taking part in a favorite activity or hobby. Next to each sketch, make a list of materials you can use for collage about the activity.

Make notes about how the materials fit the theme of the collage. (p. 121)

Why not instead create line drawings of overlapping shapes of bodies in motion in a sport? Overlap shapes of sports equipment on top of the body shapes. Use color to bring out some shapes for emphasis. In the negative spaces draw in adjectives and verbs that describe motion: *flash, swift, speed, streak, dart, sprint*. Draw the words in typestyles that look like the words they represent. Blending images and words to communicate an idea is an imaginative challenge and preparation for a graphic design career.

An Art Technique Tip in *Art* asks the student to collect photos for a collage that reflects his or her personality. The student is to “freewrite about the photographs you collected. Find a theme that connects them” (p. 146). This is a challenging divergent thinking activity much like one described in *Launching the Imagination’s* divergent thinking section: “Problem: Organize up to 20 photographs from the library so that they tell a story” (Stewart, 2006, p. 135). *Art* needs more of this type of project in its pages.

Art: Of Wonder & A World draws on the work of poets to express art concepts throughout the book. In opening *Chapter 16: Shapes that Shout*, Morman leads into a discussion of Expressionism with poetic imagery:

We do it with our voice, with our words, with our gestures. To describe the game you won, the show you like or don't like, you exaggerate. A look can be so strong that it needs no words.

The poet does this with figures of speech.

Elizabeth Bishop describes *The Fish*

Here and there his brown skin hung in strips like ancient wallpaper...

And Carl Sandburg calls *Chicago*

A tall bold slugger set vivid against the little soft cities; fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a savage pitted against the wilderness...

Expressionist artists exaggerate shapes and colors...(p. 83)

In Chapter 17 on advertising titled *Is Anyone Listening? Art: Of Wonder & A World* offers an array of challenging critical thinking and verbal activities:

--Find the overstatement and generalization in ads. Look too for the

understatement. Compare and discuss them. (p. 85)

--Cut out many *sell* captions from advertisements to develop your own visual

statement on life, friendship, success.

--Sell a fake product. Plan an advertising campaign using every trick you can find.

Read Vance Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders* for background material.

--Read the ingredients list on packaged food. Draw what you imagine monoglycerides, thiamin, hydrochloride or tocopheryl acetate look like. (p. 85)

In the *What Do You Think?* sections in each chapter of *Art: Of Wonder & A World*, abundant “compare” questions invite students to write or discuss in ways that deepen understanding of art. These are never just “look-up” questions; information is provided along with the question to raise the level of complexity. For example, in *Chapter 8: In a Thousand Lines – A Thousand Ideas*, the student must combine information with observation of artworks to answer:

--In some periods of art, lines were used as outline, pattern and expression. In other periods, all edges were blended to create a three-dimensional effect.

Contrast Dubuffet’s *Woman* with that of DeKooning (p. 48).

Two paintings, de Kooning’s *Woman* and Dubuffet’s *Woman*, are placed side by side for comparison on page 50. Throughout the book, Morman models vivid writing. The chapter titles are like wrapped gifts, too tempting not to open. Chapter 22 on science, math, and art is titled *Wonder Never Died*. Chapter 27 on Asian art is called *From the Land of the Inner Eye*. Poetic writing describes art concepts. *Chapter 10: Color is Light* begins:

Color is light. Color is pigment. Color is hilarious circus fun or gray death. Colors are as alive as electricity. (p. 58)

Words as well as images can inspire imagination in a truly creative art textbook.

In *Launching the Imagination*, students are given practical ideas for using writing to inspire artworks. To explore the potential of an idea, Stewart advises students to use a thesaurus that is arranged by concept. For example, under anger:

Anger, wrath, ire, indignation, dudgeon, tantrum, outburst, explosion...(p. 137).

Looking at synonyms helps to see many facets of one idea and make connections to others (p. 137). Words are also used to map an idea and draw connections to others, branching out in all directions (p. 137). Keeping a journal or sketchbook is another way to connect ideas through words. Stewart suggests entries on brainstorming, plans for projects, comments on works in progress, notes from textbooks and magazines, technical notes on materials used in class, questions for the next class meeting, drawings and diagrams, poetry, and song lyrics. She also suggests the student ask questions and answer them by writing or drawing:

What was the most compelling image I saw today? What made it compelling?

What was the most memorable or most offensive idea I heard expressive today?

Why was it memorable or offensive?

What similarities were there among my studio classes this week?

What connections were there between my lecture classes and studio?

What do I know today that I didn't know yesterday?

What do I need to know in order to push my ideas further?

Viewing the journal as record of your creative process is liberating. Just let your ideas flow. A random idea today can help you solve a visual problem tomorrow.

(pp. 138-139)

It seems natural that boundaries between poetry and art might be blurred in several imaginative art textbooks. Both rely on vivid imagery. The imaginative art textbook will help the student use words and images together to generate ideas. Writing tasks in art textbooks are opportunities to deepen understanding of art and of the creative process.

Many Paths to Learning: Multiple Representations of Knowledge

Eisner (2002b) pointed out that “language and quantification are not the only means through which human understanding is secured or represented” (p. 204). Eisner asserted, “By defining the forms of representation that matter within the curriculum, the school significantly influences the kinds of meanings that students can learn to secure and represent” (1998, p. 119). Art textbooks by their very nature as ideals of creative thinking could model multiple ways of representing knowledge.

Like a park with a variety of trees and plants, the textbooks that represent a variety of art disciplines offer a richer experience. *Arttalk* blends the arts of puppetry, mask and costume design, and theatre in a *Time Art Scene* feature on the stage production of *The Lion King*. Most students are familiar with the story line from the Disney animated film, so they would have a starting point to think about how it would be translated to the stage. The article describes the work of director Julie Taymor in creating the visual elements and the actors’ movements as animals on stage. The summary activity asks students to react to the nonverbal expressive techniques the actors use: “Is the ‘unspoken’ as powerful as the ‘spoken’? Can movements speak louder than words?” (p. 225). This article utilizes multiple representations of knowledge, drawing on several disciplines, critical thinking, thoughtful writing, and visual and kinesthetic modes. *Arttalk* also goes beyond the “one right answer” approach in other places. An article on Dance/Theatre describes a Kurt Jooss humanistic dance drama called *The Green Table* about the horrors of war. A discussion question asks:

Ballet or dance, is for the most part, made familiar to audiences through the world of myths, fairies, and mechanical dolls. Should dance pieces confront disturbing issues? Can they do so successfully? (p. 425)

Encouraging students to discuss dance and war in art class shows students how art connects to all other aspects of society. Multiple paths to learning are evident in studio experiments. In an activity on intensity, students are encouraged to go beyond brown in painting tree trunks. The instructions ask them to draw seven trees and mix complementary colors plus black and white to create a variety of low intensity and dark valued colors for the tree bark (p. 143). Such activities can help students to grow beyond their comfort zones in painting and drawing.

A studio project in *Art*, titled *Create A Relief Sculpture* (p. 135), goes from beginning to end in three steps. A similar treatment is given to a collage project in *Make a Hobby Collage* (p. 123). The authors may have been striving for simplicity, but in their desire to fit the entire project on one page they have limited the creative scope. Offering alternative solutions could have improved the lessons. Art forms such as dance, poetry, music, and drama are not represented in *Art*. Including other art forms could help students understand a wider definition of “art.”

Many forms of knowledge are encouraged in Morman’s *Art: Of Wonder & A World*. In *Chapter 5: What’s in a material?* Students are asked to listen to music to “find the special ‘voice’ of a trumpet, sax, guitar, tuba, violin. Can you match each with a painting or sculpture medium?” (Morman, 1978, p.31). In addition, activities approach the content with multiple answers in mind:

- Find information on many sculpture materials and processes. Do you know how welding is done? How bronze is cast? How plastic is formed?...
- Select one subject—a person, an interesting tree, house, animal—and interpret it in several materials used in painting or sculpture. See what characteristics each medium expresses best. (p. 31)

In *Chapter 15: Cool and clear and sudden*, on Cubism, Morman analyzes six ways the Cubists represented objects: multiple views, transparency, marriage of contours, projection, shifting planes, and part for whole (p. 80). A comparison of Cubism to African art follows. Students are then offered suggestions for finding Cubist inspirations in everyday objects:

- cubes, cones, and cylinders in the supermarket
- at a carton of eggs
- at a drinking glass from many angles
- through a glass bottle at more glass bottles. (p. 80)

Morman believes an art textbook should encompass not only drawings, paintings, sculpture, and pottery, but also works as varied as environmental art, references to music, poetry, and a dynamic photo of the radar telescope at California's Stanford Research Institute (p. 127).

The broadest definition of art in the four textbooks is found in *Launching the Imagination* (Stewart, 2006). Besides traditional forms of art, Stewart teaches using posters, film, environmental art, and computer design. The textbook is arranged in four parts: Two-Dimensional design, Concepts and Critical Thinking, Three-Dimensional Design, and Time Design. Part four discusses sequential arts—film, computer graphics,

visual books, and performance art—all of which depend on the manipulation of time. Stewart uses a wide range of artworks to illustrate variations of a concept. For example, within *Chapter 3: Unity and Variety*, aspects of patterns and grids are shown through the use of a page from *The Canterbury Tales*, one of Faith Ringgold's *Tar Beach* quilts, a Lin Onus screenprint, an Amnesty International poster, and Felix González-Torres' paper prints of gunshot victims, *Untitled (Death by Gun)* (Stewart, 2006, pp. 85-87). In a section on emphasis, the concepts are illustrated by the use of such diverse works as Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase No. 2*, a sterling silver bracelet by Joana Kao, and a magazine layout from the Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, California (p. 96). Throughout the textbook, Stewart's use of diverse artworks makes the idea of multiple perspectives come alive. Through multiple representations we help create the conditions Eisner (1998) described, in which students' thinking can become "more complex, more subtle, more effective. In a word, more intelligent" (p. 48).

Climbing Higher on Bloom's Taxonomy: Chapter Reviews

A paragraph of information followed by recall questions is the printed-and-bound form of banking education. In this kind of education, information is "poured" into students' heads and they parrot it back to the teacher. Freire (1970) described the effect of banking education as it "transforms students into receiving objects" (p. 64). Recall questions may make the art textbook look attractive to administrators or textbook reviewers looking to raise test scores because such questions look "academic" to some viewers. (This idea is based on a fallacy. Imagination belongs in academic courses every bit as much as it belongs in the arts!) Freire pointed out that a banking education serves

the interests of the oppressors, because, as it crushes the students' creative power and the desire to question, it preserves the status quo (p. 62).

All four books include questions for the students placed after the discussion in the chapters, but the books approach with different assumptions about how the student will generate responses. The authors of *Arttalk* and *Art* expect the answers are to be found in the text which was presented before the question. The author of *Art: Of Wonder & A World* expects multiple responses to be created by the student's experimentation or imagination. The author of *Launching the Imagination* sees the student's work as a mutable starting point and the questions as catalysts for further development of the idea. The elements and principles of art are the centerpiece in all four of our spotlighted textbooks. In this section I review the types of assessments at the chapter ends, and compare chapter review questions from chapters on shape, form, and space from all four books.

Imaginative questions could represent the high end of Bloom's Taxonomy: synthesis and evaluation. As I discussed earlier, Bloom and his associates developed a hierarchy of six categories of cognitive learning outcomes: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis (Bloom, 1956). They are used at all educational levels. Oliva (2001) asserted that the idea that critical thinking is developed by activities at the higher end (synthesis) rather than the lower end (knowledge) is central to educational practice today (p. 348). A number of educators have applied Bloom's work to writing learning objectives as behaviorally-oriented verbs. In this adaptation by Barton (1997), the activities for each level include the following:

Level 1: Knowledge (recall facts, terms, basic concepts and answers): list, name, match, choose, label, define, select, find, tell, describe.

Level 2: Comprehension (demonstrate understanding of facts and ideas by organizing, comparing, interpreting, describing, and stating main ideas): compare, contrast, rephrase, demonstrate, summarize, outline, explain, classify.

Level 3: Application: (solve problems in new situations by applying acquired knowledge, facts, techniques and rules in a different way): construct, plan, utilize, build, develop, model, solve, identify, experiment.

Level 4: Analysis: (examine and break information into parts by identifying motives or causes. Find evidence to support generalizations): dissect, inspect, find relationships, make inferences, categorize, divide, simplify, test for, make assumptions, classify, discover, examine, survey, distinguish, find themes, find motives, draw conclusions.

Level 5: Evaluation: (present and defend opinions by making judgments about information, validity of ideas or quality of work based on a set of criteria): criticize, interpret, determine, compare, recommend, agree, support, prove, estimate, dispute, decide, appraise, perceive, conclude, measure, assess, value.

Level 6: Synthesis: (compile information together in a different way by combining elements in a new pattern or proposing alternative solutions): imagine, create, invent, solve, originate, theorize, improve, design, formulate, modify, adapt, change, propose, predict, build, estimate, plan, compile, discuss, compose, make up, maximize, elaborate, make happen, construct, suppose, delete, test (pp. 3-12).

I have chosen to use Bloom's taxonomy and Barton's critical thinking activities to evaluate the chapter review questions because higher-end learning objectives encourage creativity and open-ended thought. High-end activities (evaluation, and synthesis) in the art textbook can be used repeatedly with differing results each time. This analysis compares how the four books present chapter reviews for their lessons on Shape, Form, and Space. In the examples below, I have highlighted words that indicate thinking skills at level 4 or lower in Bloom's Taxonomy.

Arttalk, (Ragans, 2005) has two types of assessments in each chapter. *Check Your Understanding* is a short assessment at the end of each lesson. At the end of each chapter is a Chapter Review featuring five sections: *Building Vocabulary*, *Reviewing Art Facts*, *Thinking Critically about Art*, *Art Online*, and *Linking to the Performing Arts*.

Throughout the book, the review questions are predominately look-up questions at the lower end of Bloom's taxonomy. They are knowledge and comprehension questions that ask students to name, define, match, compare, and contrast. A few questions are analytical, as seen in an example from Chapter 5, Lesson 1, Shape, Form, and Space:

Check Your Understanding

1. List three geometric shapes.
2. What is another word for free-form shapes? (Define)
3. Compare and contrast the use of form in the artworks in this lesson. (Ragans, 2005, p. 102)

Building Vocabulary for Chapter 5, Shape, Form, and Space asks the student to "write the term that best matches each definition given below:

1. A two-dimensional area that is defined in some way.

2. Precise shapes that can be described using mathematical formula. (Ragans, 2005, p. 133)

Reviewing Art Facts directs students to “Answer the following questions using complete sentences.” Examples of the questions are:

10. **Name** the two basic types of shapes and tell which is more often used in decoration.
11. What is the difference between shapes and forms? (**Compare**)
12. **Name** the two kinds of space found in art. (Ragans, 2005, p. 133)

Thinking Critically about Art includes some comprehension questions along with some analysis.

18. Synthesize. *The Kiss* (Figure 5.9, page 104) and *Bird in Space* (Figure 5.30, page 118) are two of Brancusi’s abstract works. **Make a list** of the similarities and differences between them. Do you think his style has changed over the years? **Explain** and defend the conclusions you reach in a few paragraphs.
19. Historical/cultural heritage. Review the Meet the Artist feature on page 105. **Compare and contrast** Figure 5.10 by Escher with Figure 1.11 on page 13 by Romare Bearden. **How do both works share** a general theme in relation to the illusion of depth? **How are they different?** (Ragans, 2005, p. 133)

Although the subhead is “synthesize,” these are not true synthesis questions. They require **comparing and contrasting**, so both of these activities are **analysis** (Level 4). *Art Online* uses Glencoe’s Web links to **compare and contrast** art careers (Ragans, 2005, p. 349), play a museum game online (Ragans, 2005, p. 315), or see a Web museum tour (Ragans, 2005, p. 133). In chapter 5, the student is invited to view works by Texas artists at the

Dallas Museum of Art and analyze how they have used shape, form, and space (Ragans, 2005, p. 133).

Art (Turner, 2005), a middle school textbook published by Scott Foresman, features short assessments and four-page Unit Reviews. There are six units in the book. The short assessments are titled *Review and Reflect*, and these appear after each studio lesson. They loosely follow Feldman's four steps of art criticism (Describe, analyze, interpret, and judge).

Unit 1 covers the Elements of Art. Lessons 2 through 5 focus on shape, form, space, and space and distance. For example, after Studio 9, an activity in which students create crayon rubbings and then cut and glue them into a collage, the questions are:

- Describe the texture you chose.
- Which texture do you notice first in your artwork? Why? (Analysis).
- Tell about the objects the textures represent. (The student might say something like, "I used my shoe sole to make this texture." This is basically a listing/identifying activity, which is in Level 3, Application in Bloom's taxonomy.)
- How well do the textures depict your outdoor scene? Explain. (Turner, 2005, p. 55). (The words at first sound like an evaluation question, but the project includes no guidance or actions that develop criteria for the question, so the student has no criteria for judging "how well" they depict the scene.)

Each Unit Review features six activities:

- A. Vocabulary review.
- B. Artists and their art.

- C. Respond to art.
- D. Write about art
- E. Your studio work
- F. Put it all together.

A. *Vocabulary review* is a matching activity. Each unit instructs the student: “Match each art term below with its definition.” The five lessons in *Unit 1: The Elements of Art* are line, shape, form, space, and space and distance. The title of each lesson is utilitarian: “Lesson 2: Shape.” The first task is a Vocabulary **matching** activity. A sample question from the Unit 1 review reads: “10. the empty space around an object (negative space)” (Turner, 2005, p. 60).

B. *Artists and their art* is another look-up and **match** activity. Students fill in the blank with an artwork they have found on a previous page in the unit. A sample question from the Unit 1 review reads: “5. Impasto is the technique Van Gogh used in *Enclosed Field with Rising Sun*.” (Turner, 2005, p. 60).

C. *Respond to art* is a third **matching** activity. A sample question from the Unit 1 review reads: “Look at the painting *Red Balloon* by Paul Klee. In a class discussion or on a sheet of paper, **match** each art term below with examples from the painting.” Some of the Art Terms listed are: “1. geometric shape. 2. warm colors. 3. cool colors. 4. diagonal line.” (Turner, 2005, p. 61).

D. *Write about art* involves defending in writing elements of art that make the artwork “appealing.” Defending is an evaluation activity (Level 5 in Bloom’s Taxonomy). The instructions for Unit 1 read: “Look back at the artworks you saw in this unit. Choose one that especially appealed to you. Consider how the elements of art are

used in this artwork. Write one or two paragraphs to persuade others why the artist's use of the elements of art make the artwork appealing. Copy the chart below and it to organize your thoughts before writing" (Turner, 2005, p. 62). (Fig. 6-1). The meaning of "persuade others why the artist's use of the elements of art make the artwork appealing" is unclear. The intention might have been clearer if the first element, "line," had been filled in with an example.

E. Your studio work is another writing activity using **description**, **application**, and **analysis** questions. The instructions read: "Answer these questions in your Sketchbook Journal or on a separate sheet of paper." The Unit 1 questions concern the student's artworks: "1. How did you generate ideas for your artworks? What medium did you most enjoy working with? Why? 2. Which elements of art did you most enjoy using? Which did you find less enjoyable? **Explain**?" Although reflection can be a useful activity after finishing artwork, the objective of these questions is unclear. More valuable questions might be reflecting upon how the artwork could be extended or changed, made more imaginative, or how it might generate more meanings depending on the viewer's experiences.

F. Put it all together asks students to discuss or write about a particular artwork using the four steps of art criticism, **describe**, **analyze**, interpret, and judge. Questions are provided for each step. In Unit 1, the painting shown is Paul Cézanne's *The Artist's Father*. The questions concern the elements of art; for example: "2. **Analyze**: What kind of shapes did Cézanne use primarily? What technique did he used to show space and distance in the artwork?" The artworks chosen, however, are not effective for illustrating atmospheric perspective in the space and distance question. Earlier in this unit, on page

34, the text explains atmospheric perspective: “Atmospheric perspective can create the illusion of air and space. In this technique, the artist uses soft colors and large portions of white to show faraway objects and air” (Turner, 2005, p. 34). (Underline mine.)

The white in the accompanying Renoir painting (Turner, 2005, p 33) is not being used to create atmospheric perspective, but to define shapes. The Cézanne painting in *Art*, p. 63 shows an interior, therefore, the white in it cannot show atmospheric perspective. A student looking up the answers to the *Put it all together* question, “What technique did he use to show space and distance in the artwork?” would likely be confused by the page 34 text and think the white in Cézanne’s father’s portrait is being used to create atmospheric perspective. A better choice to show atmospheric perspective would have been any landscape with hazy light blue mountains showing distance. In *Launching the Imagination*, Stewart chose Alfred Bierstadt’s *The Rocky Mountains, Landers Peak, 1863* to illustrate the illusion of distance (Stewart, 2006, p. 102).

In the 37 chapters of *Art: Of Wonder & a World* (Morman, 1978), questions, experiments, and activities are woven into each chapter in between discussions of aesthetics and art history. Some of the questions in this twenty-eight year-old book sound very contemporary: “Technology and art are partners today. In the recent past, Massachusetts Institute of Technology began requiring art courses in their engineering program. Today this has become an exciting special study area, taking place in their Center for Advanced Visual Studies. What do art and technology have in common?” (Morman, 1978, p. 11).

The questions and activities throughout *Art: Of Wonder & A World* are almost entirely at the high end of Bloom’s taxonomy, representing some analysis, with many

evaluation and synthesis activities. Shapes, form, and space are spread over six chapters, all with intriguing titles. *Chapter 14: Like meat and potatoes* discusses shapes that go together: “The orchestration can be static, a standing still effect, or dynamic, a lively and moving effect” (Morman, 1978, p. 77). The topic of *Chapter 15: Cool and clear and sudden* is forms as they were portrayed in Cubism and two dimensional art. *Chapter 16: Shapes that shout* is the title for a discussion of expressionist painters and poets and their use of shapes, colors, and calligraphy. Shapes in advertising are the topic for *Chapter 17: Is anyone listening?*

Chapter 18: A dozen right answers outlines ways artists through history created the illusion of space on a flat surface. *Chapter 19: Shape in space* discusses forms and sculptures including mobiles and kinetic sculptures. *Chapter 20: Space for living* moves from representations of space in artworks into architecture. The movement of chapters from shape through form to architecture is a logical progression.

In *Chapter 14: Like meat and potatoes*, the review questions provide information and present open-ended prospects.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

--The Futurists were a group of painters who tried to show the shape of motion.

Look at Giacomo Balla’s *Swifts: Paths of Movement and Dynamic Sequences*.

What possibilities does photography have for expressing motion similarly?

(p. 79)

TRY THIS

--Begin a drawing and pass it around the room, having each person add to the composition. Try to pick up the compositional rhythm you find in each one.

(p. 79)

The culmination activities in *Chapter 17: Is anyone listening?* are also evaluation and synthesis activities:

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

--Advertising design in art today really demands a *what-if* approach. Look for examples of good design and *new* thinking in ads.

--Find the overstatement and generalization in ads. Look too for the understatement. Compare and discuss them. (p. 85)

TRY THIS

--Plan a TV commercial. Choose something you dislike, and make it irresistible to others. (p. 85)

Each chapter ends with higher level thinking activities related to the concepts. Not only do these activities expand the content, they are fun! Who could resist changing the space in their classroom using string (p. 88)? Or designing a bas-relief for a bedroom door out of layered corrugated cardboard (p. 93)?

Launching the Imagination offers multimedia resources to assist student learning.

A CD-ROM that accompanies the book has five sections: Elements and Principles of Art, Art Techniques, Chapter Resources, Study Skills, and Internet Resources. The *Space* topic of the Elements and Principles section allows students to create a virtual sculpture on the screen by stretching and moving small blocks using the mouse and backspace key.

Labeled examples show students open and closed spaces in actual sculptures. A chapter summary and key terms provide only lists of facts and vocabulary words; no activity accompanies this section. In the Art Techniques section, students can watch interesting three-minute videos on bronze casting, stone carving, ceramic sculpture, or other processes.

A Web site, www.mhhe.com/launching2 shows students learning objectives for each chapter, study outlines, vocabulary in definition form and flashcard form, “quizzes with instant feedback,” internet exercises and a bibliography. (McGraw-Hill Higher Education Web site, Student Edition, 2006). The quizzes are multiple choice, and therefore are at the lower level of Bloom’s Taxonomy. An internet exercise page with two links to Escher artworks asks students to find works with creative uses of shapes. Student access to studio project instructions is through the instructor. Studio projects are described only on the instructor Web site and CD-ROM. These are password protected and not available with purchase of the student edition. In fact, a warning is posted on the Web site that it is unethical for students to pose as instructors to obtain access to the site (McGraw-Hill Higher Education Web site, Instructor Edition, 2006).

Chapter reviews in *Launching the Imagination* are composed of 3-5 “Key Questions” that extend the design or make the student aware of important concepts in his or her own design. For the chapter on space, the questions are:

- What is the relationship between substance and space in your design?
- What would happen if you substantially increased or decreased the amount of space? For example, would 70% space and 30% mass strengthen or weaken your design?

- How can the space play a stronger role in your design?

Imagination comes into play as the student plays *what-if* with the artwork done so far. The art becomes a changeable work in progress, rather than a fixed object. Estimating and predicting are synthesis skills, located at the top level of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Playground Aesthetics: The Design of Art Textbooks

If the art textbooks were playgrounds in the park, each would have a distinct design. Since graphic designers in different parts of the country use slightly differing terms, I will define some terms before beginning.

Bleed: ink area that is printed off the edge of the page. Considered a sophisticated design because it is more expensive to print.

Body copy: columns of type containing the main content in a book.

Century Schoolbook: the name of a classic typeface. It has been used for generations in school reading books because of its high legibility. A sample: Century Schoolbook was also a favorite of typesetters because its sturdy serifs made it easy to set in lead type.

Display type: a decorative typeface used for headlines. It is not recommended for body copy because its decorative elements may reduce legibility.

Sample of a display typeface: **DISPLAY TYPEFACES GET ATTENTION!**

Graded screen: printed area that gradually changes from dark to light.

Grid: a format for page design based on vertical and horizontal lines.

Grunge typeface: a font deliberately designed to look rough, worn, or hand-drawn. Grunge typefaces became popular in the 1990s as computers replaced traditional typesetting equipment. The rise of the grunge typeface paralleled the

power of publishing's coming into the hands of ordinary people, no longer held only by professionals and large companies. Grunge typefaces continue to be widely used, with new variations appearing constantly. Sample: **Grunge typefaces look worn.**

Reverse: light typeface on a darker background.

Sans serif typeface: font with characters having plain ends, no serifs. Sample:

Sans serif typefaces can look modern.

Screen: a process in which an area is printed at a percentage of its color, creating a light area.

Serif typeface: font that has small lines at the ends of the characters. Serifs give the reader's eye a "stopping point," increasing legibility.

Spread: two facing pages visible when the book is open.

Teaser: preview headline on the cover of a publication, designed to entice customers to purchase it. (Kerr, 2001, p. 125)

These terms will increase understanding of aesthetic differences in the art textbooks and remind us that every aspect of the book's form was someone's conscious design decision.

The three newer books are similar in overall size. *Arttalk's* (2005) cover measures 8 ¾" wide by 11 1/8" high. *Art's* (2005) cover is 8 ½" wide by 11 3/16" high. The cover of *Launching the Imagination* (2006) is 8 1/2" wide by 10 7/8" high. *Art: Of Wonder & A World* (1978) is slightly smaller at 8 ¼" wide by 10 ¼" high. *Arttalk* has 496 pages. *Art* has 394 pages. *Launching the Imagination* has 408 pages. Again, *Art: Of Wonder & A World* is smallest with 136 pages. Considering the current forces pressuring publishers to

make books alike, it should not be surprising that the three books with recent copyright dates are similar in size.

If *Arttalk* were a playground, it would be a handsome, contemporary play structure of the kind seen in new suburban parks. The big, bold cover design captures attention with paint brushes on an abstract painted background of four deep colors. The headline's grunge typeface is enhanced by a playful script for the author's name and publisher. Yellow-orange teasers echo the style of a magazine cover announcing the *Time* Art Scene feature and the book's Web address. The cover design communicates an imaginative, open-ended outlook. (See Fig. 6-20). Each spread in the Table of Contents is laid out on a well-organized grid, but made exciting with color-coordinated artworks and reversed headlines in red. Chapters open with page-size artworks. Artworks throughout the book are of adequate size so that details can be appreciated. In the lesson openers, bright rectangles set off the headers and bleed off the pages, giving a bold, contemporary look to each spread. The subheads, such as *Looking Closely*, pick up the same colors for unity, but vary the shapes for variety (p. 239). Yellow gradated screens at opposite corners brighten the page and promote the open, contemporary feeling (p. 238). Since the first edition of *Arttalk* was published in 1988, Ragans has presented students with artworks that define "art" in broad terms. In the fourth edition (2005), students learn that art goes beyond paintings and sculpture to include such diverse works as an Annie M. Peachey quilt (p. 202), a Congo ceremonial robe of raffia (p. 298), a Philip Johnson water garden (p. 298), and a Brian Pinkney book cover (p. 406). *Arttalk* acquaints students with artists of both genders and many cultures. There is plenty of open space throughout the

book for an airy feeling. The student artist has room to play freely with diverse artists in this cheerful playground.

If *Art* were a playground, it would look bright and promising at first glance. The attractive red-violet cover is asymmetrically divided into four rectangles, one of which features the title in Century Schoolbook bold and the publisher in a smaller sans serif typeface. The author's name does not appear on the cover. The other three rectangles are a photo of peaches and apricots, which blends at the edges to become a paper collage and an abstract chalk drawing of the fruits. The split complementary color scheme is eye-catching. Upon opening the book, however, the reader is greeted with a dull-colored spread. The table of contents page features a full-page photo which, due to unfortunate cropping, shows a group of children staring at a blank white wall (p. iv).

Headlines are set off by attractive torn paper rectangles which add texture to the pages. Many of the pages, however, are overly full (p. 92). Some breathing space would have made the design more inviting. Inexplicably, in only two places in the book, a page is designed with a small photo printed on top of a larger screen of the same photo (p. 57; p. 207). With space at a premium, it seems the page might have been used more effectively, not to mention an anomaly in the book's design. The studio instruction pages are overall effective in their illustrations, but too brief in their instructions. Perhaps the decision to fit the entire project on one page should be reviewed. Artworks are predominately paintings and sculptures, although Kente cloth, a mosaic, graphic designs and Web site designs are represented as well. Artworks by artists of both genders are shown, and varied cultures are represented. The sizes of the artworks vary from one inch to a full page. Decisions about artwork size appeared to be based on filling the page

rather than on a system. *Art* is a playground of attractive, though ordinary features.

Because *Art* misses the mark in its content, however, even the most sophisticated graphic design could not have transformed it into an imaginative art textbook.

In the landscape of the park, *Art: Of Wonder & A World* is a one-of-a-kind, hand-built tree house. This art text was designed by Canadian artist Norman Laliberte, lead author of the 1969 art text, *100 Ways to Have Fun with an Alligator & 100 Other Involving Art Projects*. The cover is turquoise fabric with a black and white photo of the earth. The title, author's name, and designer's name are printed in three dissimilar display typefaces. The plain cover design gives no clue to the riches of the content inside. Except for two color sections of eight pages each, the book is in black and white, including the cover. The table of contents lists the 37 chapter titles in a bold sans serif typeface with chapter numbers, but without page numbers. Only two typefaces are used in the body copy of the book: a bold display type for the chapter headings and classic Century Schoolbook for the content. Content is set off by italics, with activities in plain type. Oversize page numbers become design elements on the bottom corners of the pages. The layout of the book offers a lively variety from page to page, with art concepts illustrated by such diverse examples as full bleed photos, Rube Goldberg cartoons, Medieval engravings, and Claes Oldenburg sculptures. Sizes and shapes of art reproductions vary. Many cut-outs add variety and interest, breaking up the expected rectangular page layout. White space is scattered at random intervals throughout. With the addition of color reproductions throughout, this book could have been a jewel. Still, the overall feel of the design is playful, unpredictable, and as unique as a home-built tree house.

The sleek, modern playground designed for optimum safety and utility as well as beauty—that would be the sophisticated design of *Launching the Imagination*. Few risks are taken in this well-organized design. A neat grid with three variations forms the layout for the book. Small artworks on the cover give us a preview of the vast variety of artworks featured inside. White space at intervals allows some breathing room. Artist profiles are distinguished by cream-colored pages. Sleek sans serif headlines divide topic sections. Page 17 is an example of the three-column variation on the grid with the sans serif headlines. The four parts of the book are marked by color coded two-inch index rectangles which bleed off the page edges. Rotated type in a matching sans serif typeface indicates the topic section. The overall effect is unified and organized. The color reproduction is excellent quality, and sizes of the artworks are adequate to showcase details. The book’s design adheres to Stewart’s quotation from Joseph Albers, “To design is to plan and to organize, to order, to relate and to control” (Stewart, 2006, p. 11).

Summary

As I used the four criteria to analyze the art textbooks, I found that the theories of Dewey, Greene, and Eisner revealed an art textbook can expand imagination when it relishes the creative process, values synthesis, promotes multiple representations of knowledge, and models aesthetic principles in its design. Enjoyment of the creative process was communicated when the books encouraged experimentation in studio lessons. Open-ended questions, higher-level thinking activities, and writing projects that deepen understanding of art are other indicators of an imaginative art textbook.

In *Arttalk*, all of the 31 studio lessons suggest experiments, either at the preliminary sketch stage or during the creative process, or both. In the unit openers, 3 of

the 4 Quick Write projects deepen understanding of the artworks shown. The remaining Quick Write focuses on a word definition. *Arttalk* featured 14 *Time Art Scene* activities; 12 of these involve writing assignments. Of these, 6 might expand understanding of art; the other 6 probably would not contribute significantly to the understanding of art because the instructions are incomplete or they do not apply specifically to art. Each of *Arttalk's* 14 chapters culminates in a review section with 15-18 questions. Of the approximately 230 questions in the book, all are in the knowledge and comprehension levels of Bloom's taxonomy (levels 1 and 2), except for 1 "apply" question (level 3) and 4 "analyze" questions (level 4). Little variation in the representation of knowledge appears in the chapter reviews; all questions call for written or verbal answers.

Although *Art* features 54 studio lessons, only one specifically instructs students to experiment. Only 8 of the lessons instruct students to make more than one preliminary sketch at the beginning. Sidebars titled "Sketchbook Journal" and "Technique Tips" offer a variety of suggestions. Of the 93 sidebars, only 20 give specific suggestions for experiments. Four others attempt to offer experimental ideas, but the instructions are so brief they are unlikely to be helpful to middle school students. The writing assignments in *Art* are found in each of the six unit reviews, in two sections called "Write About Art" and "Your Studio Work." All 6 of the "Write About Art" sections focus on writing mechanics, such as making lists, charts, and Venn diagrams to organize writing descriptive paragraphs. Describing is a knowledge (level 1) activity. In all 6 of the "Your Studio Work" sections, the student writes explanations of procedures followed in creating art, a comprehension (level 2) activity. Each unit review includes one art criticism activity. Art criticism includes the steps: *describe* (level 1); *analyze* (level 4); *interpret*

(level 2); and *judge* (level 5). Each unit review also includes approximately 30 knowledge and comprehension questions. Throughout the book, the approximately 180 questions call for matching and fill-in-the-blank, keeping the unit reviews at the lower levels of Bloom's taxonomy. Little variation in representation of knowledge is demonstrated in the unit reviews.

Although no section is specifically labeled "studio lesson," each of *Art: Of Wonder & A World's* 37 chapters features 12-18 open-ended activities following the text. All of the activities emphasize sensory enjoyment, creative process, and experimentation. Writing is highlighted in the text through quotations from several modern poets, linking them to art. The chapter titles and text model creative writing in their poetic style. In the activities, 7 assignments are discrete creative writing projects. Activities that encourage multiple representations of knowledge appear on every page of the book, mixing two-dimensional art with looking and listening activities, sculpture, design, and dance. Some activities are synesthetic, such as painting colors that interpret sounds. Many of these activities could be used repeatedly with differing results. Virtually all of the activities in *Art: Of Wonder & A World* are analysis (level 4), evaluation (level 5,) or synthesis (level 6) activities.

Launching the Imagination is organized into 14 chapters. Each chapter includes up to 5 sidebars, each with 3-5 "Key Questions." The Key Questions correspond to major concepts in the chapter. Using the questions, the student can extend the creative process based upon information from the text. The questions encourage the student artist to ask, "What if?" and to imagine further possibilities for the artwork. Writing activities in *Launching the Imagination* are concentrated in chapters 5 and 6, which focus on

problem-solving and critical thinking. The writing activities spark creative thinking through word games, lists, journals, idea maps, and critiques that develop concepts. The chapters in *Launching the Imagination* do not feature review questions on their closing pages, but instead concisely summarize major concepts. Almost all of the Key Questions initiate formative assessment and are analysis (level 4), evaluation (level 5), or synthesis (level 6) activities.

Launching the Imagination invited the student to analyze his or her own tendencies and interests, discovering convergent and divergent thinking styles. *Arttalk*, *Art: Of Wonder & A World*, and *Launching the Imagination* provided many higher level thinking activities requiring students to use skills in estimating, planning, creating, interpreting, and evaluating. The writing projects featured in *Arttalk* and *Art* were mixed. Some were very good, requiring imagination and interpretation. Others were at the low end of Bloom's Taxonomy, using valuable art time for listing, copying, and defining words. *Art: Of Wonder & A World* introduced students to poets like Elizabeth Bishop and Carl Sandburg, and encouraged the blurring of lines between art and writing. *Launching the Imagination* gave students practical ideas for combining art and writing, like using a thesaurus, mapping an idea, and writing in the sketchbook.

In expanding imagination through multiple representations of knowledge, all four books defined "art" through a variety of artworks, representing multicultural artists and artists of both genders. Few works by physically challenged artists were shown, although Ragans (2005) detailed the experiences of Chuck Close (p. 385) and Michael Naranjo (p. 108). Artworks by mentally challenged artists were not specified in any of the books. *Arttalk* offered many approaches to arts disciplines and studio experiences. *Art* was more

limited in its approaches; it did not include references to dance, poetry, music or drama, nor did it encourage multiple solutions in the studio lessons. *Art: Of Wonder & A World* presented an exciting array of learning experiences that crossed sensory and disciplinary boundaries. *Launching the Imagination* defined art using a veritable feast of two-dimensional, three-dimensional, and sequential artworks. In the chapter reviews, questions in *Arttalk* and *Art* were “look-up” questions, staying at the lower levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy. Chapter reviews in *Art: Of Wonder & A World* provided openings for students to learn content through action. Chapter reviews in *Launching the Imagination* encouraged the student to develop the artwork further. Eisner (1998) argued that enrichment of the forms of representation increases the range of cognitive abilities students can develop (p. 50). Battles and Hudak (2005) found that flexible, varied forms of assessment promoted students’ creativity (p. 84). Through multiple representations of knowledge and higher level thinking activities, the art textbook presents a playground on which complex creative abilities can develop.

How have these four books expanded imagination by teaching aesthetic principles through their graphic design? *Arttalk*, *Art*, and *Launching the Imagination* succeeded in capturing attention with dynamic cover designs. The interior layout of all four books was generally engaging, although in different ways, and not always without flaws. *Arttalk* and *Art: Of Wonder & A World* communicated the value of good design by modeling alternative solutions within their designs; *Launching the Imagination* did so in a more tightly controlled way. *Art* needed to bring care and unity to its design. Careless cropping, dissonance, and illustration errors marred the instructional value. None of the four books modeled the cutting-edge, imaginative book design seen in many art trade

books. Imagination can show in book design through use of space, color, typefaces, and variety of elements. In Appendix A, an excerpt from the sample chapter shows how an art textbook might model an imaginative design. An art textbook is not, however, isolated from the educational environment. What kind of landscape of policy, of art teachers, and of students could allow the use of an imaginative art textbook?



Figure 7-1. Lynda Kerr. *Evening in the Park*. 2006. Watercolor and pencil on paper. 9" X 12." Collection of the artist.

CHAPTER 7

A LANDSCAPE OF IMAGINATION IN THE MAKING:

AN ART TEXTBOOK

If you can imagine it, we can get you there
(American Express advertisement, *Travel & Leisure*
magazine, June 2006, p. 45).

A wide view of the park shows people enjoying the beauty of its paths and pond. Although there is much more to be explored, and many possibilities remain to be discovered, more details are visible now than when we began the walk through the park. We can now begin to see an imaginative landscape of policy, art teachers, and students that would allow the use of a creative art textbook. Focusing on that landscape shows us how an imaginative art textbook might be used to expand the view of curriculum.

An Imaginative Landscape of Policy

In the painting, the figures walking near the center are the administrators and policymakers. They survey the entire landscape, looking at the big picture, always with the children in their view. What kind of landscape of policy would create a home for the imaginative art textbook? Greene (1995) advocated “new collaborations among questioners, as teachers and students ...undertake common searches for their own places and significance in a history to which they too belong and which they invent and interpret as they live” (p. 150). Therefore, an imaginative landscape of policy leaves openings for exploration by individual teachers and students. Further, an imaginative landscape of policy values the unique features and interests of the local community, rather than the blanket uniformity of a national standard. In an imaginative art textbook, there would be guides to researching the history of one’s community. For example, when I taught in

Forest Park, Georgia, many of my students were transient. To build a sense of community in my classes, I wrote a lesson centering on the town's history as a transportation hub, from the early railroads to the present-day international airport. In the 1800s, some of the forest was cut down for wood to power the locomotives, so the town was originally named "Stumptown." The students researched historic photos from the state archives. I invited a local historian, dressed in a period costume, to give a lively lecture on life in the early days of Forest Park. Following that, the art class studied installation art. In the culminating art project each student created a life-size cardboard stump, which was designed with images of his or her life in Forest Park, whether he or she had lived there a short time or a long time. The colorful stumps were assembled into an installation in the school library. The students had the opportunity to learn that they shared a common neighborhood, knew the landmarks, and shared the town's history even though they may have arrived there from other places. Forest Park became a little more "their town." Some said it was the first time they had ever learned the history of a place they lived. Curriculum that is local and particular can speak to students, teachers, and the community.

As Maxine Greene (2001) pointed out, encounters with the arts "cannot be packaged or neatly summarized," and their "meanings do not exist apart from their embodiments in color, language, movement, or sound. Arguments, as you well know, come to conclusions. Works of art do not" (p. 41). In an imaginative landscape of policy, inquiry is not closed off by simple-minded standards, but instead, is valued in criteria that open up inquiry. Greene contrasted the standards imposed upon arts education from an external source—a state board or a national framework—with the internal standards

communicated by those of us who are teaching artists and artists who perform and exhibit:

we try to communicate what it is to internalize a standard, a goal, even an ideal—and to feel a kind of personal obligatoriness when it comes to realizing it. We try to create situations in which the very culture encourages and rewards modes of striving—sometimes with the help of role models, sometimes through agreements among friends ... When I am asked to speak about excellence, I very often find my examples here among the teaching artists I have come to know. (p. 131-132)

The best criteria, in Greene's opinion, are those that are chosen freely by the artists themselves, rather than imposed from outside:

In my view, standards become meaningful when human beings choose voluntarily to live up to a norm, if you like, if they are freed to engage in dialogue about what they signify. I want to link the idea of standards to the sense of obligatoriness, responding (as Martin Buber would say) to the summons of a norm. (p. 173)

In an imaginative landscape of policy, the norms are set by the artists themselves, reflecting the richness of diversity that comes from the individual communities. Within that landscape, the work of imaginative leaders is valued. Principals and administrators who can engage with the arts are more likely to understand teaching as an art. In *The Art of Leadership: A Choreography of Human Understanding*, Zach Kelehear (2006) used the elements and principles of art as a way to examine leadership and supervision in schools. Kelehear stated,

...by applying the language of art we can construct a lens through which the nature of our humanity begins to become clearer...I have as a fundamental belief

that teaching is at its best when it is an art form. Accordingly, I also believe that supervision of teaching and leadership in schools must be based in aesthetics, the evaluation of art forms. (p. xii)

Kelehear asked administrators to consider a number of leadership and supervision issues through an artistic lens, using the elements and principles as metaphors for “open” ways to view these issues. When educational leadership is examined as an art, more viewpoints are considered. The talents of all educators may be utilized, not just those at the top of the hierarchy. Kelehear’s questions for administrators concern a range of issues:

Form

Leadership as Art: Perspective. Can I “see” what you are seeing? How do things appear from your point of view?

Supervision as Art: Empathy. Can I discern what the teacher is saying, not saying, means to say?

Space

Leadership as Art: Collaboration. Find ways to support and to challenge. Balance the two. Long-term collaboration offers support amid challenges.

Supervision as Art: Growth. What can a teacher manage? What is too much? The proper balance creates opportunities for growth.

Color

Leadership as Art: Differences/Similarities. How can I invite diversity of ideas? Am I celebrating different paths, journeys?

Supervision as Art: Diversity. How can I support standards for instruction but also embrace diverse teaching styles? (p. 126)

Texture

Leadership as Art: Tapestry. In what ways have I invited participation by stakeholders? Has anyone been marginalized?

Supervision as Art: Bridges. How can we bring staff together in meaningful partnerships?...

Rhythm

Leadership as Art: Flow. How do our decisions support priorities? Are we in step with the music?

Supervision as Art: Heartbeat. In what ways can I identify and support the creative elements in a lesson that bring it to life? (p. 127)

For Kelehear, the elements and principles of art provide a framework for principals and educational leaders who value creativity, collaboration, multiple perspectives, and empathy. Administrators who value creativity, artists given the opportunity to create and live up to their own norms, openings for the unique and diverse interests of the community—these features could create an imaginative landscape of policy in which innovative art textbooks could be used in creative ways.

An Imaginative Landscape of Art Teachers

The figures in the painting who, with the children, joyfully toss balls in the air—juggling so many concepts at once—are the art teachers. Greene (2001) described teaching artists as “listeners, as beholders” (p. 21), as teachers who have “thought about their own experiencing, their own moments of joy...the ones who are in a position to make significant choices where the arts are concerned...they are committed to opening doors” (p. 21). The imaginative landscape of art teachers crosses boundaries into drama,

music, dance, writing, science, social studies, and beyond. The art textbook, which heretofore was found on the art studio shelf, could be used imaginatively by any teacher in the school. In this description, though, I will discuss the visual arts teacher because he or she might put an imaginative art book to use in creating what Greene called “an art space” in school. This teacher is likely to create

a space accessible to all kinds of children, to their fellow teachers, to the parents who come by. All depends upon a willingness to recognize how much engagement with the arts has to do with wide-awakeness, perceptual aliveness, the sense of discovery, the desire to learn and thereby go. (p. 21)

In an imaginative landscape of art teachers, the teacher is not de-skilled and stripped of choices in curriculum, but rather is expert in creating the “live and informed encounters” in classrooms that Greene described (p. 27). Therefore, I envision an art textbook that offers choices to teachers about what is taught and how it is taught.

These “live and informed encounters” are not closed-ended; they are not bounded by pre-determined goals or simple-minded standards. Each creative experience is “conceived of as an emergent, as a realized possibility” (p. 27). The art textbook can help the art teacher create openings for these encounters by providing ideas and starting points. Art lessons that are open-ended cannot *make* students become aware; no test can measure their wide-awakeness, as Greene pointed out (p. 32). The art teacher can, however, use art textbooks to

try to invent situations that make it more likely—allowing for time, for privacy, for silences. We have to try to move persons to think about alternative ways to of being alive, possible ways of inhabiting the world. And then we may be able to

help them realize the sense in which an active imagination involves transactions between inner and outer vision. (p. 32)

The author of the imaginative art textbook views the art teacher as an artist who can open up a world of opportunities for young artists. Greene described the work of art teachers in a way that goes straight to the heart of one who loves teaching art to students:

We who are teachers, working with newcomers, cannot but be aware of the diverse realizations that lie ahead for the works of art that we make accessible. At once, we recognize that the quality and fullness of those realizations will depend on the kind of attending we can make possible. So we ponder, as we must, the ways there are of providing the sorts of experiences we ourselves have had: experiences that lead to transformations, that open up new vistas, that allow for new ways of structuring the lived world. (pp. 36-37)

The art teacher has the desire to share with students the love of art, the thrill of discovery, the joy of creating that he or she has experienced. In the art studio, students and teachers are exploring the park together. The art textbook can be a tour guide, offering many choices, many paths to be explored.

An Imaginative Landscape of Students

In the painting, the people exploring at the edge of the pond are children. In the era of testing and standards, children are in danger of being thought of as human resources rather than people. Maxine Greene (1995) observed that they are often “spoken of as if they belong, as it were, to a constructed category: beings who are to be shaped (benevolently and efficiently) for uses others will define” (p. 32). In an imaginative landscape of students, children are not test statistics, but active, engaged, creative human

beings who have valuable ideas to share. These children are not silently sitting in rows, machine-like, bubbling in scanner sheets while a timer counts away the hour. These are artists. In an imaginative landscape of students the classrooms are, as Greene described, nurturing and thoughtful and just all at once; they ought to pulsate with multiple conceptions of what it is to be human and alive. They ought to resound with the voices of articulate young people in dialogues always incomplete because there is always more to be discovered and more to be said. We must want our students to achieve friendship as each one stirs to wide-awakeness, to imaginative action, and to renewed consciousness of possibility. (p. 43)

The art textbook contributes to building this classroom by introducing students to the artworks of diverse times and places, so that the child learns to understand his friend's culture. The art textbook, instead of *telling* the students, offers beginnings for dialogues like the ones Greene envisioned:

dialogue among the young who come from different cultures and different modes of life, dialogue among people who have come together to solve problems that seem worth solving to all of them, dialogue among people undertaking shared tasks, protesting injustices...When such dialogue is activated in classrooms, even the young are stirred to reach out on their own initiatives. Apathy and indifference are likely to give way as images of what might be arise. (p. 5)

In an imaginative landscape of students, the learners are not content to sit passively and have information poured over them, then parrot it back to a teacher or a test. They take hold of the curriculum as Greene described, as "an undertaking involving continuous interpretation and a conscious search for meanings" (p. 96). They relate the curriculum to

their lives, looking to their teachers, their classmates, their textbooks, and their own experiences to find the significance. In encounters with artworks, the art textbook helps them to articulate aesthetic questions: *Why does this artwork speak to me?*

By putting their thoughts into words, the students become aware of their own aesthetic reactions and those of others. They make a connection to the experiences and feelings of other people. They conceive of ideas that are outside of the conventional. They learn to notice structures and details, question the canon, and look beneath the surface. They set their own criteria, as my students did when we made the monoprints and then decided jointly what to do with them. They become people who are, as Greene advocated, “simultaneously critical and creative thinkers, [who are] attentively engaged with actualities” (p. 175). Such learners may be considered dangerous by some people, because they may imagine a future that challenges the status quo.

An Imaginative Landscape of Subject Matter

In an imaginative landscape of subject matter, there are many curriculum elements competing for the student’s attention. The art textbook, like the gazebo, provides a common place to meet with fellow artists, discuss new ideas, and reflect. Like a gazebo, the imaginative art textbook is aesthetically appealing, open in design, and allows for multiple uses limited only by the imagination of the participants.

Maxine Greene (2001) pondered how to “move people to questioning, how to awaken them, how to free them to respond not only to the human condition, but to the injustices and the undeserved suffering and the violence and the violations—to respond and to endeavor to repair” (p. 129). I wondered whether an art textbook can move people in this way. It is possible that it can begin to do so, by expanding their capacity to

imagine. A person who can imagine is more likely to have empathy for others. A person with an open mind may be able understand the creative process when he or she encounters art made by another person. An imaginative person might synthesize and evaluate ideas, inventing solutions to human problems. A person exposed to multiple representations of knowledge may be able to see someone else's viewpoint.

An imaginative art textbook might help students relate the arts to their lives. Into every work of art goes a part of ourselves, our experiences, and our feelings. Greene (2001) explained how the arts communicate our lives:

Creation does not imply a making something out of nothing. It has to do with reshaping, renewing the materials at hand, very often the materials of own lives, our experiences, our memories. I believe many of you share with me the remarkable discovery that dimensions of your lives, your life histories, your past may be disclosed, may be highlighted by what you read and hear and encounter in the way of the arts. (p. 96)

For this reason, an imaginative art textbook has multiple openings for students to express their life experiences through art forms. The student's personal signature is valued; the process of discovering ways to communicate one's experience in many ways is important.

An imaginative art textbook goes beyond listing and describing art careers. Hands-on lessons give students a look at what kinds of creative careers they might pursue. Greene (1995) explained the importance of helping students to imagine a better future for themselves:

we cannot simply fantasize the disappearance of joblessness, homelessness, fatherlessness, disease. It may be, however, that a general inability to conceive a better order of things can give rise to a resignation that paralyzes and prevents people from acting to bring about change...To call for imaginative capacity is to work for the ability to look at things as if they could be otherwise...To tap into imagination is to become able to break with what is supposedly fixed and finished, objectively and independently real...Doing so, a person may become freed to glimpse what might be, to form notions of what should be and what is not yet. (pp. 18-19)

It is not always easy for high school students to identify realistic career possibilities. Adolescents frequently change their minds about career goals. Often, students do not know about careers available, nor do they know where to obtain usable information. Guidance counselors are usually responsible for hundreds of students, so one-on-one advisement requires extraordinary effort on the student's part. Students may not know anyone working in a design career. They do not know where artists and designers work or how the artwork originates. Day-to-day activities in creative jobs are not familiar to students. Faced with these obstacles, many talented art students do not pursue art careers. In short, they simply cannot imagine themselves working in an art career.

Art teachers can be a strong source of career information. Schmurak (1999) reported that three influences interact to create the motivation to pursue a career: "background variables (gender, ethnicity), psychological variables (attitudes, self-concept), and environmental variables (support from parents and teachers)" (p. 3). The art teacher can have a positive influence on the latter two. In a longitudinal study of high

school girls' aspirations and their later careers, Schmurak suggested that most teachers were not effective sources for career information because many were unaware of careers associated with their respective subjects. Teachers of drama and art were the exceptions, providing some career information to students in Schmurak's study (p 6). An imaginative art textbook with lessons that allow students to "try on" art careers can help students imagine themselves in a design profession and may make it easier for students to pursue creative careers.

A stroll through a park is enjoyed for the experience, not only as a way of getting from one place to another. Similarly, an imaginative art textbook communicates enjoyment of the creative process, with its attendant experimentation, valuation of the work as well as the product, and willingness to delay closure. This requires attending to the present moment. As Greene (2001) expressed it,

There must be a presentness, a being there...Like the artists, we are always in process, always exploring our texts, our raw materials, always seeking ways of reaching others and moving others to come alive, to think about their thinking, to create meanings to transform their lived worlds (p. 70)

With such a guiding idea, an imaginative art textbook will feature experiments built into each art lesson. Alternative solutions, ideas for extending the process, and detours on the way to the product might help them to "think about their thinking." I notice my students are hesitant to experiment. Their school experience has been so focused on producing a product in a given amount of time that they rush to finish their artwork in the same way. It takes practice to help them to understand experimenting is part of the process, yet

keeping in mind that class time is precious and should be used productively. To continue forward while enjoying the journey is the key.

Art activities in the imaginative art textbook could bring students to the higher levels of thinking: synthesizing, creating, planning, composing, evaluating, choosing, and valuing. Open-ended projects may stimulate more complex thinking. Producing “the right answer” is not the point; searching and discovering deeper understandings is more important. Greene articulated the idea:

We are interested in education here, not in schooling. We are interested in openings, in unexplored possibilities, not in the predictable or the quantifiable, not in what is thought of as social control. For us, education signifies an initiation into new ways of seeing, hearing, feeling, moving. It signifies the nurture of a special kind of reflectiveness and expressiveness, a reaching out for meanings, a learning to learn... We see it as part of the human effort (so often forgotten today) to seek a greater coherence in the world. (p. 7)

An imaginative art textbook, rather than “telling the answers,” opens the door and asks questions that lead to thoughtful explorations. Such a book includes images and words that start discussions or inspire artworks; activities that can be used over and over, but with different results each time; little drawings and quotations that send a student on a search for more; an artwork that reminds the artist of a place he or she has been; a poem that strikes a chord and inspires a painting; a zany little cartoon that shows the artist a way to connect unlike things—these are some of the varied elements that might be found in an imaginative art textbook.

Many ways of representing knowledge may lead to more possibilities and more viewpoints. Instead of confining knowledge to facts measurable on a bubble sheet, an imaginative art book could help students to formulate their own questions. Such a book could bring in more viewpoints, acquainting students with diverse ideas. Greene (2001) described what can happen: “the more multiple the perspectives, the more meanings accumulate. There are new connections to be seen, new openings, always new possibilities” (p. 89). Ways of evaluating learning could focus on the content most important to students and teachers. Eisner (1998) wrote, “The redesign of assessment instruments so that they provide information about what teachers and others care about most from an educational perspective is a fundamental aspect of school reform” (p. 173). Authentic assessment in an imaginative art book could focus on creating, performing, constructing, proposing, designing—and other higher level thinking skills.

The park in this painting looks different from most parks. The trees are violet, pink, and blue-green; it is an imaginative landscape. Should the art textbook look like any other textbook? On the first page of *Art: Of Wonder & A World*, Jean Mary Morman (1978) urged students to *THINK NEW!* (p. 7). Would we not look to an imaginative art textbook to inspire us with new page layouts, new tricks with typefaces, new graphic designs? An imaginative art textbook could look like an artwork itself, a work in which an expert graphic designer reveled in typefaces and images, celebrated the spreads, and relished the colors with the purpose of inspiring student artists to greater heights of creativity. Visual puns and clever combinations, puzzles and cartoons are woven in between the lessons, along with poems, artworks, even accompanying music, and

generous “white” space to communicate to the student that his or her thoughts are welcome.

Landscape architect Michael Van Valkenburgh recently explained to the New York Times a world-wide trend in park design that places high value on natural areas and native plantings. “There’s a voracious appetite for parks that are vigorous, robust places that provide the kind of complexity that only nature gives you,” he remarked (Greco, 2005, p. 70). This trend toward natural landscapes parallels the design of an imaginative art textbook. Open spaces, interplay between designed environments and natural areas, variety, and features that provide opportunities for open-ended activities are aspects of both contemporary park design and an imaginative art textbook’s design. As I discussed earlier, art textbooks teach aesthetic beliefs and principles not only by their content but by the way they model design. Eisner believed the way something is formed matters. If form matters, then the design of a page is important to learning. Clark and Zimmerman reported on studies of talented secondary art students. In a study by Chetelat, all of the subjects showed great interest in examining books and stated that their art was stimulated by book illustrations (Clark & Zimmerman, 2004, p. 61). My own students show avid interest in books I bring into the studio, and make insightful comments on the design of various trade books. Interest has been so high, in fact, that I purchased an inexpensive bookcase to create an in-class library so they may check out books for drawing references beyond those available in the school’s media center. The students especially enjoy the books whose appearances “break the rules” of conventional book design.

The design of a book can determine whether the student opens it. Through the expressive use of type, space, color, and imagery, an imaginative art textbook piques the

reader's interest. In an imaginative art textbook, a variety of images and typefaces are used. Type may be placed at angles and sideways on the pages. Images may cross spreads and bleed off the pages. Each spread is a surprise.

A book's design communicates a concept; the reader makes an almost instantaneous decision about whether that concept is of interest. As it communicates concepts, an imaginative art textbook will provide opportunities for the reader to engage with the page. A well-presented concept can spark imagination. Rich concepts, expressed in both text and images, engage the reader with the message, triggering imaginative responses that can lead to learning. To reach an audience, a concept is communicated in a visually powerful composition. An imaginative art textbook communicates the concept that imagination is valued by the interplay of words and images, and by relishing the unexpected. Inventive uses of the page space, type, symbols, and art elements stimulate imagination.

An art book communicates beliefs about the reader by the appearance of its pages. According to the conventions of graphic design, white space indicates a view of the reader as visually sophisticated. Clear space of any color in the book invites interaction by providing space for the reader to jot notes. Even if the student is not permitted literally to write on the pages, the design communicates that the reader's ideas are valued here. Pages filled with text all the way to the margins suggest the author is the unquestionable authority, and close off interaction. An imaginative art textbook sparks innovation and invites participation by exploring perception, paradox, illusion, language, words, letters, creativity, culture, style, aesthetics, and ambiguity.

Like a park, an imaginative art textbook offers both determinate and indeterminate areas. Both the park and the book stimulate aesthetic responses; both can be given meaning by the participant; and both offer opportunities for imaginative experiences. A complex design offers more possibilities, higher levels of thinking, and more opportunities for imagination to expand.

An Imaginative Art Textbook

What if art teachers had more choices in the format of their textbooks? For example, a catalog from which they could choose the chapters of their student textbooks. The textbooks would take the form of loose-leaf binders with each chapter as a packet of pages focusing on a theme. A similar format is already in existence at the college level as custom publishing. In this system, the instructor chooses the material to be included, whether it is his or her own written material or reprints from other sources. The publisher obtains permissions, compiles the content, prints and binds the custom textbooks for the students to purchase (McGraw-Hill Higher Education Custom Primus Books Web site, 2006).

At the beginning of each year, the secondary art teacher could read detailed descriptions of the chapters available for that year, and select the topics he or she wishes to teach. The teacher could select content by theme as well as by topic, medium, geographic area, art technique, or time period. Descriptions of the lessons could be detailed so that the teacher could order supplies for all of the lessons at the start of the year. The chapters chosen by the teacher would arrive in the binders. Each chapter could feature color reproductions of many works from one artist—early drawings, paintings, sculptures, later works—even if the artist is well known for only one medium. A pull-out

poster included in the teacher's edition could be attached to the classroom wall in the appropriate sequence to show the artist's place in a time line of art history. Photos and text would reveal the cultural and geographic environment that influenced the artist's work. Each issue would be liberally sprinkled with relevant quotations from the artist and contemporary writers, so that students could get the flavor of the cultural milieu. Several choices of studio projects would be detailed, at varying levels for beginning and advanced students. Projects would suggest rituals to begin creative work, experiments with media, and open-ended questions for class discussion. Suggestions for relevant community art projects such as murals and public art would be included. In between the lesson plans and art criticisms, pages would feature a variety of visual puns, cartoons, quotations, poems, and images which imaginative art teachers and students might use as starters for discussion, or inspirations for drawings or independent work. Back issues would always be available, so the choices would become wider each year. Inexpensive binders could be purchased to store extra chapters. The art teacher could change the chapters in the middle of the year if an event in the community gave rise to a relevant lesson. Next year the art teacher might select all new chapters, or choose to use some of the same chapters again.

The appendix of this inquiry includes an excerpt from one of the chapters of such an imaginative art textbook. "The Road Home" is the topic for the chapter. Many aspects of the topic are presented. The excerpt includes a hands-on career lesson, poetry and writing activities, artworks, and other imaginative activities. Quotations and spot illustrations provide material for discussions or ideas for drawings. The graphic design

models variety and humor. The excerpt provides a sample of activities possible in an imaginative art textbook.

Summary

An imaginative art textbook is designed by the art teacher, to fit the curriculum of the art teacher, the school's goals, and the interests of the community. The form matters; the form of this art textbook is not fixed. The chapters and topics can be changed to fit changing events and interests in the art studio, the school, and the community. In Georgia, for example, we are fortunate to have access to local clay for ceramics. An art teacher here may wish to focus on ceramics projects to a greater degree than a teacher in a place where clay is an expensive material. Some world events necessitate interpretation in school, such as the events of September 11, 2001, the tsunami, or Hurricane Katrina. After such events, the publisher of the imaginative art textbook might make available a special chapter packet with a variety of activities that would help art students view from many perspectives the history, the science, and the aftermaths of those incidents, with accompanying creative projects. The packet would be available in during the school year, when it is relevant and fresh. Unlike a bound textbook, this book might remain current for a longer period of time. The design of the book inspires humor and opens up the imagination, showing students a variety of possibilities in page layout. Drawings, paintings, cartoons, photography, graffiti, murals, installations, poetry, sculpture, environmental art, folk art, and film are among the wide variety of media used to illustrate imaginative art. The book might include a music CD and a video disc. Links to internet sites accompany lessons. An imaginative art textbook might travel from the art studio to other classrooms, inspiring collaborative lessons involving art and creative

writing, art and science, art and music, art and drama, and many other creative events. In the park, we need no borders separating the types of wildflowers in order to enjoy the meadow. An imaginative art textbook could help students enjoy learning without walls between subjects.

PERSPECTIVES:

AN EPILOGUE

The more we imagine, the more possibilities will open for us—
possibilities of meaning, of vision, of alternative realities
(Greene, 2001, p. 75).

Evening is falling; the sunlight is fading. A few leaves float on the breeze. The journey through the park has yielded the creative experiences of several watercolor landscapes, and many more questions about the future of art in schools. The outlook for the arts in this era of testing is dim. Media coverage of arts education has painted a dismal picture of the arts. A five-month analysis of media coverage on arts education conducted by the Education Commission of the States (2005) showed the arts were portrayed as lower priority than academic subjects when school budgets were tight. A second major theme in news stories was that the arts were taking time and resources away from the teaching of core classes which students need to pass standardized tests (p. 2). National radio and television reporters featured arts education in their news coverage less than print reporters did. Print news stories about arts education tended to be found on the opinion-editorial pages or in the local/community coverage rather than in news articles (p. 5).

Seldom heard in the conversation about arts education are the voices of the students. In most other enterprises, if something is important to the consumer, it becomes the central focus for the provider and the policymaker. Not so in education. The student is the consumer of education, but he or she has no voice in curriculum decisions. Students often express to me, and to their parents, the importance of art in their lives. Many times

over the years students have said, “Art is the reason I come to school every day.” Yet the arts remain marginalized at the executive levels of administration and policy. I wonder why, while administrators wring their hands over attendance problems and dropout rates, we could not listen to the students to find out whether the arts might motivate them to come to school each day. Recently I approached my colleagues in the English department about a collaborative project with the art and English students creating paintings and poetry. The teachers sadly informed me that creative writing was no longer a viable part of the English curriculum because all of their time had to be used for standardized test preparation. As long as testing remains at the forefront of the school’s mission, creative learning will be marginalized, simply because imagination cannot be measured by traditional forms of testing. Inside the visual arts studio, however, the creative work with students is still shining brightly. Some days we will use the activities in the textbooks as the authors intended. Other days we will use the textbooks as launching points for synthesis, experimentation, and multiple perspectives not found in the books. Imagination will continue to be celebrated and expanded through books and other materials brought in by the students and by me. For me, the continuing work of advocacy to keep art alive in school lies ahead. Writing letters to state and national legislators, working with the National Art Education Association and the National Education Association, speaking at parent-teacher meetings, distributing brochures and hanging posters explaining the purpose and benefits of the arts—all of these are parts of my strategy. A Doctor of Education in curriculum studies with art education emphasis may give me a greater “voice.” As an art teacher, my mission is to continue to widen the view of learning in art, and wherever possible in the entire school.

A wider view also can be used in art education research. Eisner (1998) pointed out that different kinds of meaning can be made only when students are taught through different forms of representation (p. 119). In a similar vein, Barone and Eisner (Jaeger, 1988) believed

educational research ought to exploit the capabilities of mind to process information in a variety of ways. A parochial conception of the vehicles we think are legitimate for doing and reporting educational research will certainly limit the varieties of understanding and the forms of meaning we are able to secure. The medium matters. (p. 91)

They described arts-based inquiry as “an expansion of the traditional means through which research has been undertaken as well as an expansion of the media through which the results of research are made available to some public” (p. 91). In studying art textbooks, I chose an arts-based framework to assist in revealing the open and aesthetic qualities, patterns, rhythms, and ambiguities—or the lack of them—in the books. Barone and Eisner (Jaeger, 1988) describe arts-based inquiry as including the creation of a virtual world which pulls the reader in and shows a new outlook (p.74). In this case, the reader sees the park as a place where the ordered, manicured areas contrast with the indeterminate areas. There is value keeping some areas indeterminate where people may create their own meanings—in parks as well as in curricula. Arts-based inquiry, as Barone and Eisner see it, also includes the use of expressive language and vernacular (p. 75). The language used in my inquiry is sometimes metaphoric, signifying the park as a symbol of the educational environment. Narratives use the vernacular of the Midwestern states where the stories take place—the places of my lived experience. Contextualized

and expressive language allows the “re-creation of the mental atmosphere, thoughts, feelings, and motivations of the characters in a story, drama, or essay. Through such language readers are brought to vicariously experience events from a different perspective” according to Barone and Eisner (p. 77). By showing my experiences and thought processes, I enable the reader to see the art textbook from my perspective. Finally, Barone and Eisner point out that, in arts-based inquiry, the author’s personal signature “shapes the reality in accordance with his or her own particular thesis or controlling insight, which the text is composed to suggest” (p. 77). My insight into art textbooks comes from my work as an art teacher, an artist, a writer, and a graphic designer. With Barone and Eisner, I invite the reader to “participate in a variety of perspectives and not to arrive at a single, correct version of reality” (p. 78). My experiences as an artist, teacher, writer, and graphic designer blended together, influencing the way I performed each job. The combination made an arts-based inquiry an apt choice for communicating the qualities of art textbooks.

At the beginning of the inquiry, I thought textbooks might become relics, soon to be replaced by a virtual book the student accessed on a portable media player. After crossing the metaphorical park and delving into the textbook publishing and adoption process, I believe textbooks will stay in American classrooms for a long time to come. Tyson-Bernstein (1988) discussed the reasons textbooks will remain important instructional tools, and some of these are manifested in my own school. Although teachers would like to use more trade books and original source materials, increasing time is spent on non-instructional duties, leaving little time to prepare outside materials. Increasing numbers of inexperienced and uncertified teachers make textbooks with

teacher guides and ancillary materials necessary (p. 12). For the first two years my new school was open, a staff shortage necessitated my teaching a World Geography class. I was all too happy to have a teacher guide, elaborate study guides, and a box of ancillary materials so that geography lessons did not take too much time away from preparing for my art classes. In addition, state and local administrators feel the need for textbooks that promise to meet standards and prepare students for standardized tests (p. 12). In the testing era, this need is not likely to disappear. Parents feel it is a necessary part of schooling for their children to have textbooks that look like the ones they remember from their own school days (p. 12). In conferences, parents often ask whether there are textbooks for art. They are concerned because they do not see their child bringing home a textbook for art class. Parents seem reassured when I tell them we do have art books, but they are class sets that are used only in the art studio.

Although technology has brought much advancement to learning in the arts, I do not believe technology is likely to replace art books in the near future. Educational technology literature is filled with articles on new advances in computerized instructional tools. The reality, however, is that technology does not always work as it should. Computer systems fail in the middle of the day. Students forget their password on the day of the test. Many high schools do not have space for a separate computer lab for art classes. Computers placed in dusty environments like sculpture and ceramic studios experience frequent problems. Some school systems have chosen to impose extremely tight censorship of internet usage that is biased against art students, such as those who have blocked image search engines. Some school systems have blocked almost all art museum Web sites because most museums have, somewhere, at least one nude painting

or sculpture. Computers are one instructional tool among many. Although technology may supplement it, I believe the bound book will continue as an important instructional tool in the secondary school art studio.

In analyzing the art textbooks, I see many possibilities for art textbooks to become more imaginative. Overall the textbooks featured a wide variety of artworks. Both genders and many cultures of artists were represented. The books, however, could feature more activities at the high end of Bloom's taxonomy, more variety in the creative works, more suggestions for experimentation, and more possibilities for extensions of the work. Writing projects could be more creative and deepen understanding of the artwork. There could be more representations of knowledge and multiple solutions offered. Assessments could be improved by moving away from knowledge and comprehension questions and toward synthesis and evaluation activities. The aesthetics of the textbooks were clean and attractive, but not cutting-edge in their graphic design. Because art textbooks are teaching aesthetics, they could inspire students by modeling exceptional design. Overall, there is potential for art textbooks to educate students' imaginations in more ways and at higher levels of thinking.

Educating the imagination of students through the arts is important for several reasons. Educating the imagination through the arts has positive effects on student motivation and engagement in school, as well as student success in school. Positive influences on the social and civic development of students may result. Students may be prepared for entry into a creative workforce. Finally, the school climate benefits from educating the imagination of students through the arts. The Education Commission of the States highlighted research linking increased student engagement, higher levels of

motivation, improved attendance, and higher educational aspirations when students participated in the arts (Catterall, 1998). In studies of high-poverty schools, benefits were found when the arts created new opportunities for teaching and learning, and for building communities inside and outside the school building (Deasy & Stevenson, 2005).

Although more research is needed on the connection of the arts to academic success, a voluntary survey of SAT test takers showed that students in arts courses achieved higher math, verbal, and overall scores (Vaughn & Winner, 2002, p. 96-97). Sandy Garrett, Oklahoma Superintendent of Public Instruction, commented, “The arts provide a dynamic that is not present in most academic subjects, and make learning a richer experience” (Education Commission of the States, 2006a, p. 9). Among the competencies arts classes teach are respect and appreciation for other people’s viewpoints. The advancement of social skills and civic development gained in arts classes was shown in research by Torney-Purta and Vermeer (2004). Americans for the Arts (2005) reported that creative industries, including design, architecture, the arts, museums, and entertainment, are growing at a faster rate than total U. S. business growth. In these industries, demand is high for people who can think creatively. Elizabeth Burmaster, Wisconsin State Superintendent of Public Instruction stated, “When I talk to business groups, I say, ‘Let’s focus on what you tell us you’re really looking for: problem solvers, critical thinkers, people who have good interpersonal skills and who can communicate and articulate.’ Then I say, ‘Well, look to the students who are engaged in arts activities, and you’ll see that they indeed have those skills’” (Education Commission of the States, 2006a, p. 8). A North Carolina study (Nelson, 2001) indicated that integrating arts into the school-wide

curricula can foster a positive school climate and build relationships within the school and the surrounding community.

Arts education stands under a long shadow at present. Currently only 44 states and the District of Columbia require arts courses to be offered, according to a report by the Education Commission of the States (2006a, p. 3). The report further noted disparities between arts education in rural and urban schools, with rural students less likely to have access to arts classes. A survey of 1,000 elementary and secondary principals in four states showed 33% anticipated reduced instructional time for the arts in the future. In schools with a high percentage of minority students the future looked even bleaker, with 42% of the principals expecting to have less instructional time for the arts (p. 7). State requirements for graduation vary among the states. According to the Education Commission of the States' *State Notes Instruction and Graduation Requirements – Arts in Education* report (2006b), 20 states require one credit in the fine arts to graduate from high school. Seven states require one credit in either fine arts or another course such as a foreign language or career technology. Four states require only one-half credit in fine arts for graduation. Only two states, Indiana and Oklahoma, require two credits in fine arts for graduation. In 13 states, no fine arts courses are required in high school. Kentucky is the only state requiring a statewide assessment in the arts, although eight other states require local school districts to perform assessments in the arts. Teacher certification programs for the elementary level require arts coursework in only 31 states. Connecticut requires arts courses for secondary certification (2005, November, p. 1). When all states require arts courses for high school graduation, arts assessments, and arts courses in teacher preparation programs, the arts will be closer to reaching parity with other core subjects.

Important changes happen to adolescents between the beginning of ninth grade and high school graduation. What if every student in high school had access to a quality program of art, music, theatre, and dance taught by certified arts teachers? What if every student could study the art of his or her choice for two years or more—long enough to realize a range of skills, a basic history of the arts, and to gain confidence in a performance or technique? What changes might happen to a student's perception of school? What changes might happen to the perception of his or her own abilities?

Many paths are open for possible future research. This inquiry could lead to a study of how art textbooks might help students to pursue art careers. Art textbooks might be developed with the goal of helping students develop creative thinking skills. Sir Ken Robinson, in the Education Commission of the States report (2006a), described the need for “a workforce that is flexible, adaptable and highly creative; and ...an education system that can develop these qualities in everyone” (p. 9). Textbooks could be developed with the purpose of promoting innovative thinking skills in many subjects. In addition, research could guide artistic approaches to the study of other subjects. Textbooks could be written using art as the framework for the study of social studies or science. Students who love art might enjoy learning about the social history of bookbinding or the scientific reasons why some paint colors are more intense than others. Studies might also be conducted on how art teachers actually use the textbooks. Other research has indicated the arts engage both cognitive and affective domains simultaneously (Arts Education Partnership, 2004, p. 5). The impact of art textbooks on student engagement in learning is a subject for future research. Correlations between participation in the arts and students' perceptions of school have already been studied

(Catterall, 1998). I wonder how school systems might use such information to make school a place where creative students can seek development of their talents.

Just as the park changes from season to season, so, too, can the landscape of curriculum. In the darkness, there are glimmers of hope. The San Francisco School District has announced a new master plan that will fund visual and performing arts classes, teachers, and supplies for every school in the district through 2014 (Asimov, 2006). Two advocacy groups with differing views of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*—the Education Trust and Communities for Quality Education—have announced that the U. S. Department of Education is now considering using individual student growth to measure accountability. In West Virginia and North Carolina, education and business coalitions are working to create new methods of assessment that focus on skills (Eggers & Caligeri, 2006). Although the landscape is in the shadow of standardized testing at the present time, the imaginations of children and teachers are still alive in schools. If parents, administrators, and policymakers value imagination in their own work, if imagination is valued in the work of teachers and students, and if the indeterminate aspects of curriculum are valued as much as the determinate aspects, then school could become a place where a child's imagination may be educated. For Maxine Greene (2001) curriculum is “always in process, as we who are teachers try to make possible a continuing enlargement of experience. There must be open-mindedness and a sense of exploration; there must be breaks with ordinariness and stock response” (p. 28). An artist can create a watercolor to communicate a view of the park. Walking on the sidewalks and in the meadow, the artist notices important features, both determinate and indeterminate, and interprets them in the painting. In the landscape of curriculum, I use

art to highlight the creative aspects of textbooks that can educate the imaginations of my students.

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APPENDIX A**THE ROAD HOME:****A SAMPLE CHAPTER OF AN IMAGINATIVE ART TEXTBOOK**

The Road Home is an excerpt from a chapter of an imaginative art textbook, showing some of the content and design characteristics of such a book. The lesson plans, poems, artworks, and activities are designed to be used many times with different outcomes, and to offer teachers and students a variety of choices in their uses.

“One of the first things people ask in this country is, ‘Where are you from?’ and the idea is that that information tells you something.”

—Eleanor Harvey, Curator of the Smithsonian American Art Museum (Lubow, 2006, p. 52).

The Road Home

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"Without people,
place doesn't mean anything."

~ Eleanor Harvey
*Curator,
Smithsonian American Art Museum*

(Lubow, 2006, p. 52).

Where is the place you call home?

How many places have you lived?

Have you ever been homesick?

Artists have expressed powerful feelings about “home” using many different media. In this unit you will explore the concept of home through a variety of activities chosen by your art teacher. As you explore, here are some ideas to think about:

Describing home: What does a home look like? Feel like? Smell like? What are the tastes of home? Sounds of home? Textures of home? Who is at home? What objects say “home?” Where is home? When are you at home? How does home look at different times of day, different seasons?

Analyzing home: What must something have to be called “home?” What is a house besides shelter? What lives in a house besides the human occupants? What are the organic and non-organic components of a house? What are the emotional, intellectual, mental, and physical qualities of a home?

Interpreting home: What is the difference between a house and a home? Can home be in more than one place at a time? Can a home be moved? How can a home be lost? Found? Given away? Renounced? Traded? Stolen? Bestowed? Inherited? Misplaced? Mistaken for someone else’s? Transformed? Glorified? Fragmented? Expanded? Condensed? Propagated? Transmitted?

Evaluating home: What makes a good home? What is a healthy home? How can you counteract the effects of a bad home? How can you make a good home for yourself wherever you go in life?

Who needs to be there
for the place to be
“home?”

In Your Sketchbook

This old house

The three bears' house

Home is where the heart is

One's home is one's castle

The old lady who lived in a shoe

(To) Grandmother's house (we go)

The prince's castle on Cinderella's wedding day

FOURTEEN HOMES TO DRAW FROM IMAGINATION

The witch's candy house in Hansel & Gretel

Take me home, country roads

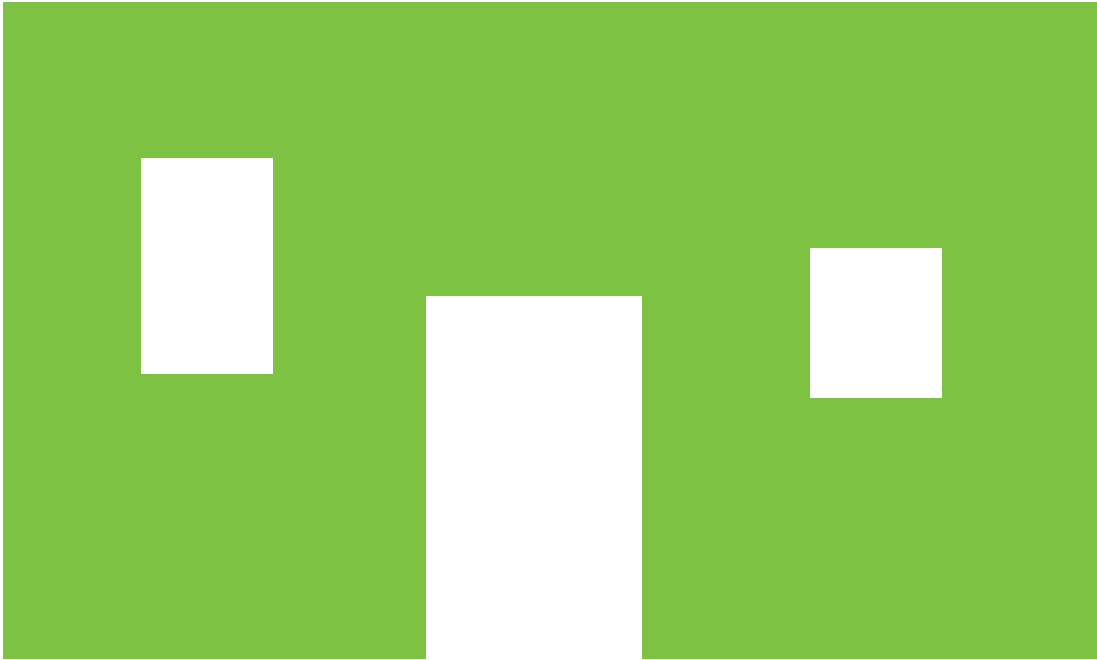
Your home away from home

The three little pigs' houses

My old Kentucky home

Home sweet home

A house divided



Where I Come From

I come from Illinois cornfields and rich black dirt.
 I come from sweet peas and plump tomatoes eaten right out of the garden.
 I come from Duke and Annie, farmers and river fighters.
 I come from spotted milk cows named Beauty, Gingerbread, Reindeer, and Jane.
 I come from hand-churned butter made from their rich, creamy milk.
 I come from work boots and blue jeans and painting silver fenceposts.
 I come from mudpies, pony rides, and piano lessons.
 I come from musical brothers and artistic sisters.
 I come from bicycle rides on gravel roads and skinned up knees.
 I come from lightning bugs, "Kick the Can", and strawberry Kool-Aid.
 I come from Sunday chicken dinners and gin-rummy at Grandma's house.
 I come from picking sour cherries and my mother's homemade pie.
 I come from "If something is worth doing, it's worth doing right" and
 "There's nothing wrong with being different."
 I come from the belief that knowledge is power and working hard
 will make my dreams come true.

By Karen Brumbaugh

Create a poem or collage--or a combination.

Begin with a line or an image that names the place and the color of one of its features.

Tell us about the people there: What are their names? What are they like?

Name the things that make the place special to you: foods, games, animals, objects, scenes, and events.

End with the sayings you heard and the beliefs you learned there.

Evaluation: Read the poem aloud or display the collage in another class.

Ask other students to describe their impressions of your place in a discussion or in writing.

Thirty spokes meet in the hub,
but the empty space between them
is the essence of the wheel.

Pots are formed from clay,
but the empty space within it
is the essence of the pot.

Walls with windows and doors form the house,
but the empty space within it
is the essence of the home.

Lao Tse

View Out of My Window: *A Watercolor Project Inspired by Charles Burchfield*

Where this lesson fits into your painting experience	Artists enjoy the surprising blending of colors when they paint with watercolors. Although watercolor can be a challenging medium even for experienced artists, you can find success in creating watercolor textures by experimenting with some common household materials and simple techniques.
Objective	You can express a feeling about your home by creating a watercolor painting of the view out of your window, using various textures.
Warm-ups	<p>Day 1: Draw the frame of a window. Inside the rectangle, from imagination, draw a city or suburban view.</p> <p>Day 2: Draw a wooden fence from life or from memory. Show the grain of the wood.</p> <p>Day 3: Draw a brick wall from memory or from imagination.</p> <p>Day 4: Draw a street corner with a curb and traffic sign from memory or from imagination.</p> <p>Day 5: Draw a sidewalk with people walking along it. Use linear perspective.</p>
Homework	Days one through five: Each afternoon or evening, look out of a different window in your home. Sketch the view, just as you see it from that window. If you have time, sketch the same view at different times of day, such as breakfast time and supper time.
Resources	<p>Web sites:</p> <p>The Burchfield Homestead Society: http://www.salemohio.com/Burchfield/home.html</p> <p>The Memorial Art Gallery of the University of Rochester http://magart.rochester.edu/obj3566\$6387</p> <p>American Art at the Phillips Collection http://www.phillipscollection.org/american_art/collection/collection-artist_ab.htm</p>

Materials Handout: Creating a neighborhood of textures in watercolor
 Watercolor paper, cut into small sheets (5 X 7) and larger sheets (11 X 14)
 Watercolors, brushes, water cups
 Table salt, rock salt, frisket and old brushes to use with it, toothpicks, plastic wrap, facial tissues, rubbing alcohol.

Comprehension How long have you lived in your present home? What does your home look like? What do you see when you look out of your window?

Charles Burchfield (1893-1967) grew up in a poor family in Ohio. He was the second to last child of a large family. All of his older brothers and sisters left high school to go to work so that Charles could finish high school. When he was in tenth grade he decided he would not only graduate, but graduate as valedictorian. He succeeded in both, and was the first member of his family to graduate. The seven of them lived in a small house. In time, they earned enough money to enlarge the house, and they took great pride in their home. You can visit his home in Salem, Ohio today. Find Charles Burchfield's town on a U.S. map in eastern Ohio.

Analysis Charles attended the Institute of Art in Cleveland, and then moved to Buffalo, New York where he began his art career by working as a wallpaper designer. He painted three kinds of landscapes throughout his career. In the beginning, he painted the house and the town in which he grew up, inspired by his childhood memories. From 1918 through the 1940s, he painted America during the Depression, with dirty streets and abandoned houses. In the last twenty years of his life, he painted expressive views of cities and towns.

View the painting *The Cat-Eyed House* on the Web site of the Memorial Art Gallery of the University of Rochester. Can you guess to which of the three landscape periods this painting belongs? What clues do you see in the painting? Where do you see texture in the painting?

Charles's memories of his childhood neighborhood were happy ones. As a child Charles read imaginative stories from the Brothers Grimm, in

which Good and Evil are constantly in combat. Some art critics believe these stories inspired the imaginative style of landscape painting he developed after 1917. If you walk through his old Salem neighborhood today, you'll see that many of the small houses have central doorways with windows on the left and right. The windows and door may have reminded Charles Burchfield of eyes and a mouth, making the house look as if it had a face. Some older buildings in downtown Salem have curved windowcaps above the glass resembling eyes. In Charles's imagination, the houses seemed to look out at the passers-by, projecting different moods at different times of the day.

Charles wrote in his journal:

"The view from my bedroom window was the entrance to a romantic land."

View the Burchfield paintings on the Art at the Phillips Collection Web site. Look for different textures in the paintings. What are the different moods portrayed in the paintings in this collection?

Charles also wrote:

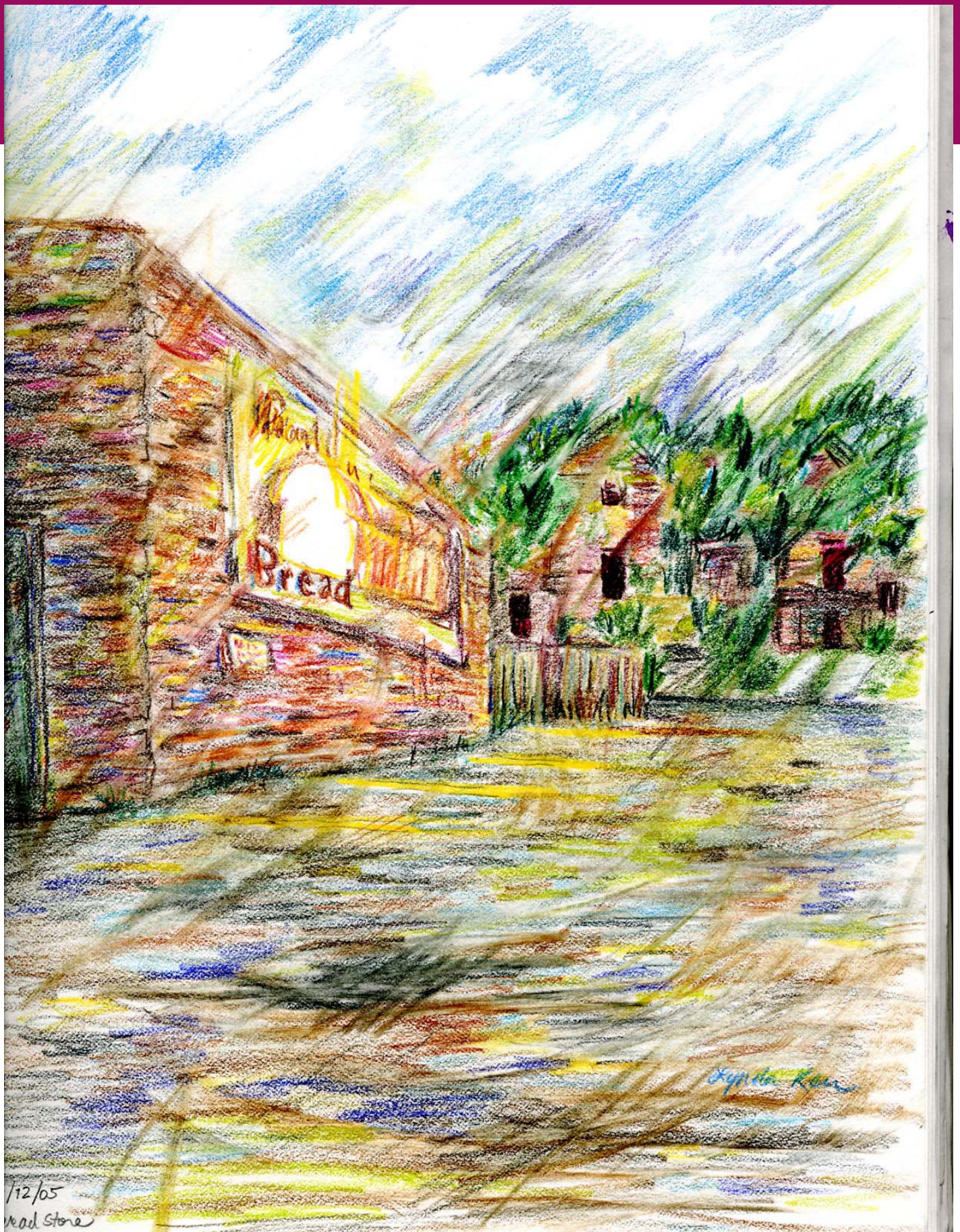
"A house is often more moody than nature. What a rare thing it is. They are built by men as dwellings; windows are put in to let in light - and this strange creature results. In the daytime they have an astonished look, at dusk they are evil, seem to brood over some crime committed or begun. Each one is individual."

On the Internet, go to the Burchfield Homestead Society Web site:
<http://www.salemohio.com/burchfield/home.html>

To see the views Charles Burchfield painted from his windows and compare them to photos of the same views, click on "Where Reality Ends."

To see a painting from each window in Charles Burchfield's home, click on "Interactive Floor Plan." Charles drew the floor plan of his home when he was a senior in high school.

- Application** Experiment with creating the textures on the handout *Creating a Neighborhood of Textures in Watercolor*. Some ideas for uses:
1. glazing (roofs)
 2. masking with frisket (glass windows)
 3. scraping (grass, bricks,)
 4. blotting (glass windows, foliage)
 5. rock salt (bushes)
 6. table salt (stars, rocks, sand)
 7. rubbing alcohol drops (foliage, clouds)
 8. crumpled plastic wrap (stone)
- Synthesis** Create a watercolor that shows the textures and the feeling of the place where you live. Choose either to (a) paint the outside of your home, and show some of the yard or neighborhood around it; or (b) paint the view from one of your windows.
- Evaluation**
1. How does your painting communicate your feelings about your home?
 2. How have you used two or more of the dry techniques?
 3. How have you used two or more of the wet-into-wet techniques?
 4. Where have you used one or more special effects?
 5. Is your craftsmanship good, that is, are your textures inside the shapes you intended them to be?
- References**
- Loudin, F. (1998) *Capture the charm of your hometown in watercolor*. Cincinnati OH: North Light Books.
- Nice, C. (2000). *Painting weathered buildings in pen, ink, and watercolor*. Cincinnati OH: North Light Books.
- Burchfield Homestead Society Web site (2003, retrieved on September 4, 2006 from the World Wide Web:
<http://www.salemo.io.com/burchfield/home.html>



Bread Store, a colored pencil drawing from Lynda Kerr's sketchbook, shows a place she shopped with her grandmother. Can you draw a place you went with someone you love? (2005. 9" X 12." Collection of the artist.)

A Drawing or Painting Project

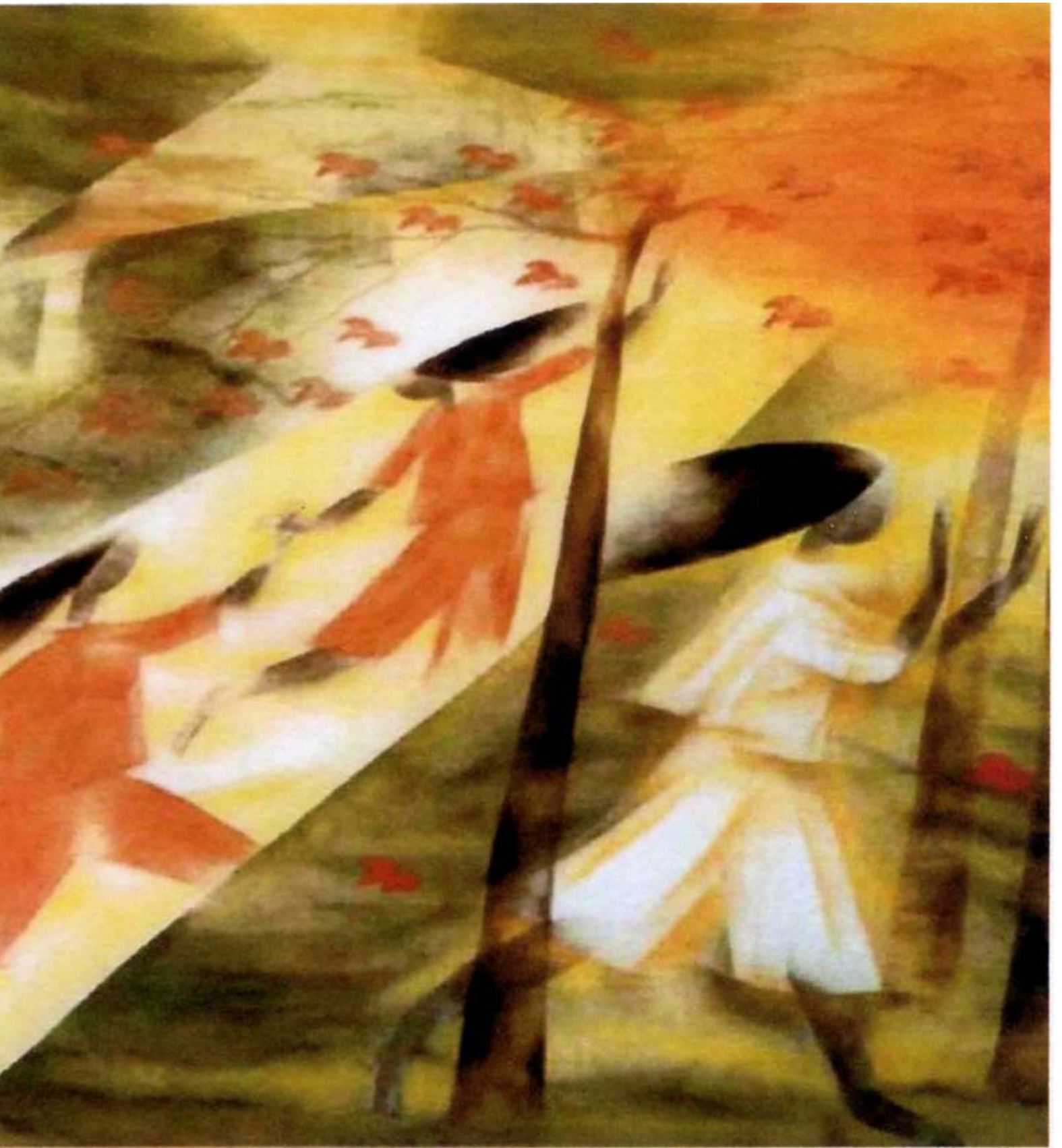
Ambiguity: **the state of being two things at once.**

Imagine a place you once lived. Compare it to the place you live now. Have you ever felt homesick? Or, think about your home as it looked when you were a child, and how it looks to you now. What has changed? How are some things the same?

You Sha Lin emigrated from China to Canada. In her painting she expressed her memory of her first home, her feelings about belonging in her new home, and her search for the idea of “home.” How did she express the feeling of searching? What feels ambiguous about this painting?

Create a drawing, painting, or collage that expresses your search for an idea of “home.” You might use photos or sketches of places you have lived. Perhaps you could cut or tear them into strips and weave them together. Oil pastels or chalk pastels could be used to blur the edges. Try to create the feeling of ambiguity by allowing shapes to overlap and blend together.





You Sha Lin, *The Road Home*. 1997. Chinese colors on silk. 28" X 32." Collection of Ming Fang He. Used with permission.

Planning a City

A Design Project

Materials

18" X 24" newsprint for sketches
18" X 24" white drawing paper for final design
pencils
rulers
French curves (optional)
colored pencils

Getting involved

Think about your neighborhood. Which places are beautiful? Which places are not? In which place is traffic congested? Is there anything near your neighborhood that is noisy or pollutes? What would you change about your neighborhood? What would you make more of? What would you make less of? These are questions considered by urban designers. If, as a child, you enjoyed building cities from toys, urban design may be a career path for you.

Highlights of urban designers' careers:

Their purpose: to monitor the visual appearance of a city and to ensure that development of commercial, residential, industrial, and recreational areas is balanced.

How their work is used: Working with government officials, community representatives, and architects, urban designers consider questions that affect the beauty, function, and welfare of the community. They may work on revitalizing a downtown street, planning for a new park, developing a shopping mall, or planning for an industrial complex.

Where urban designers work: Almost every American city employs at least one urban designer, who is usually an architect. The urban designer typically has a staff to help with the many projects in progress at one time. Urban designers may work for architectural firms, or as consultants to corporations involved in real estate development, corporate expansion, harbor development, and park development.

How urban designers work: Like most problem-solving in design, the solution begins with drawings. The urban designer must be able to visualize the place and the problem, and draw solutions so that others can understand. Working as part of a team is an important part of urban design, because the solution affects many other people and the quality of their lives.

Qualities needed for success in urban design:

- ability to work with a variety of people
- ability to visualize
- skill in handling large projects
- knowledge of community affairs
- skill in drawing, mathematics, and architecture
- knowledge of demographics, urban geography, environmental planning, and geology

Objective

Urban designers have a major effect on the environment as well as on the life quality of the community. Your challenge is to design a plan for a new city that gives people choices of life-styles, but also is friendly to the environment.

Your design will be evaluated using a rubric based on these questions:

1. Does the design include the four areas: commercial, community, residential, and city service areas?
2. Does pedestrian and vehicle traffic move through the city effectively?
3. Does the plan allow for choices of life-styles?
4. Does the plan allow people to live in harmony with the environment?

Quick review

Review the design principle of movement. This will apply to the layout in planning the traffic patterns through the city.

Getting started

Divide into teams of two or three urban designers. After sketching, each team will present designs to “the city council.” This council may be made up of three or four students from your class, or from a social studies class. Perhaps they have studied the history of cities. Before beginning, be sure everyone is familiar with the rubric.

Making it real

The plan must include the following four areas: commercial, community, residential, and city service areas. The new city will be built on a plot of land that has, on its south side, wetlands with many species of plants and animals. In planning the new city, urban designers must decide what role, if any, the wetlands will play in the development. Some things to consider in the overall design:

Good work!

Take your sketchbook out into your city or town. Do a detailed study of a location. Draw the same intersection or park sidewalk from different angles, and at different times of day. Note the traffic flow and patterns of people and vehicles. Then, at home, make sketches showing how the traffic flow or pattern could be improved, or how the location could be beautified. Sketching on location is a great way to sharpen your powers of observation!

Polished introductions!

Practice a courteous handshake. Both men and women shake hands using a firm, but not tight grip, all the way to the thumb. Make eye contact, smile, and use the person's name. Begin role playing with introductions and shaking hands. Model shaking hands by introducing yourself to new students or those visiting the art studio for the first time.

- commercial area: stores, offices, businesses, restaurants. Plan for pedestrian (walking) areas that are safe from car traffic. Include parking, public transportation, and a way for trucks to deliver supplies to the businesses and for waste to be taken away without interfering with customer traffic.
 - community area: parks, bike paths, hiking trails, baseball and soccer fields, nature preserve, museums.
 - residential area: choices of homes for families and single people; low income, middle income, and high income residents.
 - city service areas: city hall, fire department, police department, jail, water treatment plant, and sanitary landfill. Remember that waste materials must be transported to the landfill. How will you plan the route?
1. Student teams draw several alternative layouts on newsprint. As the teams work, ask questions about the movement of traffic and people through the area. Have students look at the work of other teams and discuss ideas.
 2. *Role play:* The teams present the sketches to the “city council.” The city council should be prepared to ask questions about important decisions, such as provisions for pedestrians, vehicle use, waste management, and recreational facilities. The urban designers should be prepared to defend their designs. Both groups should ask, “Would I want to live in this city?” and be prepared to tell “Why?” or “Why not?”
 3. When the role play has concluded, and suggestions for improvements are complete, draw the city plan on white drawing paper and enhance the appearance with color.

Decisions to make

- locations
- types of homes and transportation
- traffic flow
- amount of space allotted for each area

Reflections

Write or discuss: How did you decide how much space to allow for commercial use? Was there anything you would like to have included, but did not have enough space? If you could apply parts of this design to your own neighborhood, what changes would you make to your part of the city?

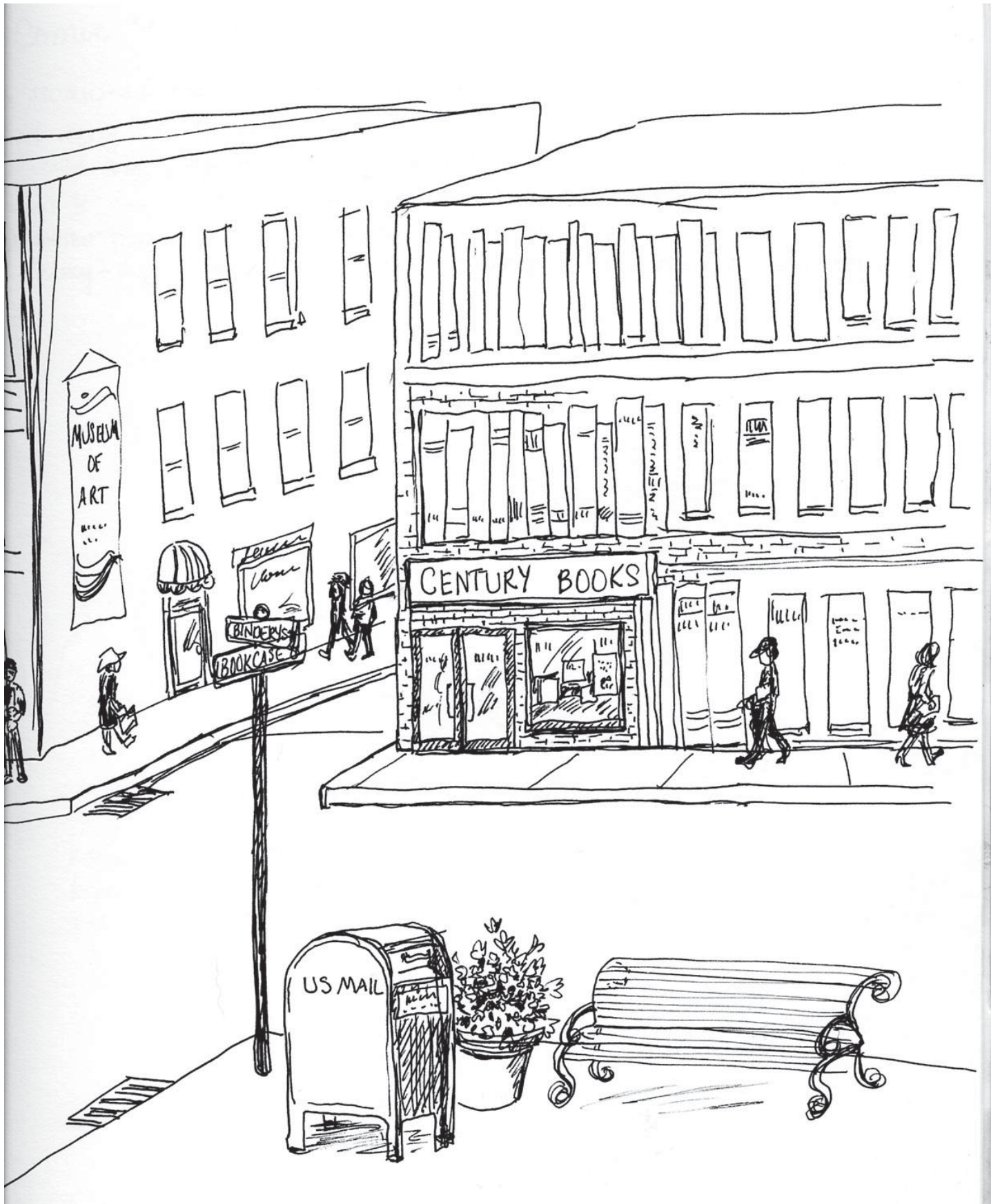
To do now

If you are interested in preparing for a career in urban design, here are some things you can do now:

- o Take drawing and art history courses.
- o Work on communication skills: writing, presentation, and public speaking.
- o Go to the library and look through architectural magazines and urban design journals.
- o Contact your city's urban design office. Ask to talk with the architects about preparation for this career.

Career descriptions adapted from Brommer, G. & Gatto, J. (1999). *Careers in Art*. Worcester, MA: Davis Publications.

Lesson plans and sidebars: Kerr, L. (2001). *Top Drawer Art Careers*. Personal materials developed for unpublished Plan B paper.



Lynda Kerr, *Booktown*. 2006. Ink on paper. 8.5 X 11. Collection of the artist.



FEED YOUR IMAGINATION

Walk around your home and yard. Close your eyes periodically and feel the textures of the various surfaces: wood, plastic, metal, carpet, stone, brick. Imagine a new word to describe each texture.

Sit in the yard and listen to the sounds around you. Draw or paint a visual expression of the sounds of your home.

Find an antique in an attic or storage closet, or in an antique store. Ask an older person how the object was used. Imagine yourself using the object every day.

Open the kitchen cabinet or pantry door. Look at the colors of the jars, cans, and boxes. If you squint your eyes, can you imagine the shapes and forms as city buildings? Imagine yourself as a resident of that city. Where would you live? What would traveling mean?

Go into a store you've never thought of entering before. Examine the objects for sale there. Take note of forms, textures, and uses that are new to you.

Go to a library and find books with pictures of furniture designs. Find pictures of living room chairs or kitchen dinette sets from the 1920s, the 1950s, and the 1980s. Compare their designs to ads for these items in today's newspaper. How have the designs changed over the years?

Art Criticism: *Arthritis: Deeper than the Meaning*

Use the questions to guide a discussion of the drawing *Arthritis: Deeper than the Meaning*, by Lionel Daniels (age 17). Then write an imaginative interpretation of the artwork.

DISCUSS:

GET INVOLVED

What is arthritis? How can it affect a person's hands? How could that change the person's life and work? Do you know anyone who is affected by arthritis?

DESCRIBE

What is the age of the woman you see?

Where is she sitting?

What is she holding?

Who else is in the picture?

ANALYZE USING YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF VALUES

Where do you see the darkest values (shadows)?

Where are the medium values?

Where are the lightest values (highlights)?

Where does the light appear to come from?

Where is the area of the greatest contrast?

How does the light create a connection between the two figures?

DECIDE

Is this artwork successful because it is realistic, because it is well-organized, or because it has a strong message? (Choose one and defend your choice with evidence from the artwork.)

WRITE AN IMAGINATIVE INTERPRETATION:

What do you think is the relationship between the two people?

What, in your opinion, is the importance of the building?

What do the woman's eyes and the expression on her face seem to say to you?

If the woman could speak to you, what do you think she would be saying?

What do you think the man and woman would say to each other?

Looking at the drawing, what can you imagine about the lives of these people? About their family? About their work? About their beliefs?



Lionel Daniels (Age 17), *Arthritis: Deeper than the Meaning*, 2005. Pencil on board. 30" X 40." Collection of the artist. Used with permission.

My Father's Mind

My father's mind is a house
During a storm. No matter the
Mood it's tempered by a wyrd
Of his own making.

And his windows shake open,
And his shingles unstitch,
And his siding pulls from the frame,

As his basement fills with
A dim tide, a flotsam of the past
All wrecked and rain-soaked.

He alone stands in his mind
While the foundation creaks
And shifts like a home built
On dark shale.

by Scott Honeycutt



John Paul Wood, *Untitled*. 2006. Acrylic on canvas. 32" X 41" X 4". Collection of the artist.
John Paul Wood teaches high school art in Luella, Georgia. Untitled is used with permission.

How do I know what I think
till I see what I say?



--Norman Laliberte

*100 Ways to Have Fun With an
Alligator & 100 Other Involving Art
Projects* (1969) p. 38.



They will say that you are on the wrong road, if it is your own.

--Antonio Porchia.
in Laliberte, *100 Ways to Have Fun
With an Alligator & 100 Other
Involving Art Projects* (1969) p. 54

The Road Home

A '36 Ford, dashing transportation then;
The road home had ruts and rocks,
And you could see where you had been.
Nobody's doors even had locks,

The house wasn't wired with electricity,
Light to read was with an oil lamp,
There weren't any phones; there was no TV,
There was only a washtub to get yourself damp.

Friends and family were welcomed always,
The World War II soldiers came home on leave,
The garden fed many throughout those days,
People lived and died, and loved ones would grieve.

The couple who lived there had a dairy farm,
Produced milk and butter for the small town,
Chocolate milk was the magnetic charm,
That attracted kids from all around.

Finally, some children were born to the home
As well as cousins to come and play;
The farm was a playground for us to roam,
And we had nothing but fun every day.

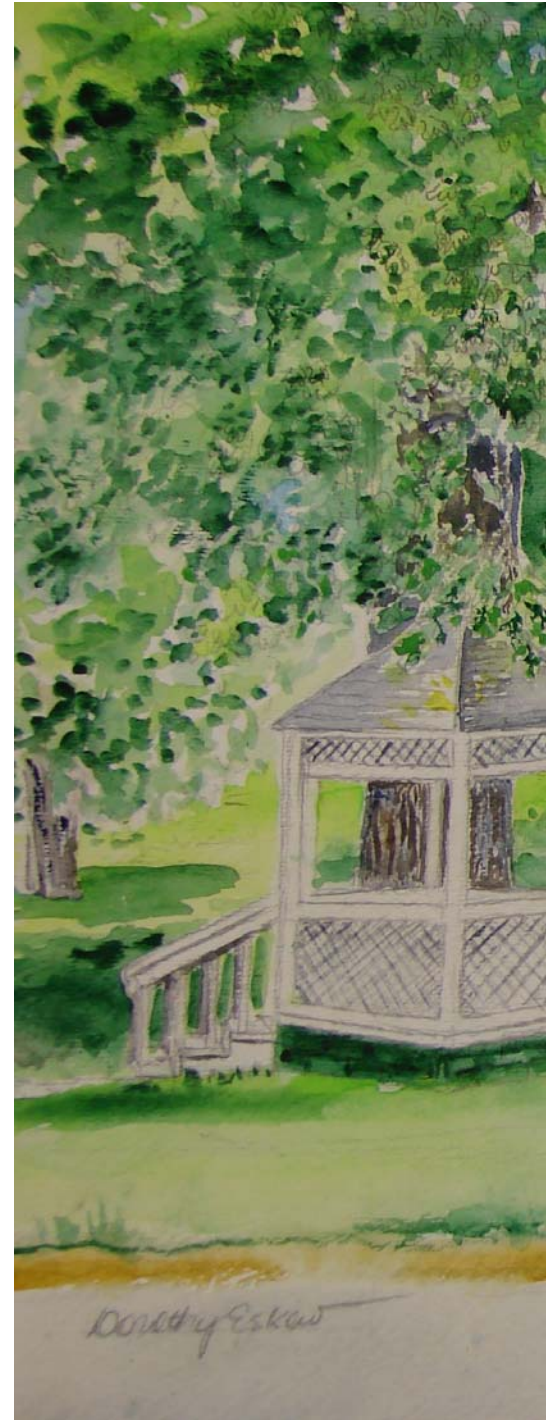
There were wagons of cotton driven by mules
Passing by the house on the way to the gin.
You didn't worry so much about rules
Because you didn't think of breaking them then.

Brother and I grew up and moved away,
But took the road home to see Mom and Dad,
Then, grandchildren were born on a brighter day,
And they made Grandma and Granddaddy glad.

The trees grew from tiny to big,
And the dairy cows were sold;
Daddy could not longer in the garden dig,
And they both grew old.

My daddy said once as he sat outside,
"More cars pass in a day than there were in a year!"
Time moved onward, and the old couple died;
They took a different road Home, and I shed a tear.

by Dottie Eskew



Time Passes

The encircled area in Dottie Eskew's watercolor shows a decorative detail of the house called "gingerbread." It was brought from her grandparents' house and added to her parents' house as an heirloom. Dottie's poem and painting show the passage of time. In the painting, the gingerbread is a tie to the past. The fire hydrant shows how city conveniences, such as a water system, grew up around the house that was once on a country road. What images in the poem show the passage of time?



Dottie Eskew. *Home*. 2006. Watercolor on paper. 11" X 14." Collection of the artist.

What changes do you think might come to your neighborhood in the next twenty, thirty, or forty years? What will the buildings look like? What will the trees and foliage look like? Who will live there? Who will come to visit? How will they travel there? What clues to the past will remain for the visitors to see?

Create an altered book that shows the passage of time in your neighborhood. Find a discarded hardbound book. You might cover the book pages with white paint and draw on them. You could

glue the pages together in sections, and then cut windows into the sections. Glue objects or photos in the windows. Paint and draw inside the book. Reflect on your altered book on its value as a time machine that gives a clue to a possible future.

Dottie Eskew teaches high school art in Locust Grove, Georgia. The Road Home and Home are used with permission.

APPENDIX B
USAGE PERMISSION LETTERS

Aguirre

USAGE PERMISSION

August 31, 2006

To: Lynda Kerr
992 Arbor Way
McDonough GA 30253

Dear Ms. Kerr,

By my signature below, I am granting you permission to reproduce my painting, entitled "Landerman's family" in your dissertation, *Landscapes of Imagination: A Critical Analysis of Art Textbooks*.

I understand ten copies of your dissertation will be printed for use in the College of Education, Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Georgia, and for your personal use, and copies will be made on compact disc, for your personal use, not for sale. In addition, your dissertation will be available online through the Zach S. Henderson Library at Georgia Southern University.

I understand that I retain ownership of original artwork and that a credit line will appear in the dissertation, suitable to the design of the page.

Sincerely,

Rodrigo Aguirre _____
Signature If minor, parent's signature

Rodrigo Aguirre _____
Name Printed If minor, parent's name printed

Address 92 Dogwood Lake RD Hampton GA 30228

Address _____

Phone 770-707-2191

Email chipelibre1@hotmail.com

Brumbaugh

USAGE PERMISSION

August 31, 2006

To: Lynda Kerr
 992 Arbor Way
 McDonough GA 30253

Dear Ms. Kerr,

By my signature below, I am granting you permission to reproduce my
poem, entitled Where I Come From
 in your dissertation, *Landscapes of Imagination: A Critical Analysis of Art Textbooks*.

I understand ten copies of your dissertation will be printed for use in the College of Education, Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Georgia, and for your personal use, and copies will be made on compact disc, for your personal use, not for sale. In addition, your dissertation will be available online through the Zach S. Henderson Library at Georgia Southern University.

I understand that I retain ownership of original artwork and that a credit line will appear in the dissertation, suitable to the design of the page.

Sincerely,

Karen c. Brumbaugh
 Signature

If minor, parent's signature

Karen c. Brumbaugh
 Name Printed

If minor, parent's name printed

Address 854 West Y street

Address Washougal, WA 98671

Phone 360-833-1498

Email kurt.brumbaugh@comcast.net

Daniels

USAGE PERMISSION

August 31, 2006

To: Lynda Kerr
 992 Arbor Way
 McDonough GA 30253

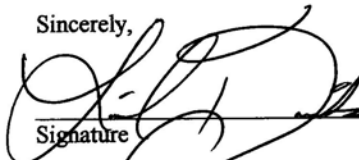
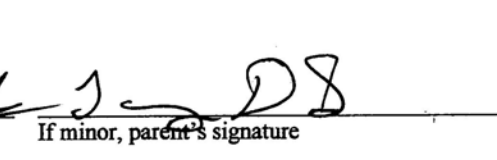
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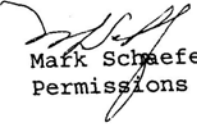
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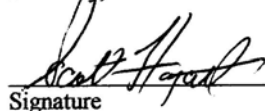
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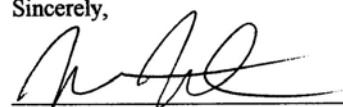
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