

CRITICAL CULTURAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE CLASSROOM THROUGH AN  
ART-CENTERED CURRICULAR UNIT, "RESPECT AND HOMAGE"

Deborah A. Kuster, B.F.A., M.A.

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APPROVED:

Connie Newton, Major Professor

Jacqueline Chanda, Committee

Member and Chair of the Division of Art  
History and Art Education

Melinda M. Mayer, Committee Member

Jack Davis, Dean of the School of Visual Arts

Sandra L. Terrell, Dean of the Robert B. Toulouse  
School of Graduate Studies

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The purpose of this study was to describe the implementation, structure, content and outcome of an art-centered unit developed for 5th grade students. This unit was designed to be an example/model of specific tools and procedures that teachers can use in the art and general classroom to promote critical cultural consciousness, which is the ability to analyze both the covert and overt elements of a culture with the purpose of developing a holistic viewpoint that values the cultural heritages of self and others.

The participants selected for this study were all the students in three 5th grade classes. The art-centered unit focused on three artists—Romare Bearden, Elizabeth Catlett and Charles White—under the theme "Respect and Homage." The research methods used in this investigation were qualitative. This study was written in a style that described the research design with its origins, organization and implementation. The implementation of the curricular unit developed for this study took place in the art and general classroom.

Of particular interest in this study was the framework and structure of the art-centered unit, designed around two specific strategies utilized to promote

critical cultural consciousness. One strategy in this unit was the identification of art-related or art-centered micro-cultures as an organizing framework for promoting critical, aesthetic inquiry of the selected works of art. Another important curricular strategy examined in this study was the utilization of personal and cultural value orientations for their role in developing cultural consciousness and critical aesthetic inquiry into works of art. Value orientations are common general issues or questions that we as people and as cultures apply various ranking patterns.

Evidence of students' development of critical aesthetic inquiry into the focused works of art was documented and discussed, along with evidence of students' expanded understanding of art and culture. That evidence, added to students' personal, reflective ideas exhibited in the context of their personal art making, provided the record of students' growth in critical cultural consciousness used in this study.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES.....	iii
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
2. REVIEW OF RELATED THEORY AND SCHOLARSHIP .....	43
3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	98
4. RESULTS .....	116
5. REFLECTIVE DISCUSSION OF RESULTS .....	167
APPENDICES	
A. RESPECT AND HOMAGE: AN ART-CENTERED UNIT OF STUDY ....	187
B. STUDENT'S ARTIST STATEMENTS INSTRUMENT.....	202
C. DRAMATIC READING ( <i>ARTWORLDS</i> ).....	203
D. VALUE ORIENTATION SURVEY INSTRUMENT .....	208
E. VALUE ORIENTATION COOPERATIVE GROUP QUESTIONS.....	212
F. DESCRIPTION OF PILOT STUDY.....	213
REFERENCES.....	217

## LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Page

### Figures

1. Conceptual Framework ..... 39

### Tables

1. Pre- and Post-Instruction Word Association Surveys ..... 120
2. Students' Responses (Cultural Value Orientations)..... 126

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

May we come “to believe in the possibility of a variety of experiences, a variety of ways of understanding the world, a variety of frameworks of operation, without imposing consciously or unconsciously a notion of the norm.” --Elsa Barkley Brown

After Walter O. Evans developed an interest in art while attending medical school, he noted the absence of African American art in the world’s major museums. Because he strongly believed art defines a people’s cultural heritage, he passionately became committed to collecting. Walter and Linda Evans feel a personal responsibility to share their collection of African American art. In an effort to share the African American cultural legacy they have loaned approximately eighty works of art from their collection for an ongoing traveling exhibition throughout the United States.

The Tyler Museum of Art hosted a small exhibition of Jacob Lawrence lithographs from the Walter O. Evans Collection of African American Art in the beginning months of 2002. While speaking about his collection at the exhibition opening, Dr. Evans expressed how the Black image spoke directly to him, of seeking works that show that African American painters also existed in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and of documenting a “historic picture” of African American cultural history. While listening, I was convinced of the path I wished to pursue in my doctoral research study. I want to search for ways to utilize art to expand cultural awareness and understanding to promote learning for all students.

As the demographic makeup of classrooms across the United States becomes increasingly culturally diverse, the classroom has the potential of becoming a place for an active exchange of cultural perspectives (Roosevelt, 1998). According to the

National Center for Education Statistics, in the 2000/2001 school year, the average proportion of students who were members of an ethnic minority was 40%, whereas in the 100 largest school districts the minority population was averaged at 69%. My search is to increase knowledge of effective ways to not only address the diversity of our student population, but to utilize art to expand cultural awareness and understanding to promote learning for all students.

My doctoral research is founded in the belief that by helping students view the world beyond their limited racial and ethnic perspectives, we will enrich them as human beings and enable them to live more productive and fulfilling lives. We can get a fuller view of our own cultures and behaviors only by viewing them from the perspectives of other cultures (Banks, 1988; Trueba & Wright, 1992; Radnor, 2001; Cross, 2000). The arts, as a universal human phenomenon and means of communication, embody and chronicle the cultural, aesthetic, and social development of the world's people. Art has the capacity to reflect the heart of the thinking, feeling and wanting of our fellow human beings (Sabol, 2000; Remer, 1982; Grant, 1992; Morris; 1998). By its very nature, art offers such a rich bounty of cultural exchange. As an art educator, upon hearing the passionate words of Dr. Evans, I earnestly wanted to search for ways to raise the practice of multicultural art education into higher levels of effectiveness.

The use of the term *multicultural education* varies widely, to include ethnic studies, multiethnic education, teaching diversity and pluralism. Multicultural education represents the idea of no one best way to be an American, seeking equal opportunity for all students of diverse populations. Multicultural education has been described as a school reform, curricular reform, as well as an ideological and on-going process (Grant

& Sleeter, 1998; Banks, 1988; Gay, 2001). Multicultural education is used to in this paper to describe any educational endeavor that attempts to address the diversity of the student population.

My research fits under the umbrella of multicultural education as it seeks to contribute to an educational reform that equally values the cultural perspectives of all students from diverse backgrounds. The purpose of this study was to describe the implementation, structure, content and outcome of an art-centered unit developed for 5th grade students. This unit was designed to be an example/model of specific tools and procedures that teachers can use in the art and general classroom to promote critical cultural consciousness. *Critical cultural consciousness*, as used in this paper, is an awareness and ability to analyze both the covert and overt elements of culture. Cultural consciousness is a holistic understanding and affirmation of the multi-faceted nature of culture as it applies to self and to others (Kirkland, 2002; Nieto, 1999; Trueba & Wright, 1992; Pekala, 1991). Thus, the promotion of critical cultural consciousness has the potential of creating a learning environment that fosters students' ability to view the world beyond their limited personal, racial and ethnic perspectives.

Multicultural education as philosophy and ideology had its beginnings in the civil rights movements of the 1960s and early 1970s and expanded to become the umbrella term for a school reform movement that addressed issues of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic class, language, and disability. Multicultural education was built conceptually on American ideals such as freedom, justice, equality, and human dignity (Grant & Tate, 2001). Proponents of multicultural education sought equal representation of these traditionally marginalized groups of people in such curricular matters as content



perspective, historical accounts, and selected literature. The ideal was a reform of education that placed multiculturalism at its philosophical core.

Nieto (1999), in her introduction to *The Light in their Eyes*, remind us of the reason multicultural education had come about in the first place.

It was not to promote human relations, to help students feel good, or to preserve their native languages and cultures. These are important goals to be sure, but there is reasonably unanimous agreement by the major theorists in the field that these purposes are secondary to the primary objective of advancing student learning (Banks & Banks, 1995b; Grant & Millar, 1992). These secondary objectives need to be placed in the service of the primary goal of education: to promote the education and achievement of all students... (p. xvii)

Nieto's identification of the primary educational goal to be the promotion of student learning is reinforced by a research poll conducted by Farkas and Johnson with Public Agenda and the Public Education Network (1998). The surveyed African American and Anglo American parents of school-aged children rated the most important goal for public schools as academic achievement. Education and academic achievement is a democratic foundation for living more productive and fulfilling lives. American ideals such as freedom, justice, equality, and human dignity demand an equal valuing of students' cultural identities in all curricular endeavors to promote learning (Grant & Tate, 2001; Nieto, 1999).

A further eloquent description of the essence of multicultural education is stated in an interview with distinguished educator, Adelaide Sanford (Cahan & Kocur, 1996):

We should be educating young people as whole human beings who value themselves, their world and other people, and who approach that world and its people with the desire to understand them.... I think we can make the education process relevant by affirming diversity and recognizing that there are different people who have had different experiences and that they express these experiences in different ways. I think it is the responsibility of the school to make subject matter relevant.... If you can make it important for the child to learn that data then the child will learn it.... That is really what multiculturalism—or what I prefer to call diversity—is all about. It brings everyone in at the same level.... Diversity allows each culture to enter centered within itself and bring all of its various aspects to the experience of life. Everyone is recognized as having played a role. We don't have to make a decision about which one is better.

(pp.5-7)

Sanford stressed the supreme importance of recognizing the goal of multicultural education as the goal of all of education—advancing the academic achievement of the student population in today's American classroom in its time of vast diversity. Multicultural education can take place in a classroom atmosphere that recognizes everyone has a role in the creation of culture and each person's contribution is valuable. A classroom atmosphere that cultivates critical cultural consciousness is actively involved in raising students' cultural awareness or consciousness in order to analyze both the covert and overt elements of personal and other cultures. The desired effect of critical cultural consciousness is an on-going pursuit for a holistic understanding and affirmation of the multi-faceted nature of culture as it applies to self and to others.

## Historic Overview of Multicultural Art Education

Before discussing the problem I wish to address in this study, an overview of the history of multicultural education in the field of art education in America should be discussed. In reviewing the professional publications of the National Art Education Association (NAEA) before 1951, Chalmers (1996) observes only a few articles contained minor curricular attention to the art of non-Anglo cultures. Multicultural art education grew to emerge as an issue between 1953 and 1980. A concern with multiculturalism was present in Manuel Barkan's (1953) early work and in Viktor Lowenfeld's work at the Hampton Institute. Of key importance were June King McFee's presentation of her doctoral dissertation to the Seminar in Art Education for Research and Curriculum Development held at The Pennsylvania State University in 1965 and the first edition of her book *Preparation for Art* (1961). Voices of nonwhite art educators also began to be heard with such publications as *Art and Ethnics* by Eugene Grigsby in 1977.

McFee (1992, 1998) notes that questions about cultural and social class diversity were asked in the fifties and sixties. Some educators hoped that by bringing the folk arts of American Indians, African Americans, Eskimos, Hispanics, and some Asians into the classroom all students would see and appreciate these contributors to American art. A resurgence of ethnic group history and art inquiry began in the 1960s, with a concern that Black art and culture was being ignored in mainstream education. This concern led a few Black art educators—Gene Grigsby, James Smith, Howard Lewis, and Grace Hampton—to petition NAEA for a committee to address problems of minority teachers and students. The NAEA Committee on Minority Concerns was formed in 1971. *Art*,

*Culture, and Ethnicity* edited by Bernard Young (1990), includes several members of this committee with case studies and research of art among minority children, studies of ethnic arts, and a chronological review of journal articles on minority concerns. Multicultural art education began to receive much more attention beginning in the 1980s as a large wave of immigration of peoples from all over the world changed the demographics of America.

#### *Trends of the 1960s and 1970s*

In the sixties research involving multicultural art education was mainly focused on a concern for “economically deprived children in our schools” (McFee, 1992, 1998). Schumaker (1990) notes the “oblique titles such as the difficult school, the disadvantaged, social change, and competency education were used in the 1960s to indicate minority education (Barclay series, 1968, 1969)” (p. 269). In 1960 73% of the African American population were urban dwellers, a vast contrast to the 90% that lived in the rural south in 1900. Therefore, many Blacks among the new urban population were not prepared for the complexities of this urban life. Along with the increase of the American population entering the workplace and the technology advances of industry of the 1960s, the role of education was linked even more strongly to the potential economic mobility of minority groups in America (McFee, 1965, 1998).

Grigsby (1977) cites some conferences and seminars during the 1960s and early 1970s that reported on research in multicultural art education. These included:

- *The Seminar on Elementary and Secondary Art Education* convened by Howard Conant at New York University;

- *The Role of the Arts in Meeting the Social and Educational Needs of the Disadvantaged* conference, initiated by Hanna T. Rose and held at the Brooklyn Museum;
- *The Arts and the Black Revolution*, reported in *Arts in Society*, Summer/Fall 1968;
- CONFABA a *Conference on the Functional Aspects of Black Art*, organized by Jeff Donaldson at Northwestern University, 1970; and
- The Black Academy of Arts and Letters conference, *To Assess the State of Black Arts and Letters in the United States*, held in 1972 in Chicago. (p. 33)

Along with important sessions of the NAEA national and regional conferences these conferences and seminars addressed the imperative need of improving the quality of teaching art through improved communication with people of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

The keynote speaker at the 1972 NAEA Conference, Pacific Regional, with the theme “Celebrations of Peoples,” was Dr. Marcus Foster, superintendent of Oakland Public Schools at the time. He spoke of how important of a role art activities played in changing the attitudes of students at Gratz High School in Philadelphia. Dr. Foster had been the first Black principal of the mostly White staff in a school that had only eighteen graduates his first year. At the end of his second year the dropout rate was cut in half, and 168 students graduated with 128 accepted into college. The full story was told in his book, *Making Schools Work* (1971). He stressed the need for change in the attitudes of teachers and the need for role models for youth. In his book, Foster wrote:

Students will learn of the contributions of Negroes to art and music.... They will discover that culture is a tapestry made up of black threads, white threads, yellow threads, and other colors, all woven together. Our task will be to put the black threads back where they belong in the tapestry because when one leaves out the major contributions of any part of mankind, one distorts the entire pattern of culture. (Grigsby, 1977, p. 25)

Research studies addressing issues of teaching the culturally different had doubled in the 1970s, yet there were few examples of the depth and magnitude documented by Dr. Foster. Most studies were isolated and confined to a single classroom; carried on outside the regular school; and/or conducted in short periods of time in clinically isolated situations (Grigsby 1977).

Some examples of studies focusing on the characteristics of disadvantaged students and experimental programs that were designed to help them achieve include the studies of Silverman, Hoepfner, and Henricks (1969) in Los Angeles and Corwin (1975-76) in New York City. Churchill (1971) and Silverman (1984) reported teaching experiences with inner-city adolescents and, a bit later, Degge (1976), Johnson (1985), and Stokrocki (1987) reported participant observation studies that dealt with teachers of preadolescents (Stokrocki, 1990, p. 201).

Stokrocki's (1990) study, "A Portrait of a Black Art Teacher of Preadolescents in the Inner City: A Qualitative Description," was purposed to "describe, examine, and interpret, through participant observation, the characteristics of an effective minority art teacher of preadolescents in the inner city" (p. 201). The researcher observed the class one day a week for half of the school year. The teacher's instructional behaviors were

documented and comparative analysis was used to search for conceptual themes of effective instruction. The findings of this study suggested “the primary goals of art teaching are to relate art to students’ everyday life and heritage and to improve their confidence and comprehension” (p. 216).

Though published later than the 1970s, Twiggs (1990) addressed this issue of teaching art to disadvantaged students in his paper, “Teaching Art to Disadvantaged Black Students: Strategies for a Learning Style.” Twiggs’ intentions were to explore to some extent “the plight of Black disadvantaged students, investigate their learning styles, and offer some suggestions as to how art teachers can perform more effectively in the classroom” (p. 3). He believed “art by its very nature, offers a unique opportunity to reach these students in a special way and even serve as an example for teachers in other disciplines” (p. 1). Twiggs suggests that teachers (White and non-White) tend to have negative expectations and stereotypical thinking, which can set off aggressive counter-behavior by students. He believed the most important quality to be achieved by the teacher and student is mutual respect. If art is to be taught so that it becomes a “humanistic endeavor, an extension of the student’s life experiences, teachers must become genuinely interested in what their students care about” (p. 8). The art experience should be one of posing questions; providing time for careful, deliberate learning styles; and not overly structured.

McFee (1965, 1998) summarized multicultural implications for art education into four directives. The first directive challenged art educators to study the function of art in societies “other than our own” in order to better understand the way art forms presently operate in people’s lives, thus providing a sense of continuity and belonging to a

community. Extensive study needed to be made in the differences in values and attitudes toward art held by the various economic classes within an ethnic culture to relate art to what already had meaning or value to them. Secondly, McFee posed questions about what we are teaching minority students about art. "Are we helping children of these various groups preserve and develop symbols that help them preserve their cultural continuity, to identify and communicate with others in their same culture? Are we able to help them retain and respect their own culture at the same time that we give them the choice of accepting and appreciating all the visual arts?" (p. 8). The third directive related to developing skills in art criticism that provided opportunities for students to acquire aesthetic sensitivity and discernment for further improvement of the environment. And the final directive explained the need to look at cultures "far removed from our own to gain perspective for looking with more discrimination at the functions of art in our culture" (pp. 8-9).

In the 1960s, the meanings of "culture" and "art" began to be expanded and explored. In American culture there exists a "core culture," meaning values and beliefs shared to some degree by a majority of Americans. Different regional, ethnic, and religious groups within the whole, referred to as "subcultures" also exist. The subcultures may share the core culture in part, but have a different nucleus of values, beliefs and ways of behaving that set them apart. Within a single classroom there may be students who represent a wide variety of subcultures. "Though some people assume that art is a universal language, there are differences in symbolic meaning and style that do not communicate the same things to people who do not understand the culture in which the art was produced" (McFee, 1970, 1998, p. 99). McFee stresses that



multicultural art education must include study in the differences in values and attitudes toward art held by the core and sub-cultures in American and a look at foreign cultures to gain critical perspectives at the functions of art in our culture. Within the cultural contexts, such as the values and attitudes toward art and the functions of art, we begin to better understand and appreciate art multi-culturally.

An important trend in the field of multicultural art education was studies to increase understanding of the cultural factors that influence aspects of aesthetics, such as perception and values. "As educators in the arts we are concerned with how people develop aesthetic awareness, how their past experience affects how they experience works of art" (McFee, 1978, 1998, p. 26). Research conducted by Dennis (1960) provides an example of research that examined the differences in the ways people perceive as a result of their cultural experience. He found that scores on the Draw-A-Man test declined in children (grades 1-6) of cultural groups whose religious beliefs found the making of the human figure unacceptable, as compared to children who were more exposed to images of people. In a later study Dennis (1966) found children who grew up in an industrial, commercial environment scored higher on the Draw-A-Man test than those in rural, natural environments (McFee, 1978, 1998).

Research was conducted to determine when cultural differences begin to influence drawings made by children. Some researchers supported the child study behavioristic psychologists that analyzed children's drawings with a focus on the representationality and formal qualities that were thought to illustrate a natural, stage-by-age model. It was a perspective that presented the stages of development in drawing of young children as consistent throughout different cultures and the developmental

stages in drawing as being more closely connected to biological factors, somewhat predetermined in the same way as physical growth. Brittain (1990) cited such researchers as Luquet (1927); Lansing (1969); Morley (1975); Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1982; Leeds et al. (1983); and Brittain (1985).

A different concept of development began to be studied seriously by psychologists in the 1960s. The focus shifted from traditional behavioristic research to cognitive psychology, concerned with complex performances and learning processes. This model suggests that age may not be the most important factor in development. Many aspects of drawing are believed to be connected to culture and socialization. Researchers such as Wilson and Wilson (1977) found forms of children's drawing development to vary in many extents cross-culturally and historically (Freedman, 1997). The Harvard Project Zero, founded at the Harvard Graduate School of Education in 1967 by the philosopher Nelson Goodman, focused on the arts as cognitive processes of constructing and comprehending understanding. The focus on the cognitive processes involved in the constructing and comprehension of art directed attention to ways children's cultural worldviews inform or influence their art and ways their art impacts cultural worldviews (Davis, 1997).

In the 1960s and 1970s considerable research was done in the area of visual perception among people from different cultural backgrounds. For example, studies, including Miller (1973) and Turnbull (1962), showed the ability to see cues of spatial depth in photographs or drawings varied among cultural groups. This ability appeared to be affected by a peoples' opportunity to view two-dimensional depictions of depth perception. Dawson (1967) found that strict punitive and conforming cultures, and those

with varying child-rearing practices responded to illusions of spatial depth differently. Deregowski and Serpell (1971) found that the recognition of objects in pictures is dependant on the amount of experience the person had in looking at pictures as well as the familiarity with the subject (McFee, 1978, 1998).

Other studies examined the effects of culture on cognitive style and aesthetic approaches portrayed through art. Bruner (1966) and McFee & Degge (1977) noted how some people depend more on visualizing and image-making abilities to learn and communicate, and others more on conceptualizing and verbalizing abilities to learn and communicate. Black aesthetics has been a topic of debate in the field of art education examining differences in aesthetic perceptions. Authors and researchers in this area include DePillars (1976), Fuller (1971), Gaither (1972), Karenga (1971), Neperud & Jenkins (1982), and Neperud, Serlin, & Jenkins (1986). Though there remains discussion about the existence of a distinct Black aesthetic, evidence does suggest that most ethnic groups possess aesthetic values that are central to their culture (Franklin & Stuhr, 1990). Berlyne (1972) and Eysenck and Iwawaki (1975) are among the researchers who sought to identify what part, if any, of the aesthetic experience is shared by all peoples (McFee, 1978, 1998).

Some of the conclusions made by McFee (1978, 1998) in response to the studies mentioned in the previous paragraph examining how culture affects cognitive style and aesthetic approaches portrayed through art are:

Any given aesthetic experience has cultural factors, personality or readiness factors and it takes place in a given context which can change it.... To help children and young people learn to understand other people's art we have to

expose them to far more than the art object or event itself. They need a rich understanding of all the cultural factors that help the artist give it form. Perhaps this deeper understanding of each other's aesthetic experience in evaluating and responding to art will give us greater insights and understandings of peoples around the world. (pp. 37, 40).

These studies lay the foundation for including cultural factors such as religion, environment, past experiences, and ethnic identity to the teaching, study, and understanding of art.

Hart (1991) cites other art educators that have studied non-Western art systems and aesthetic approaches. These include: Collins & Sandell (1984); Congdon (1987, 1989); Gardner (1987); Lowry & Wolf (1988); and White & Hart (1990). Hart's paper, "Aesthetic Pluralism and Multicultural Art Education," addressed the limitations of a Western aesthetic system when applied to non-Western art systems. Hart identified four key Western characteristics traditionally used to define aesthetics: "individuality, originality, permanence, and form" (p. 146) and found that these characteristics are non applicable "to all art in the world" (p. 147). We must free ourselves from "the grip of a single aesthetic system" and expand our definitions of art and the artist (p. 157). Hart gives further support of previous scholars' emphasis on a multicultural art education that includes critical inquiry into the values and attitudes toward art and the functions of art and the artist within and across cultures.

Two important and influential books written in the 1970s that addressed multicultural curriculums in the visual arts are *Art and Ethnics* (1977) by J. Eugene Grigsby, Jr. and *Art, Culture, and Environment: A Catalyst for Teaching* (1977) by June

King McFee and Rogena M. Degge. One purpose of *Art and Ethnics* was to highlight and provide resources with more information on the neglected art of the Afro-American, American Indian, and the Spanish-speaking American artists. The remaining chapters began to address the needs of the art teacher to understand the ethnic and cultural differences between peoples, the history of immigration in America, and the influences of religion and protest on art. McFee & Degge devote a unit to “Exploring the Cultural Meaning of Art,” concentrating on the diverse meanings and functions of art in the lives of people from different cultural groups. *Art, Culture, and Environment: A Catalyst for Teaching* (1977) concludes with specific activities for all age groups to inquire about the diverse roles of art, what art communicates, and different ways of responding to art.

Some earlier books on the Afro-American artist include *The Negro in Art* (1940) by Alain Locke, *Modern Negro Art* (1943), *American Negro Art* (1960) by Cedric Dover, *Black Artists on Art* (1971), *17 Black Artists* (1971) by Elton Fax, *Afro-American Art and Craft* (1971) by Judith Wragg Chase; and *The Afro-American Artist* (1973) by Elsa Honig Fine. Exhibits and publications of Black artists increased between the 40s and 70s, but little attention had been given to them in school curricula texts.

Grigsby noted literature on the Mexican-American or Chicano artist was even scarcer than on the Black artist. The *Humble Way* (published first as an article in 1970) by Jacinto Quirarte traces the Mexican-American artists from the beginning of the century through 1946. In contrast, written material concerning the arts of the American Indian is “voluminous,” as the Indian was a subject of “curiosity to the invading settlers, hunters, cowboys, and farmers” (p. 17). Extensive ethnographic study of the Indian began in the nineteenth century and the publication of *Indian Art of the United States*

(1941) by Fredrick Douglas and Rene D'Harnoncourt emphasized the aesthetics.

Others include: *Native Arts of the Pacific Northwest* (1940) by Fredrick Douglas; *Art of the Northwest Coast* (1950) by R. Bruce Inverarity; *American Indian Sculpture* (1949); *Indian Art in America* (1960) by Fredrick Kockstader; and *American Indian Art* (1965) by Norman Feder. However, the "Indian artists have remained as invisible in the general texts for classroom use as the Afro-Americans and the Mexican-Americans" (p. 21).

A prime concern for a multicultural art curriculum is to stress the importance that art by ethnic artists must be included

for the same reasons as those of other artists. Such inclusion provides double benefit for the art teacher as they serve as models for youth to emulate. On the other hand, their exclusion serves to alienate members of the ethnic communities, particularly the youth. (Grigsby, p. 12)

As stressed by Grigsby, we as art educators must reflect on why we select certain works of art to include in school curriculums. Unless we include works of art from the various ethnic and social-economic cultures represented by the youth in our classroom, we certainly distort the "whole picture of art" and the role culture plays in its creation.

General multicultural scholars and educators agree with the need to diminish the "culturally hegemonic Eurocentric dominance in the disciplinary knowledge taught to students by including the contributions of culturally diverse groups" (Gay, 2001, p. 34). Gay (2001) lists Hilliard (1991/92), Banks (1990), Mitchell-Powell (1992), Nieto (1992), McElroy-Johnson (1993), Darder (1991), and Crichlow et al. (1990) suggesting that intellectual discrimination and oppression can be corrected by

giving voice to those groups and cultural traditions long silenced in U.S. society and schools. "Voice" is the power of affirmation, derived from seeing one's cultural heritage accurately represented in school programs, as well as the ability of individual students to express ideas and direct and shape their lives toward a productive fulfillment of psychological and social needs. (p. 35)

This idea is described by Hilliard (1991/92) in another way: "Ultimately, if the curriculum is centered in truth, it will be pluralistic, for the simple fact is that human culture is the product of the struggle of all humanity, not the possession of a single racial or ethnic group" (Gay, 2001, p. 34).

Some of the specific curricular activities suggested in *Art, Culture, and Environment: A Catalyst for Teaching* begin by selecting certain designed objects from different countries and/or time periods and compare their designs and functions to gain ideas of how cultures at different times are both alike and different. Students will begin to learn to relate the design of the object to its cultural meaning, its social use and meaning, and to its function. More advanced levels of activities suggested students study how the placing of objects communicates cultural values and attitudes. With other works of art, McFee and Degge suggest comparing different examples of similar kinds of objects or subjects. In this way, beginning students can look for similarities and differences. Examples of a higher level of inquiry would include student research and reporting on each culture to look at the way art developed in that society and the next suggested level of inquiry was the investigation of the diversity of art within one cultural group.

### *Trends of the 1980s*

A review of multicultural art education literature in the 1980s pointed to the issue of social meanings and functions of art. McFee (1986, 1998) explained art as “a mode of knowing as well as communicating” (p. 46). Chalmers (1996) suggested the need for art educators to make use of the work of sociologists, who tend to focus on the material, social conditions, and functions of art. We

cannot really understand art without including such perspectives or lenses from the great variety of individuals and groups across cultures who make art, preserve it, sell it, collect it, steal it, study it, use it, and enjoy it (p. 30).

Art is used to maintain, transmit and change culture. Lukacs (1971), Balfe & Wyszomirski (1985), and Dubin (1986) are key researchers into the role of art in cultural imperialism as well as in cultural change (Chalmers, 1996).

Dissanayake (1984), Lankford (1992), McFee & Degge (1980), McFee (1986, 1998), and Chalmers (1973, 1980, 1996) have been cited as identifying the varied functions of art (McFee, 1986, 1998; Chalmers, 1996). These authors acknowledge that we hold cultural ways of seeing, thinking, and valuing art of other cultures. An example of this is when Western societies put some forms of art in an art museum and some in a natural history museum. An important issue in multicultural art education addressed by the scholars previously named is to expand and reflect on the place or function of art in different cultures. Included in these lists are such functions as:

- Art reflects and echoes the natural world.
- Art is therapeutic in allowing for escape into a more desirable world.
- Art can temporarily allow unselfish personal expression.



- Art can train our perception of reality.
- Art can give order to the world. It differentiates and organizes.
- Art can give a sense of meaning, significance, or intensity to life.
- Art is a means of communion and communication.
- Art is valued for the pleasure it gives; its economic worth; its emotional impact; its social criticism; its political clout; its sentimental associations.
- Art can beautify, surprise, inspire, stimulate, inform and record.
- Art is used to make subjective values, emotions, and ideas more sensuously tangible.
- Art enhances.

Art educators are encouraged to embrace and implement a multicultural art curriculum based on these cross-cultural functions of art for human beings. The widespread functions of art turn students' attention to why cultures need art. The teacher takes the role as a leader and facilitator that focuses on assisting students in their investigation and understanding of commonalities in the functions and roles of art across cultures (Chalmers, 1996).

Congdon (1989) agrees that studying art objects for “understanding the functions and world views of the artists and appreciators is one way to engage in multi-cultural educational practices” (p. 177). She suggests another way is “to discover, develop, and utilize art criticism formats from varying cultural groups” (p.178). Art criticism formats have been established by “Western academically educated Caucasian art educators” such as Chapman (1978), Clements (1979), Feldman (1970, 1981), and Broudy (1972). Congdon proposes recognizing and building on art criticism formats and language

styles of the “Afro-American, African, Asian, and Native American, the rural farmer, and those who are experiencing disabilities, just to name a few” (p. 178). A strong effort needs to be made to talk about art in many ways, thus broadening the perspective for everyone.

Chanda (1992) in her paper, “Alternative Concepts and Terminologies for Teaching African Art,” described some of the negative terms often used in Western criticism of art from non-Western cultures. Due to a lack of understanding, the visual arts of non-Western people have been described as

abstract or conceptual in nature, decorative in character, functional in purpose, and created by non-artists of uncivilized nations. Negative terms, such as “primitive,” “idol,” “fetish,” are often used to describe the arts of these cultures....

As art educators we must not persist in using terms that perpetuate prejudiced attitudes toward works of art from non-Western cultures. (p. 56)

Congdon (1989) points out specific examples of differences in communicating meaning such as: the Navaho’s use of words “as a creative power”; an African use of imagery by analogy; the Hopi’s language having no reference to “time”; or the Creole term “*Gumbo ya ya*,” which means “Everybody talks at once.” These examples are cited because they offer valuable insights to begin analyzing or critiquing art of other cultures from diverse viewpoints. There is a need for art educators to expand art criticism formats. We must not use criticism in culturally negative, narrow, and stereotypical ways and we “must begin to listen to (rather than solely talk to or at) those from varying cultural groups who criticize art in their own way” (Congdon, 1989, p. 182). Chalmers (1996) cites Blau (1988) who also stressed “the lenses provided by cultural semiotics and linguistics are

relevant to the study of art, particularly in complex multicultural postmodern societies” (p. 31).

### The Prevailing Inadequacies of Multicultural Education

In the past decade in the field of art education much has been written on the advocacy level about multicultural issues; many multicultural curricular proposals have been suggested (Chalmers, 1996; Sabol, 2000; Sahasrabudne, 1992; Wasson, Stuhr, and Petrovich-Mwaniki, 1990); and an increase in descriptions of multicultural school and museum programs can be noted (Morris, 1998; Douglas, 2001; Branen & Congdon, 1994; Floyd, 2002; Marche, 1998). Yet, evidence infers the present reality is that art teachers continue to be uncertain about what content multicultural education should include. This uncertainty and confusion has resulted in what Sabol (2000) has articulated as a “clouded and fragmented multicultural education looking-glass that most often presents a blurred and distorted view of cultures that prevents multicultural education programs from achieving their goals” (p. 14). Questions concerning multicultural art education have included: Which of the diverse cultural heritages should be integrated into the curriculum? Who is qualified to teach the contents of these different heritages? What aspect of such diverse cultural heritage should be explored? And what kinds of teaching strategies should be used? (Chanda, 1992b; Adejumo, 2002).

Much research in the 1990s referred to the multicultural approaches in American education as described by Sleeter and Grant (1987) and Banks (1989) as they applied to multicultural art education. Banks (1989) identifies a first approach as: *The contributions approach*. This approach has been defined in art education as a way to

assimilate students of color into a mainstream art program with curricula additions that provide ethnic role models. Their cultural backgrounds are used as building blocks to better compete in the core culture. Special art courses may be offered for the students of color only or minor amendments are made to the curriculum based on what the dominant culture sees as important. The teacher may or may not address issues that artists from non-dominant cultures have faced (Zimmerman, 1990; Stuhr, 1991, 1994; Chanda, 1992b; Chalmers, 1992, 1996).

Banks (1989) specified a second approach as *the ethnic additive*. Chanda (1992b) explains, though this plan introduces concepts, themes, and perspectives that are relevant to different cultural groups, the basic structure of the curriculum is primarily from European-American perspectives. The emphasis is on the similarities of art forms and methods of making them. The *ethnic additive* approach often stresses cultural celebrations and emphasizes the visual symbols and accoutrements that go with these events. Differences are purposely glossed over or overlooked in search of harmony and good will, making it a rather shallow approach (Zimmerman, 1990; Stuhr, 1991, 1994; Chalmers, 1992).

Banks (1989) labels the *transformation approach* to be a higher level. Chanda (1992b), states that this strategy “would encourage a discussion of various perspectives and frames of reference as they relate to the education, knowledge base, and skills of the African, Hispanic, Asian, and native American peoples of the United States” (p. 15). The *transformation approach* involves reforming the art curriculum to reflect the national cultural and social diversity. Art teachers would present a lesson “democratically by relating it to members of many different groups through a selection of various social and

cultural exemplars and perspectives” (Stuhr, 1994). Zimmerman (1990) described the goals including “celebration of diversity, emphasis on respect for a variety of life styles and human rights, and equal distribution of power among members of all groups” (p. 19). Students are “expected to develop a critical perspective towards sociocultural art communities they study and to consider the role that power and knowledge have played in each instance” (Stuhr, 1994, p. 176).

*The social-action approach* as defined by Banks (1989) requires teachers and students to act as agents for social reconstruction to expose and challenge all types of oppression. Issues such as racism, sexism, and inequity are discussed and attended to as much as the cultural dimension of education (Zimmerman, 1990, p. 19). Students are encouraged to “engage in critical thinking and to participate in their own thinking process about change (Chanda, 1992b, p. 15). “Curriculum would be dependent on social, political, and economic conditions of the community, state, and nation rather than based on a sequential, mandated, uniform, national, or state curriculum.... An art program based on this approach would be a radical departure from what we know as art education” (Stuhr, 1994, p. 177).

Chanda (1992b) states: “We can be sure that art educators, for the most part, are still using the contributions and ethnic additive approaches in their teaching” (p. 15). Chalmers (1996) agrees, stating that his observations of classroom practice suggested that, except in a few instances, art educators have made commitments only to the lower-level approaches as identified by Banks (1989) and Sleeter and Grant (1987). Chalmers (2002) described a typical “so-called” multicultural art program in 1996 as: September – make African harvest mask; late October – make Mexican “Day of the

Dead” skeletons; January – make Li See Chinese (lucky money) envelopes; etc. And currently, “Six Years Later,” these programs still look largely the same (pp. 296-297).

In the 1990s, some twenty years since its inception, multicultural education more often takes the form of limited curricular add-ons and continues to be a far cry from its vision of wholly integrated educational reform. Labels such as the “food/festival/arts/quaint native garb” (Hanna, 1994, p. 74), the “sprinkle and stir” approach and “a kind of multicultural quick-fix” (Garber, 1995, p. 219) have been given to an implemented multicultural education that only adds on to the curriculum without truly representing culture. Garber notes:

Focusing on food and clothing in a multicultural unit turns attention to color and taste differences. If we go no further, we are making a superficial differentiation based on the look or taste of something. This is one of the most common errors I have observed in teaching diversity at the elementary level. (p. 221)

As suggested by Chanda (1992b), Chalmers (1996, 2002), Hanna (1994), and Garber (1995) multicultural art education has failed to rise from the nominal *contributions* and *ethnic additives approaches* to the more authentic, integrated curricular tactics advocated in the *transformation and social action approaches*.

#### The Problem: Seeking Higher Levels of Multicultural Art Education by Promoting Critical Cultural Consciousness in the Classroom

This review of the history of research of multicultural art education reveals advancements in the number of voices and players involved, our understanding of the influences culture plays in the field of art, and a refining of the goals and objectives of multicultural art education. The weaknesses appear to lie in the absence of research

that involves practicing teachers and utilize the classroom as a laboratory. Practicing teachers are not likely to incorporate new concepts unless they are consistent with their perceived reality and/or offer guidance for more effective performance of their tasks. Any new concepts or systems need to be user-friendly, not requiring extensive training. In other words, new concepts or systems will be most utilized by teachers if they believe it will help them better deal with problems or be more effective with issues they recognize, if it can be put into practice without extensive preparation, and if they have the resources to do so (Tyler, 1978; Burgess, 1984; Levine & Lezotte, 2001; Erickson, 2002).

I suggest advancements in the number of voices and players involved in multicultural art education affirm teachers' recognition of the importance of addressing multicultural issues. However, if teaching the diverse populations of our schools requires that teachers learn the vast amount of content necessary to adequately present each culture represented by the students within their classrooms, the requirement becomes too extensive and overwhelming. Therefore, the steps taken toward multicultural art education have generally not progressed from simplistic curricular additions.

As an art educator, I have pursued research that will influence practice. I believe we, essentially, must ask important questions as to how teachers will effectively and realistically incorporate theories into their classrooms. It is important to record how children and classrooms are involved and affected. Further emphasis of research that focuses on the classroom as a laboratory becomes necessary. Research that is far removed from the reality of day-to-day educational practices is less sensitive to the

issues that urgently need attention. Researchers need to understand the context of the school and the self-perceived role of the teachers, by addressing the lack of first-hand autobiographical accounts of qualitative research in educational settings. We will profit from accounts of how the researcher has gone about his/her work, highlighting the principles and processes involved in the actual conduct of the research (Tyler, 1978; Mills, 1959; Burgess, 1984; Trueba & Wright, 1992). Research in the classroom setting has potential of recording the practicality of the theoretical concepts for teachers and students as well as the specific procedures involved in conducting research in a classroom-laboratory that may benefit future educational researchers.

Authentic multicultural education implementation strategies are researched in the classroom setting, in partnership with practicing teachers, can be tested, evaluated and revised. The researcher stays more fully aware of the “real” issues of the day-to-day educational practice. The involvement of the teacher with the researcher can aid in new concepts being utilized by teachers, because s/he has been a witness and participant in the formation of the reform ideals.

The problem does not rest in lack of consensus on the importance of effectively educating all students from culturally diverse backgrounds. The problem rests in the reality that multicultural education (including art), in its common implementation from the 1970s until the present, has fallen short of authentically representing or verifying the diverse cultures of the students that occupy today's American classrooms (Zimmerman, 1990; Stuhr, 1991, 1994; Chanda, 1992b; Chalmers, 2002; Nieto, S., 1999; Eaton, 1991). Therefore, multicultural education has fallen short of meeting its democratic objectives of enabling students to develop all their talents and competencies necessary



for the challenges they will face throughout their lives (Roosevelt, 1998). Instead of empowering, the classroom practice of multicultural education is found often to be patronizing. Instead of valuing, it is found often to be trivializing and stereotyping.

My review of the history of multicultural art education led me to focus on a lack of understanding about the complex nature of *culture*, itself, as an important issue related to the problem of inadequate implementation of multicultural education. Each person is comprised of multiple cultural identities, which makes simplistic and bounded conceptions of culture that focus just on specific racial or ethnic groups inadequate in serving the needs of today's youth (Nieto, S., 1999; Eaton, 1991). Culture is "dynamic; multifaceted; embedded in context; influenced by social, economic, and political factors; created as socially constructed; learned; and dialectical.... (C)ulture is constantly evolving and the reason that it evolves is because human beings change it" (Nieto, 1999, pp. 49-50, 56).

In addition to the lack of understanding the complex, ever-changing nature of culture, is the problem that many, important and critical aspects of culture are not addressed constructively because they are typically left at an unconscious level. Every teacher and every student bring to the classroom a distinct combination of beliefs, values, and experiences influencing his/her behavior, perceptions, attitudes, and performance (Hernandez, 2001; Saravia-Shore & Arvizu, 1992). These aspects of culture are such an integral part of our human existence and often act as an invisible or unconscious script that directs our personal lives (Hollins, 1995). Implementation of multicultural education has been strongly focused on generalized explicit or overt cultural characteristics such as dress, speech, and holiday or ceremonial behaviors

(Garber, 1995; Hanna, 1994; Chanda, 1992b; Chalmers, 2002). This type of focus has been simplistic and does not analyze or begin to explain cultures in a meaningful or real-life manner (King, 2001; Banks, 1988). Generalized cultural curriculum content has not led students to an increased awareness or consciousness of the important elements of covert culture.

My research led me to use the classroom setting as my laboratory and focus on specific strategies designed to raise cultural consciousness. My focus became not the content of specific cultures, but over-riding characteristics or components of *culture* in a holistic sense. My focus was the search for ways of increasing students' (and teachers') abilities to analyze both the covert and overt elements of culture as a dynamic, on-going process. My vision became a multicultural art education that could introduce limited cultural content (because content will always be limited), yet with an increased conception of the nature of culture itself. Are there ways to introduce students to overt aspects of diverse cultures such as holidays and festivals, yet investigate and analyze under-riding covert cultural aspects such as the valuing and promotion of past traditional beliefs? By promoting critical cultural consciousness, my purpose is to promote greater appreciation and understanding of cross-cultural beliefs and ideals, thus nourishing an authentic valuing of one another.

The critical cultural consciousness arena encompassed my founding belief that by helping students view the world beyond their limited personal, racial, and ethnic perspectives, we will enrich them as human beings and enable them to live more productive and fulfilling lives. I believe that parents in our democratic society highly value academic achievement for their children because they view education as

providing the knowledge and ability necessary for living productive and fulfilling lives in our nation. As my path led me to a focus on critical cultural consciousness in the classroom-laboratory, it brought me full circle to the same goals as I had upon listening to Dr. Evans passionately speak about his collection of African American art—in search of ways to utilize art to expand cultural awareness and understanding to promote learning for all students—ways that could be practically utilized by practicing teachers in today’s classrooms.

In summary, in this study I wished to address some of the shortcomings or deficiencies in the present implementation of multicultural education by:

- examining some specific tools and methods that will expand teachers’ and students’ understanding of the complex, dynamic nature of art and culture;
- examining some specific tools and methods that aid in identifying and assessing covert aspects of culture, thus raising cultural conscious levels in the classroom;
- examining these tools and methods in the actual classroom setting, thus providing a bridge from theory to practice.

#### Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to describe the implementation, structure, content and outcome of an art-centered unit developed for 5th grade students. This unit was designed to be an example/model of specific tools and procedures that teachers can use in the art and general classroom to promote critical cultural consciousness, which is the ability to analyze both the covert and overt elements of a culture with the purpose of developing a holistic viewpoint that values the cultural heritages of self and others.

The participants selected for this study were all the students in three 5th grade classes of an arts magnet school located in East Texas. The school includes students living within the geographic area and other students from around the district who specifically applied to the school because of its emphasis on fine arts. Generally, the school's student ethnic population is one-third of European, one-third of Mexican, and one-third of African descent, making it a suitable reflection of this school district's ethnic diversity. The administration and faculty were open to the implementation of an innovative art-centered curriculum and were willing to generously assist and cooperate with me to accomplish this project. The faculty involved in this study included the three 5th grade classroom teachers and one visual arts teacher, with approval and support from the school's principal and two instructional consultants.

The art-centered unit focused on three artists—Romare Bearden, Elizabeth Catlett and Charles White—under the theme “Respect and Homage.” The works of art were chosen from the Walter O. Evans Collection of African American Art for several important reasons. Primarily, the selections are powerful images exemplifying the curricular theme, “Respect and Homage,” and were created by American artists that have historically been undervalued and under-represented. In addition, the student participants had the opportunity to view the original artworks at the Tyler Museum of Art at the time of this research study, giving more weight and validity to the curriculum content.

The Evans Collection includes landscapes from 1848 to modern paintings and sculptures as recent as 1997. Walter Evans began his collection of art and printed works in 1977. He met and became friends with many of the artists of which he

collected works such as Romare Bearded, Elizabeth Catlett, Jacob Lawrence, Gwendolyn Brooks, Ollie Harrington, and Richard Hunt. Among Evans' collection of printed works is a large group of books, pamphlets, letters, and other written material relating to Frederic Douglass and letters written by Toussaint L'Ouverture. For nearly a decade Linda Evans has coordinated the traveling exhibition that featured more than seventy works from the Evans Collection. Dr. Walter and Mrs. Linda Evans have established the Walter O. Evans Foundation for Art and Literature as a means of keeping their collection intact and to insure a perpetuation of appreciation for and education about African American art (Barnwell, 1999).

Of particular interest in my study was the framework and structure of the art-centered unit (see Appendix A) that was designed around two specific strategies utilized to promote critical cultural consciousness. One strategy in this unit was the identification of art-related or art-centered micro-cultures as an organizing framework for promoting critical, aesthetic inquiry of the selected works of art. *Artworld* is the term used in the recently published book, *Multicultural Artworlds: Enduring, Evolving, Overlapping Traditions*, edited by M. Erickson & B. Young (2002) to explain the theory and importance of including art-centered micro or subcultures (*artworlds*) in the study of multicultural artworks. In the book, Erickson described an *artworld* as "a culture maintained by people a significant portion of whose identity is drawn in some way from art" (p. 18). An instructional unit that examines *artworlds*, in this sense, is based on the belief that our understanding of art and how we experience it must take into account more than just its visual components. The key people, places, activities and ideas of an *artworld* provide "concrete entry points for the introduction of the distinctive activities

and ideas of a culture” (Erickson, 2002, p. 18). My unit includes the presentation and discussion of the key people, places, activities and ideas of each focused artist’s *artworld*, or art subculture. Examples of art subcultures in the 1940s and 1950s were institutions such as the Art Students League in New York or the People’s Graphic Workshop in Mexico. These sub-groups provided inspiration, support, and promotion of and for their artist members.

The inclusion of each artist’s *artworld* was an attempt to provide students with an understanding of specific art-centered subcultures that played important roles in the artist’s creation of his/her art. *Artworlds* provided new contexts for promoting critical, aesthetic inquiry of the selected works of art. Critical, aesthetic inquiry is based on an on-going wondering and questioning about art. It incorporates new contextual information (which *artworlds* provided), with an on-going reexamination of one’s views in light of the new information. The viewer understands that interpreting a work of art includes active dialogue with others so as to consider different voices for an intersubjective understanding (Parson, 2000; Cary, 1998; Mayer, 1999). Critical aesthetic inquiry, though specific to students’ acts of interpreting works of art, relates to an increased understanding of ways art-centered micro- or subcultures influence artists. Critical aesthetic inquiry becomes an important activity in my search for ways to use art and the interpretive process to promote critical cultural consciousness. As students learn about artists’ subculture memberships, it helps them connect art to culture in new ways. For example, students may be presented with specific examples of an artist’s membership in a political organization or an educational institution and how such

memberships influenced the content and style of his/her art. Students could transfer ways their personal, cultural memberships might influence their own artmaking.

Another important curricular strategy examined in this study was the utilization of personal and cultural value orientations for their role in developing cultural consciousness and critical aesthetic inquiry into works of art. Value orientations are identified by Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961) as complex principles that consist of worldwide cultural components. These principles are variable from culture to culture only in the ranking patterns of the component parts. Three assumptions are expressed in these value orientations.

First, it is assumed that *there is a limited number of common human problems for which all peoples at all times must find some solution....* The second assumption is that *while there is variability in solutions of all the problems, it is neither limitless nor random but is definitely variable within a range of possible solutions.* The third assumption ...is that all *alternatives of all solutions are present in all societies at all times but are differentially preferred.* (p. 10)

Value orientations are common general issues or questions that we as people and as cultures apply various ranking patterns.

I limited my study to the investigation of three of the core issues—the *time*, *activity*, and *relational* orientations. The *time* orientation indicates a personal or cultural tendency to rank an emphasis on 1) preserving the past, 2) living within a time-less present, or 3) living with anticipation of a better future. The *activity* orientation represents a personal or cultural ranking on the acceptable ways of going about daily

events. One may rank a varying emphasis on 1) spontaneous, impulsive, 2) contained, self-disciplined, or 3) perceived, measurable types of daily activity. The *relational* orientation refers to a personal or cultural ranking on the most optimum type of relationships or dependencies one should seek to maintain. A varying emphasis may be placed on 1) seeking independence or autonomy, 2) contributing as a member of a supporting, care-taking group of peers, or 3) upholding a social order system that gives authority to specific members. The theories of value orientations and *artworlds* (art-subcultures) are expounded in chapter 2 of this paper.

The introduction and application of value orientations were important components of my curricular unit. I used a situational survey instrument (see Appendix E) to define the concepts and to identify students' personal value orientations. The situations in the survey provided specific examples of how value orientations, often unconsciously, function in our lives. This survey became an important reference point for future discussion and examination of the works of art. Students were prompted to utilize their understanding of cultural value orientations for active dialog and for reexamination of their previous interpretations. The identification of cultural value orientations was a tool for promoting critical aesthetic inquiry into works of art with the goal of developing increased cultural consciousness. The utilization of value orientations was chosen because value orientations often function at an unconscious level, thus their identifications act as agents of raising awareness or consciousness (Hollins, 1995).

The curricular unit (see Appendix A) included the pre- and post-activities surrounding the participating students' museum visit. After the museum visit, students



were introduced to the art-centered subcultures of which Bearden, White and Catlett were members. Examination of specific works of art, under the theme “Respect and Homage” followed, allowing students the opportunity to apply how the art-subcultures influenced each artist and how students’ new contextual information would affect their interpretations of the works of art. Students had opportunity to assess and discuss personal and cultural value orientations and transfer their understanding to interpretations of the works of art. Final lessons included interdisciplinary lessons with social studies and literature; the making of students’ own art created under the theme “Respect and Homage;” and the writing of student artist’s statements applying an understanding of art-subcultures and value orientations.

Three questions were examined in this study. They were:

1. In what ways do 5th grade students define *culture* and identify their *cultural value orientations*?
2. What observable and documented effects does the identification of art-subcultures (*artworlds*) and cultural value orientations have on students’ critical, aesthetic inquiry into works of art?
3. What observable and documented role does an art-centered curricular unit applying art-subcultures and cultural value orientations play in fostering students’ development of critical consciousness?

The research methods used in my investigation were qualitative. This study was written in a style that described the research design with its origins, organization and implementation. Triangulation was used to include different types of data from varying perspectives. The data included: (1) classroom observation collected through

audio/video taping and field notes of classroom discussions and activities; (2) documents of students' literary and visual art works and written survey accounts; and (3) informal interviews with students and casual feedback from teachers.

The implementation of the curricular unit developed for this study took place in the art and general classroom. Teachers were provided with the designed curricular unit and I sought and received feedback as to its classroom implementation. I was the primary teacher of the art-centered unit. However, the teachers played an active role by: inserting related information and responses; helping engage and involve students; offering support with classroom management; and providing casual reports of their observations. An independent assistant was trained and utilized for student interviews at the latter part of the study. My field research was conducted at varying times throughout the spring semester (January-May). I began teaching in the art classroom with increased concentration the final month of implementation in the general classroom as well.

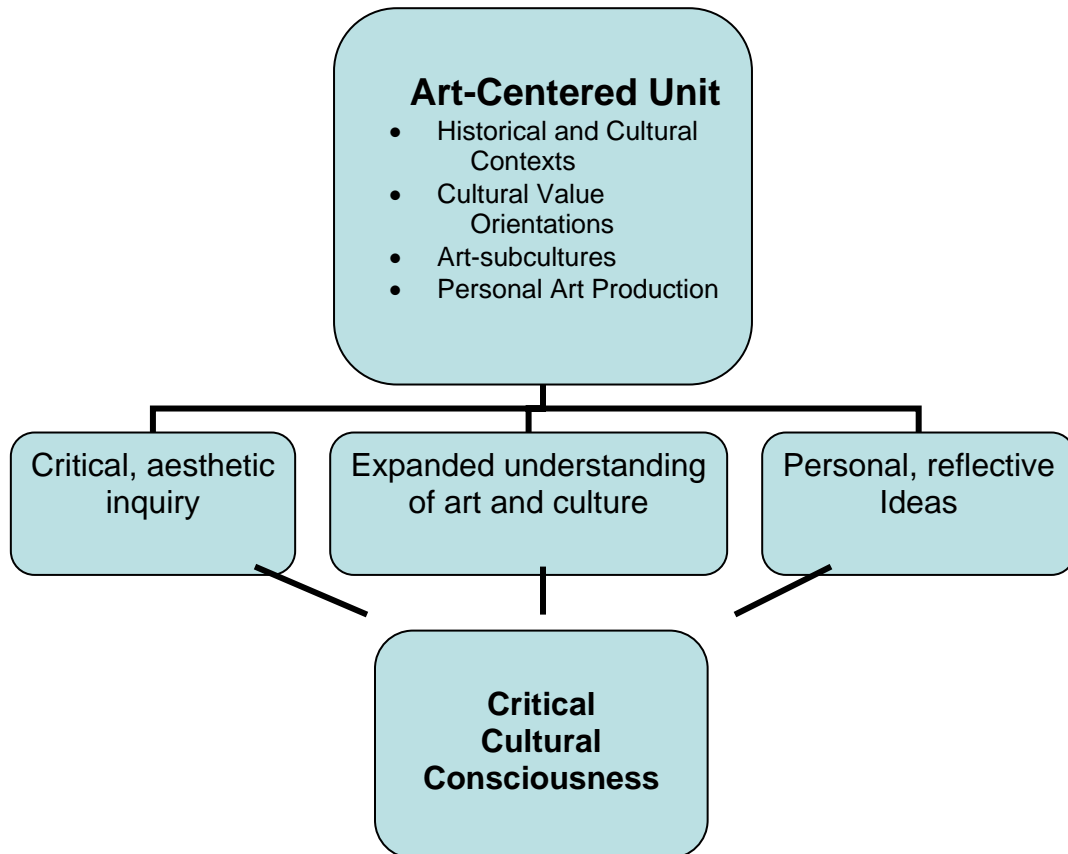
This study was not designed to provide specific curricular content to be utilized by teachers. It represents a step toward providing teachers with some specific examples of tools, such as curricular structure and framework, student surveys, inquiry approaches, curricular objectives, and class activities, to foster students' development of critical cultural consciousness. By examining the implementation and outcome of a model, art-centered unit within the actual classroom setting, my desire is for these tools to be relevant and applicable for practicing teachers and museum educators, thus offering additional implications for pre-service and in-service preparation of all educators

of multicultural populations. As Darling-Hammond, Wise, and Klein (Melnick & Zeichner, 1998) explain:

If all children are to be effectively taught, teachers must be prepared to address the substantial diversity in experiences children bring with them to school—the wide range of languages, cultures, exceptionalities, learning styles, talents, and intelligences that in turn requires an equally rich and varied repertoire of teaching strategies (p. 88).

May this study be as a catalyst to the increase of practicing teachers' repertoire of rich and varied teaching strategies that effectively address the complex diversity of their students.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



The art-centered unit utilizes teaching methods and activities that present historical and cultural contexts, cultural value orientations, art-subcultures, and personal art production in connection with specific works of art. These methods and activities are designed to foster critical aesthetic inquiry, expanded understanding of art and culture, and personal, reflected ideas from the participating students—each a vital component of critical cultural consciousness.

## Definition of Terms

The following list of terms and concepts are used throughout this paper. Understanding their meaning in the context of this study will add clarity to the discussions and findings reported.

1. *Multicultural Education*: Multicultural education is used to in this paper to describe any educational endeavor that attempts to address the diversity of the student population.
2. *Culture*: Culture is constantly changing because it is influenced by factors that are dynamic in nature. Some of the factors that influence culture include the social, economic, religious, and political. *Culture*, in this sense, is what guides how people act, think and feel. People are the authors of culture, as each interact and learn from one another. Culture, then, is a creative process involving behaviors, values, and substance shared by people as they seek to give meaning and significance to their lives. There can be no pure and simple culture, in that culture is always multifaceted and complex (Nieto, 1999; Trueba & Wright, 1992).
3. *Consciousness*: Consciousness as used in this paper, refers to the thoughts and feelings of which one is actually aware or has knowledge (Pekala, 1991). This becomes an important issue when examining culture, because culture is such an integral part of our human existence, it is often an invisible or unconscious script that directs our personal lives (Hollins, 1995). If we seek to raise our conscious levels, it becomes a meta-cognitive process of deliberately examining and bringing to our attention elements that affect our thoughts, feelings and actions, but have here-to not been identified or understood. "It is hypothesized that in a given context, it is possible for individuals to

consciously invoke techniques for being aware of being aware” (Thornton II and McEntee, 1995, p. 254).

4. *Critical Cultural Consciousness*: Critical cultural consciousness is the ability to analyze both the covert and overt elements of one’s culture with the purpose of developing a healthy, cultural identity. It is a holistic viewpoint that affirms and understands the multi-faceted nature of the cultural heritages of self and others. (Kirkland, 2002; Nieto, 1999; Trueba & Wright,1992; Pekala,1991).

5. *Values*: Values are principles or ideals to which members of a society attach a high worth or regard. Individuals adopt their values through socialization, or within the context of human interaction. “Values are one of the most important elements of cultures and microcultures that distinguish one group from another” (Banks, 1988, p. 75).

6. *Value orientations*: Value orientations are identified by Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck (1961) as complex principles that consist of world-wide cultural components. These principles are variable from culture to culture only in the ranking patterns of the component parts. In other words, *values* are the results of the variability of solutions to the common human questions identified through the *value orientations*.

7. *Art-subcultures or Artworlds*: *Artworld* is a term used in the recently published book, *Multicultural Artworlds: Enduring, Evolving, Overlapping Traditions*, edited by M. Erickson & B. Young (2002). In the book, Erickson describes an *artworld* as a subculture membership and environment identified with art and artists. *Artworlds* include the key people, places, activities and ideas of an art-centered or art-related subculture of which artists are members.

8. *Critical, aesthetic inquiry*: Critical, aesthetic inquiry is based on an on-going wondering and questioning about art. The viewer's interpretations are the result of an on-going reexamination of one's views in light of new contextual information and active dialogue with others (Parson, 2000; Cary, 1998; Mayer, 1999).

#### Limitations

A major limitation of this study was potential researcher bias. I was the designer and teacher of the curriculum unit that was the focus of this study. This offered the potential of my overlooking some valuable data and insights because of my intimate involvement in the research. I may have occasionally sought to actively address the effects related to the research questions in ways contrary to a more conventional role of the researcher who solely probes and records the participants' ideas and responses on the issues.

A second limitation was the relatively short length of the study. If it had been longer and the study included more lessons, perhaps the participants would have exhibited more evidence of development in the areas of critical aesthetic judgments and critical cultural consciousness. A much longer study would also be useful to assess the long-term effects and sustainability of the progress that did occur. This study could be expanded to include further examinations of ways cultural value orientations, artworlds, and functions of art translate into other academic studies, other art units, and other affiliations in school and the community.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF RELATED THEORY AND SCHOLARSHIP

In this chapter I will present a review of research scholarship to define, expand, and justify the theoretical basis for this study. The fundamental basis for this study is the on-going search for ways to advance the learning of the diverse student population in America today. This study addresses specific curricular methods of removing narrow notions of culture and of art, thus opening practical avenues for critical multicultural dialogue and understanding. Critical multicultural dialog and understanding are necessary as one seeks to analyze both the covert and overt elements of culture as a multi-faceted and dynamic process. This is an ongoing dialogue and debate that must be ultimately rooted in a conscious valuing of every individual human being, or there is nothing for the debate to be about (Banks, 1988; Trueba & Wright, 1992; Radnor, 2001; Cross, 2000). Critical cultural consciousness is the term used in this study to describe this process.

#### Art and Culture

A key premise of this study is the assumption that higher levels of multicultural art education have not been reached because of a narrow definition and understanding of the complex and broad nature of both culture and art. Art and culture are inseparable in that cultural influences guide expression in art, and art records and influences culture. In some cases the artistic record is the only historical evidence of a culture's existence. The arts, as a universal human phenomenon and means of communication, embody and chronicle the cultural, aesthetic, and social development of the world's people. As a tangible expression of human creativity, the arts reflect humankind's perceptions of



his/her world. Art has been described as essential to both “well-being” and “human survival.” And it has the capacity to reflect the heart of the thinking, feeling and wanting of our fellow human beings (Sabol, 2000; Remer, 1982; Grant, 1992; Morris, 1998; Stout, 1997). Wolff (1981) holds that “many people are involved in the production of any work of art, that sociological and ideological factors determine or affect the artist’s work, and that audiences and ‘readers’ are all active participants in creating the finished product” (p. 30). Dewey (1934) singles out the arts as unrestrained revelation: “In the end, works of art are the only media of complete and unhindered communication...in a world full of gulfs and walls that limit community of experience” (pp. 104-105).

Teachers have exhibited a lack of acknowledgment or understanding of the complexity of cultures. The focus has been on a few isolated, often superficial, aspects of an ethnic culture without making meaningful connections that challenge students to reinvestigate their beliefs and ways of thinking. We as educators have portrayed

so-called “traditional” cultures as if they are fixed in an unsullied time-warp in an imagined homeland.... It has seemed too messy to deal with new hybridized identities, forms, and cultural practices, so we have left them alone and instead reinterpreted, diluted, and exoticized selected cultures. (Chalmers, 2002, pp. 302-302)

I believe teachers lack understanding of how culture and art are related. In general, educators view culture as “fixed” and that critical, reflective investigation of cultural issues is not a vital part of educational training or practice.

The misguidance of teachers as to the nature of multicultural education is evident in the art education field. Teachers are anxiously focused on what content to present as

if they are the sole conveyors of all information. It seems educators are far too ready to search for some ready-made, self-contained curricular unit, instead of participating in a fluid, evolving inquiry into the arts of diverse cultures from the perspectives of their diverse student populations. Multicultural competence is more than adding on to the curriculum a conglomeration of superficial aspects of cultural life such as dance, dress, hairstyles, or holiday celebrations (King, 2001). According to Banks (1988):

When educators add ethnic heroes and bits and pieces of ethnic content to the curriculum, the assumption is made that ethnic heroes and content are not integral parts of the mainstream U.S. experience. Consequently, it is also assumed that it is sufficient to add special units and festivals to teach about ethnic groups and their cultures.... This type of teaching about ethnic cultures often perpetuates misconceptions and stereotypes about ethnic cultures and leads well-meaning but misinformed teachers to believe they have integrated their curricula with ethnic content and helped their students better understand ethnic groups.... Superficial teaching about ethnic cultures may do more harm than good. (pp. 158-159)

Multicultural competence is more than adding on to the curriculum a static, diluted synopsis of a *culture* without making any connections that cause students to better understand how each person within a society affects and is influenced by others, thus contributing to the on-going definition and creation of culture. Art is created in a cultural environment of giving and taking, of influencing and of being influenced. Multiculturalism is not simplistic, isolated, or passive.

Studies reviewed by Mehan, Lintz, Okamata, & Wills (2001) recommend that teachers learn about the “details of the students’ lives in the particular” as opposed to trying to learn “the generalities of ethnic groups in the abstract” (p. 141). Teachers are recommended to focus on studying and learning from their own students’ dynamic culture. Students are much better served in being led to an increased consciousness and understanding of the varying aspects of each other’s cultures than with any attempt of the teacher at standardizing a culture with generalized, static data. Attempting to adequately encapsulate the essence a culture is impossible, and presenting only random, isolated illustrations of a culture often leads to stereotypes that actually impede learning. Teachers do not have the extent of knowledge, time, or ability required to appropriately present information about a variety of cultures. As the complexity in the diversity of American student populations increases, it becomes increasingly impossible to teach the content of each student’s culture for full appreciation or authentic representation (Adejumo, 2002). Cultures are always hybrids and are constantly evolving.

To address cultural diversity and art McFee and Degge (1977) expand the meaning of art to include all:

human-made things that are done *purposefully* with some attempt to enrich the message, or enhance the object or the structure; to affect a qualitative and content awareness in the viewer. A painting, a sculpture, and a photograph are art, so are a building, a body covering, and a designed tool. (p. 276)

These authors clarify the belief that art is a universal language, by pointing out that all art forms do contain basic elements and principles of design, but we can understand the

art of others only to the degree we can learn their culture. When observing a given work of art, we are limited by our understandings of the culture and role the artist plays in that culture. Yet, if we learn to go beyond just appreciating the art of others, we can begin to understand other people and to see how their art is an expression of their sense of reality. And as we look at other people's art in terms of their culture, we can get new insights into our own (McFee and Degge, 1977).

Saravia-Shore and Arvizu (1992), under the term "cross-cultural literacy," describe a type of ethnographic inquiry into culture that offers insights to be applied to the study of art. These authors advocate a comparative and holistic view of diversity that is "grounded in understanding human differences as well as universals, and that such an understanding be translated into behavior which supports respect for and among people and their many forms of interacting" (p. xvi).

Saravia-Shore and Arvizu (1992) explain that the hallmark of anthropology is ethnographic, cultural descriptive analysis. This approach can be applied to the design of an art curriculum to facilitate students' learning. Some of the characteristics of ethnographic, cultural descriptive analysis are:

- A mode of inquiry for an understanding of culture and any explanation of the underlying cultural dynamics of human action and interaction.
- A comparative perspective that enables the investigator to understand one group in the context of the total universe of human groups.
- A holistic orientation that studies a particular phenomenon by placing it in its total context so that interconnected influences and behaviors are more completely understood.

- The use of the notion of cultural relativity as a means of understanding, rather than prejudging, a group (pp. *xvi-xvii*).

Ethnographic inquiry into culture is a comparative and holistic view of diversity that seeks to recognize shared, universal cultural perspectives as the context for greater appreciation and understanding of human and cultural differences. The examination of the underlying cultural dynamics of human action and interaction involves inquiry into covert values and beliefs, aspects that have proven to be neglected in the prevalent practice of multicultural education.

In *Celebrating Pluralism* (1996), Chalmers directed curriculum to big themes, stressing the use of studio projects to encourage students to tell their own important stories, and noting the “functions” of art.

Students are asked to find similarities in “function” and to compare and contrast cross-and trans-cultural examples of art where the makers are, or have become, and where they themselves become ascribers of meaning, ascribers of status, catalysts of social change, enhancers and decorators, interpreters, magicians, mythmakers, propagandists, recorders of history, sociotherapists, storytellers, and teachers. (Chalmers, 2002, p. 297)

As student take on the roles of artists, they are able to connect to the shared, universal shared cultural functions of art as the context for greater appreciation and understanding cultural differences.

The review of scholarship established in this section began with my understanding that practicing teachers are in need of specific curricular tools that will shift the emphasis from presenting isolated information about selected, static cultures to

an emphasis of challenging students to make meaningful connections and reinvestigate their beliefs about the nature of *culture* itself. To address this need, I turned to studies and scholarship by Mehan, Lintz, Okamata, & Willis (2001), McFee and Degge (1977), Savarvia-Shore and Arvizu (1992), and Chalmers (1996, 2002). These scholars suggest the focus for teachers must become a critical examination of their students' own diverse and dynamic cultures. As art educators, we need to guide students in an examination of works of art to understand other people and how art is an expression of their sense of reality. We are encouraged to seek for ways to use art to gain new insights into our own cultures and the cultures of our students. An art curriculum used to facilitate such types of examination is anthropological in nature. An anthropological-based curriculum coincides with a curriculum that encourages students to take on the roles of artists to tell their own *cultural* stories, thus connecting cross-cultural functions of art.

When looking and responding to works of art, students compare and contrast diverse examples of art. Students' own stories and their own created works of art involve them in the making of meaning. They partake in the various functions of art and become players of the different roles of artists as a holistic orientation, so that multicultural beliefs and behaviors can be more personally understood. Other ethnographic concepts will be further explored and addressed next under the heading of *Artworlds*. Introducing the theory of *artworlds* or art-subcultures is a specific curricular tool that will provide the opportunity to incorporate other ethnographic characteristics, thus addressing the common misinformed definitions and understandings of the multifaceted nature of both culture and art.

## Artworlds

Erickson (2002) describes an *artworld* as an art-centered or art-related subculture. An instructional unit that examines *artworlds* is based on the belief that our understanding of art and how we experience it must take into account more than just its visual components. The key people, places, activities, and ideas shared by artists working and creating together can provide specific insights into some distinctive activities and ideas of a culture. Teachers can initiate this concept by pointing out that we, as individuals, identify with traditional cultures such as Native American, African American, European American, or Latina/o, and we also build important connections with other sub-groups or micro-groups within cultures because of more specific interests or experiences. Artworlds are examples of sub- or micro-cultures within larger, traditional cultures. Teachers could encourage students to consider the everyday cultures in which they participate, such as a skateboarding culture, a computer game culture, a trading cards collection culture, or even their school classroom culture. This understanding can then be applied to the artists presented in a curriculum unit. The artist is a member of a traditional culture and also of an art subculture or artworld. Understanding the artworlds that support and sustain an artist can provide key insights into the ideas and values of the cultures in which the art was made. In this format artworks become very effective resources for instruction about one's own culture and about the culture of others (Erickson, 2002).

An art curriculum that identifies and introduces the influences of many different artworlds within the creation of one work of art, effectively addresses aspects of the problem of the bounded, narrow representations of art and culture often used in the

classroom. The United States is made of many distinct, yet interrelated artworlds. They are diverse, evolving and overlapping artworlds such as mainstream museum artworlds, folk artworlds, commercial artworlds, and ceremonial artworlds. Further, the artworlds of the various ethnic groups, or traditional cultures, in the United States are diverse, evolving and overlapping artworlds.

For example, Sam Coronado, a key figure in the Chicano artworld of Austin, Texas, recently identified three distinct artworlds in which he works: commercial, fine art, and technical artworlds (Coronado, 2001). In addition his work draws imagery from the mass media and popular arts of both the United States and Mexico, as well as from the artworlds of Pre-Hispanic Mesoamerica. (Erickson, 2002, p. 18).

In their book *Multicultural Artworlds: Enduring, Evolving, and Overlapping Traditions* (2002), the editors, Mary Erickson and Bernard Young, structure the examination of artworlds around four questions:

- Who are the *people* judged to be important?
- What are the *places* where members meet to share?
- What are the essential *activities*?
- What are the important art *ideas*?

These questions act as entry points for study of the distinctive characteristics of multicultural artworlds. This type of curriculum structure has potential for broadening and refining students' understanding of art and culture by revealing the ever-evolving nature of both art and culture, with each overlapping and influencing the other. Within artworld contexts, students can better interpret the meanings of art and the role of art in



society and begin to realize the importance support systems play in the making and understanding of art.

### *Artworlds in Curriculum Unit*

The three artists selected for focus in my unit are Romare Bearden, Elizabeth Catlett and Charles White (see Appendix C). The works of art were chosen from the Walter O. Evans Collection of African American Art. The student participants had the opportunity to view the original artworks at the Tyler Museum of Art at the time of this research study. Community art museums are examples of *artworlds*, or centers where artists can exhibit and discuss their art. By viewing the artworks exhibited in their own community, students experience first-hand the importance of museums as places for examining and interpreting art and culture. Potentially, connections could be made that direct students to consider memberships in their community museums as their own personal art subcultures.

All three artists were members of the African American *artworld* beginning in the 1930s. The important art institutions where African American artists were trained during this time included the Art Students League in New York, attended by Bearden and White; the Arts Institute in Chicago, attended by White and Catlett; Howard University in Washington D.C. attended by Catlett; and the People's Graphic Workshop in Mexico, attended by White and Catlett.

All of these artists were members of other *artworlds*. For example, Romare Bearden's art subcultures included Paris in 1950, where he was influenced by the cubistic and collage styles of the Spanish artists, Picasso and Braque and the French artist, Matisse. He was a member of a subculture called, "Spiral," an association that

supported the work of African American artists during the civil rights movement of the 1960s.

Elizabeth Catlett was a member of the social realist movement *artworld*, where she studied under Grant Wood. Wood encouraged her to look to her people and pursue subjects she knew well for inspiration. While teaching at Hampton University in Virginia, Catlett was a member of the university's art faculty. At Hampton University the well-known art educator, Viktor Lowenfeld, encouraged Catlett to use her art to discuss social injustices and human dignity. Catlett became a Mexican citizen in 1962. Her art contains influences from different *artworlds* of America, Africa, and Mexico.

Charles White was also a member of the Hampton University faculty. In fact, he and Catlett were married at the time. White was a member of the historic muralists *artworld* during the 1930s and 1940s. His murals were most influenced by such artists as Jose Clemente Orozco and Diego Rivera, who were members of the Mexican muralist movement. When White shifted from large murals to drawing, he became interested and was influenced by a member of the German expressionist *artworld*, artist Kathe Kollwitz. The important art ideas expressed in the various art sub-cultures shared by these artists include: a deep respect for labor; the rich history and life of African Americans, including its complexity and beauty; a deep respect and concern for women of color; and the struggle for racial equality.

The *artworlds* or art subcultures of which the selected artists were members are introduced to the participating students after their museum visits, but early in the implementation of the unit. The method used is a dramatic reading (see Appendix C) followed by class discussion. References were then made to these subcultures and

other biographical information at later points during the unit. The curricular unit used in my study utilized *artworld* concepts because they coincide with much of Saravia-Shore and Arvizu's (1992) explanation of an ethnographic, cultural descriptive analysis approach, used for better understanding a culture and its underlying dynamics. A comparative perspective that helps students understand sub-cultural groups within the context of larger ones characterizes the ethnographic approach. *Artworlds* as an ethnographic approach fosters a holistic orientation that reveals the many interconnected influences and behaviors involved in the making of a work of art. Such an orientation can reinforce a notion of cultural relativity as a means of understanding, rather than prejudging, a culture or a work of art.

#### *Research Studies of Artworlds*

Erickson (2002b) identifies specific studies that have been made addressing how the concept of artworld contributes to one's understanding of art. These studies offer a theoretical basis for a curriculum that uses the concepts of artworlds. The first study was conducted by Parsons in 1987. He interviewed 300 individuals of various ages with various art backgrounds. He used the idea of artworld to help explain more advanced stages of art understanding. Parson identified five stages of growth in art aesthetic understanding. The later stages of aesthetic understanding are only reached with an education and history of encountering and thinking about works of art often and seriously. The concept of artworld plays a role only in the later stages of understanding art. Artworld concepts provided questioning strategies to better understand the participants' understanding on issues of cultural contexts and how it relates to works of art (Erickson, 2002b).

Another example of research utilizing the concepts of artworlds identified by Erickson (2002b) was Stokrocki (1994) who employed the idea of artworld to describe the art experiences of Navajo students living on the Navajo Reservation and attending public school there. “These students acquired knowledge and skills drawn from at least two different complex and evolving artworlds: the Navajo artworld and the mainstream European American artworld” (p. 33).

Erickson (2002b) notes that various members of a team of art teachers and researchers worked together for many years on a series of projects that finally evolved into a focused study on the concept of artworlds. The study involved three art teacher participants and 122 student participants from an intact seventh-grade art class, an eighth-grade art class, and two 4th grade classes. The design of the study was quasi-experimental with a written pre-test, an instructional intervention, and a written post-test. “This study suggests that with focused instruction, children as young as the 4th grade can increase their rudimentary understanding of their own artworlds” (p. 38). Using a Tukey HSD analysis of the students’ pre- and post-test scores it was revealed “that there was a significant improvement between the pre- and post-tests by both elementary and middle school students’ scores for all four artworld characteristics” (p. 38).

The curricular unit in my research study was designed with the shared belief that when “students are provided with some information about the artworld contexts within which diverse art ideas develop, they can begin to understand and appreciate the richness of multicultural art” (Erickson, 2002, p. 34). My study was conducted to further examine if and how works of art, studied through lenses of cultural value orientations

and *artworlds*, can become rich resources for greater understanding and appreciation of one's own culture and the culture of others.

### Cultural Consciousness Through Value Orientations

In addition to the lack of understanding the complex, ever-changing nature of culture, higher levels of multicultural art education have not been realized because many important and critical aspects of culture are not addressed constructively in that they are typically left at an unconscious level. As stated earlier, many covert elements of culture influence our lives, yet without our recognition or comprehension (Hollins, 1995). Multicultural education that only focuses on only the generalized explicit or overt cultural characteristics such as dress, speech, and holiday or ceremonial behaviors is inadequate. This type of curriculum content has not led students to an increased awareness or consciousness of the important elements of covert culture. The curriculum unit in my study introduced value orientations as a way to address the issue of critically examining some of the covert features of culture that customarily are only unconsciously transmitted through art and in the classroom. (See Appendix E for the particular situational exemplars that help clarify each value orientation addressed in this study.)

Addressing personal and group *value orientations* as they relate to the curricular content can offer teachers a powerful avenue or tool for developing students' cultural consciousness. The identification of teacher and students' value orientations can be a starting point from which to extend student learning. Value orientation identifications can contribute to a multicultural education that has potential for empowerment because this

pedagogy builds on each student's personal experience and cultural perspectives and finds ways to use them in the classroom (Nieto, 1999).

I will begin by making a distinction between the definition of *value* and the meaning of *value orientations* that will be considered in this paper. Banks (1988) defines values as "abstract, generalized principles of behavior to which members of a society attach a high worth or regard. Individuals acquire their values during socialization. Values are one of the most important elements of cultures and microcultures that distinguish one group from another" (p. 75). Most all aspects of the social life of a people are expressions, to some degree, of their basic cultural values. Many writers have emphasized the unconscious nature of basic values, describing them as "unconscious canons" and "unconscious systems of meaning" (Kluckhohn & Stodtbeck, 1961, p. 5).

Value orientations are identified by Kluckhohn & Stodtbeck (1961) as complex principles that consist of universal cultural components. These principles are variable from culture to culture only in the ranking patterns of the component parts. Three assumptions are expressed in these value orientations. The first assumption is that there exists a limited number of common human problems or choices in which to deal with or appropriate in one's life. The second assumption is that there exists a range of possible variations of choices to these common human problems that is neither limitless nor random. Though each person in all societies may choose a different variation of the possible solutions, these variations fall within a definable range. Finally, the third assumption is that the variations of preferences to the choices or solutions are present

in all societies at all times. Personal and societal *values* are the results of the variability of solutions to the common questions identified in the *value orientations*.

The five universal problems or human questions singled out in the Kluckhohm and Strodtbeck model (1961, p. 11) are:

- (1) What is the character of innate human nature? (*human nature* orientation)
- (2) What is the relation of man to nature (and supernature)? (*man-nature* orientation)
- (3) What is the temporal focus of human life? (*time* orientation)
- (4) What is the modality of human activity? (*activity* orientation)
- (5) What is the modality of man's relationship to other men? (*relational* orientation)

A sixth common human problem that was identified, but "the ranges of variability in it have not been worked out sufficiently well to be included," is man's conception of *space* and his place in it (p. 10).

### *Time Orientation*

Though all are crucial orientations, I will limit this study to the investigation of three of these core dimensions, the *time*, *activity*, and *relational* orientations, as applicable to the multicultural classroom. According to Kluckhohm and Strodtbeck (1961), the *time* value-oriented schema is represented by the three divisions: (1) a timeless, traditionless, future-ignoring Present; (2) a realizable Future; and (3) the maintenance or restoration of the traditions of the Past. All societies have conceptions of the Past, the Present, and Future, but they have rank-order emphasis of their preferential ordering. Examples of the time orientation include the Spanish-Americans as a people who "place the Present *time* alternative in first order position. They pay little attention to what has happened in the Past and regard the Future as both vague and

unpredictable” (p. 14). Historical China was a society that gave first-order rank to the Past *time* orientation, with ancestor worship and a strong family tradition as expressions of this preference. England, with its domination by an aristocracy and traditionalism, was also cited as showing the Past preference. And Americans, “more strongly than most peoples of the world, place an emphasis upon the Future—a Future which is anticipated to be ‘bigger and better’” (p. 15).

If the mainstream American school’s culture and curriculum reflects primarily a Future *time* orientation, it becomes clear the cultural conflicts that can assuredly arise with students of cultures with varying orientations. If the educational process is solely based on delayed gratification and planning for future goals, many students may be left unmotivated. J.E. King (2001) notes literature suggests that African American cultural knowledge includes a mode of rationality that evolved out of the shared history of “resistance against the various effects of capitalism and racism” (p. 272). This African American rationality would not share the dominant society’s value-oriented, optimistic, anticipation of the Future to be “bigger and better.”

*Time* value-orientations can be insightful lenses for art criticism and cultural understanding. Congdon (1989) cites Chalmers (1971) as a long-time art educator who has spoken of art as a cultural communication and notes how folklorists and anthropologists study art as it relates to a particular group’s worldview. The *time* value orientation lens could offer enlightenment when studying art as it relates to a particular group’s orientation of time as to the dominance of Past, Present or Future orientation. Congdon (1989) provides cultural examples that could be analyzed through the *time* value orientation. Examples include: the Kachina sash symbolizing how Hopi Indians



perceive time and space; the Navajo belief of an eternal now, with no past or future references; and the Anglo language structure and world view look at time as one-dimensional, uniform and perpetually flowing. Multicultural art education practices could utilize value-orientations to develop appreciation systems that better incorporate beliefs and perceptions of the people who have created and lived with those artistic expressions. According to Congdon (1989):

Cultures other than those which ascribe to modernism to the degree found in the United States see art as more fully integrated with the social, cultural, and political purposes of their being. It is these world views and their varying notions of time, space, and the search for knowledge that need to be addressed (p. 177).

Utilizing the theory of *time* value-orientation is an effective, specified way to address, examine and gain understanding of varying worldviews.

#### *Activity Orientation*

Kluckhohm and Strodtbeck (1961) explain the *activity* orientation centers solely on man's mode of self-expression in *activity*. The three-way distinctions of the *activity* orientation are compared to Charles Morris' development of the "Dionysian," the "Apollonian," and the "Promethean" personality components. The "Dionysian" component is paralleled to the Being orientation, defined as a release and indulgence of existing desire. The Being orientation is a preference of choosing activities that satisfy one's immediately perceived needs. There is no specific ranking of a set standard or ordering of priorities. The Being orientation is a living-for-the-moment type of orientation. The preference of *activity* is one that is "a spontaneous expression of what is conceived to be 'given' in the human personality.... Mexican society illustrates this preference well

in its widely ramified patterning of *fiesta* activities” (p. 16). The “Apollonian” is similar to the Being-in-Becoming orientation, in which one is given to containment and control of desires by means of meditation and detachment. The paramount idea stressed in this orientation is the development of all aspects of the self as an integrated whole. The Being-in-Becoming orientation is exemplified in a careful and controlled balancing and regulating all aspects of one’s person, in the desire for emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental well being or health. Finally, the “Promethean” is paired with the Doing orientation. The Doing orientation has been characteristically the dominant one in American society, valuing the kind of *activity* that results in measurable standards conceived to be external to the acting individual.

In her book, *Multicultural Education: A Teacher’s Guide to Linking Context Process, and Content*, Hernandez (2001) referenced *A Guide to Culture in the Classroom* by M. Saville-Troike (1978). Some of the questions posed in this guide that relate to the *activity* value-orientation include:

- What behaviors are considered socially acceptable for students of different age and sex?
- How is the behavior of children traditionally controlled, to what extent, and in what domains? (p. 66)
- What is the purpose of education?
- What constitutes a positive response by a teacher to a student?
- What ranges of behaviors are considered “work” and what “play”?
- What kinds of work are prestigious and why? Why is work valued? (p. 68)
- What is the purpose of play?

- What forms of art and music are most highly valued? (p. 69)
- How is success defined?
- What significance does adherence to the traditional culture of the group have for the individual's potential achievement? (p. 70)

Obviously, one would answer these questions in varying ways dependent upon one's leaning toward a more Being, Being-in-Becoming or Doing *activity* value orientation. By identifying *activity* value orientations within the classroom setting, educators gain significant cultural insights into specific behaviors and are then better capable of addressing conflicts in constructive and impartial ways.

Cultures make judgments about art that are based on accepted practices and values within their groups. For example, Eskimos are "more interested in the artistic act than the product of the activity, the criticism focus should be on the process rather than the product" (Congdon, 1989, p. 178). This emphasis on the artistic act of expression in and of itself appears to more reflect the Being *activity* orientation. The Eskimo value-orientation might be compared to one Arkansas quilter who says she and her husband quilt because " 'it keeps us out of meanness' (Farb, 1975, p. 365)" or a Midwestern chain carver who says, " 'I'm whittling away at the problem' (Brommer, 1985, p. 95)" (Congdon, 1989, p. 178). Classroom discussion could explore how the Arkansas quilter and the Midwestern chain carver might exemplify a either Doing or a Being-in-Becoming *activity* value-orientation by defining their artistic activity as being important because it accomplishes a separate, more valued outcome, such as temperance or problem-solving.

### *Relational Orientation*

The third common human problem identified by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) is human's relationship to other humans. The three subdivisions of this orientation are the Individualistic, the Collateral, and the Lineal. When the Individualistic principle is dominant, the individual's goals have primacy over all others. Each individual's responsibility to the total society and his place in it are defined in terms of goals (and roles) which are structured as *autonomous*, in the sense of being independent of particular relational groupings.

A dominant Collateral orientation results in a primacy of the goals and welfare of the laterally extended, peer group. An example is the Navaho, whose "roles and goals which have primacy for him are those which are *representative* of his Collaterally extended household group" (p. 19). Another example is a study of Japanese students (Cross, 2000) who described knowledge about their roles, family and relationships as central to understanding them. "This is not viewed as superficial information or as prelude to real knowledge about the person; instead, these statements mark where the person belongs and therefore who the person is" (p. 166). Grace Lee Boogs, a scholar-activist in the Black community of Detroit, observed the school system's promotion of opportunist individualism over communal needs left a large majority of Black youth unable to see any relationship between education and their daily lives in the community (King, 2000), suggesting a Collateral *relational* value orientation, as well.

If the Lineal principle is dominant, the group goals have primacy with an emphasis on the importance of continuity through time. "*Continuity* of the group through time and *ordered positional succession* within the group are both crucial issues when

Lineality dominates the *relational* system” (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961, p. 19). The Lineal orientation adheres to a specific ranking of authority and power within a societal grouping. This hierarchy of power and authority is supported and maintained consistently. An example of the definite Lineality in the aristocracy of England was noted as having been maintained in the whole society until fairly recently (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961). In other words, the aristocracy of England was delegated to a position of power and authority in relation to other members of the society, with the other members of that society supporting such an arrangement.

Domination, as opposed to democratic liberation, has occurred in the United States when the Individualistic oriented, majority culture’s interests have prevailed over less powerful groups. J.E. King (2001) states:

Under conditions of domination, race and ethnic difference, for example, is negated and a single, normative “common culture” model based on individualism is emphasized. In this instance culture-centered knowledge can be identified with hegemony, if it induces the belief that the social interests of various groups are indivisible (e.g., isomorphic), whereas diverse communities of interests actually exist (Alinsky, 1971). (p. 271)

The Individualistic *relational* orientation has been ranked highest in the mainstream culture within American society. The Individualistic orientation values autonomy and independence as ideal relational goals. If an Individualistic *relational* orientation is upheld by negating any other cultural orientations that most certainly do exist, it serves as a form of domination. A prevailing culture with an Individualistic orientation that does not recognize or value subcultures that prefer community interdependency (Collateral

orientation) will be an agent of suppression. Domination and suppression are not the goals of education. Cultural value orientations identifications offer avenues to expose and, thus, eliminate the practices of schools enforcing only an Individualistic *relational* orientation.

The *relational* orientation can be investigated when studying works of art by seeking answers to such questions as how artists acquire identities in different societies, and the relation of artists to many different types of publics and patrons. Chalmers (1996) suggested comparing the context in which a new pole is commissioned, executed, and raised in an Alaskan First Nations community to the erection of a contemporary public sculpture in a large city. The *relational* orientation surfaces such questions as: Does the art endorse an Individualistic, Collateral, or Lineal orientation? For what purpose was it made? Who benefits? What messages are communicated? Who is the intended audience? Important questions are posed that reveal the cultural value orientations of students and the works of art under inquiry.

Though all are crucial orientations, I limited my study to the investigation of three of these core dimensions, the *time*, *activity*, and *relational* orientations, as applicable to the multicultural classroom. I sought methods for identification of these core dimensions and techniques that cause students to identify or pay attention to the value orientations that influence and direct their personal lives and the lives of others. The cultural value orientation survey was an instrument that used specific situations and choices within each situation that provide insights into the meaning of each value orientation and each student's personal orientation concerning the *time*, *relational* and *activity* dimensions . Such identification would increase teachers' and students' awareness or consciousness

of important and, more often, covert values that underlie their attitudes, actions, and beliefs.

The unconscious nature of cultural values and value orientations is a point of great importance in the multicultural classroom. When one set of cultural values are unconsciously established as normative models, it can significantly alienate and confuse students with different cultural values. Multicultural education, as expressed by Elsa Barkley Brown, is a pedagogical practice that includes not just analyzing or intellectualizing about a variety of experiences, but “coming to believe in the possibility of a variety of experiences, a variety of ways of understanding the world, a variety of frameworks of operation, without imposing consciously or unconsciously a notion of the norm” (Mohanty, 1994, p. 152). By identifying, discussing and examining cultural value orientations, students have opportunity to become aware or conscious of various combinations of systems or solutions in which peoples and cultures have constituted in their lives. Value orientations provide lenses for understanding, not for judging or standardizing.

J. E. King (2001) identifies the term *cultural knowledge* as referring to the “learned behaviors, beliefs, and ways of relating to people and the environment that members of a cultural group acquire through normal processes of enculturation” (p. 270). King points out that culture-centered knowledge (CCK) acts as an aid to hold a social framework together, describing school curricula as serving “to *legitimate* the dominant White middle-class normative cultural model” (p. 270). King contends for a conscious, culture-centered knowledge that makes “dyconsciousness” improbable. “Dyconsciousness” is defined as an uncritical habit of mind, which includes

perceptions, attitudes, assumptions, and beliefs. This form of thought, when left unchallenged, results in inequity and exploitation by accepting the existing order of things as given (J.E. King, 1991a, 2001). In other words, historically American schools have unconsciously and uncritically promoted a culture-centered knowledge that upheld the dominant White middle-class as the only normative cultural model. This is contrary to multiculturalism, which holds the idea that there is no one best way to be an American.

Subconscious aspects of culture must be brought to the conscious level before examination and reform can take place. Erickson (1997) notes that issues of culture “may be addressed by educators explicitly and within conscious awareness, or they may be addressed implicitly and outside conscious awareness. But at every moment in the conduct of educational practice, cultural issues and choices are at stake” (p. 34). Hernandez (2001) affirmed that teachers are often more conscious of explicit or overt culture such as dress and speech and less aware of values, attitudes, fears, and assumptions, the common elements of implicit or covert culture. If issues of covert culture are left as only an “uncritical habit of mind” with “the existing order of things as given” advanced levels of multicultural education will never be attained.

In counseling the culturally diverse, Sue and Sue (1999) declare one of the most useful frameworks for understanding differences among individuals and groups is the Kluckhohm and Strodtbeck model (1961). “It assumes that there exists a set of core dimensions (human questions) that are pertinent for all peoples of all cultures. Differences in value orientations can be ascertained by how we answer them” (p. 167).



My art-centered curricular unit uses methods for the identification of these core dimensions and techniques that cause students to identify or pay attention to the value orientations that influence and direct their personal lives and the lives of others. The methods used include a value orientation survey that gives students the opportunity to assess their personal value orientations (see Appendix E). Such identification would increase teachers' and students' awareness or consciousness of important and, more often, covert values that underlie their attitudes, actions, and beliefs. This situational survey is the key manner by which students understand the concepts of each value orientation. Other methods included class discussions of personal value orientations, cooperative group discussions applying interpretations of the works of art through the lenses of value orientations, and the inclusion of value orientations in student artist's statements.

#### *Value Orientation Summary*

According to Kluckhohm and Strodtbeck (1961) a society, such as the United States, becomes an "intricate *web of variation*." The conceptual scheme of value orientations assumes there will be a dominant class, in which adherence to dominant values is marked. However, the conceptual scheme also assumed that the dominant class (which historically in the United States has been the middle class) is surrounded by other classes that will hold to variant orientations in much of what they do and believe. "No dominantly oriented group ever escapes being influenced by the variantly oriented ones which surround and constantly impinge upon it, and no variant group survives without numerous relationships to the dominantly oriented ones" (Kluckhohm and Strodtbeck, 1961, p. 28). Furthermore, each individual within any society has within

him/herself a unique profile as a part of his/her personality and rank ordering of value orientations, thus adding more extensions to this “intricate web of variation.”

Kluckhohm and Strodtbeck (1961) hold to the view that variation in value orientations is the “most important type of cultural variation and is, therefore the central feature of the structure of culture” (p. 28). They note that because there is a relationship between the generalized value and the particularized expressions of it in behavior, it follows that knowledge of a value system is significantly important and may be used deductively as the basis of both predictions and explanations of general life situations.

Cross (2000) affirms Kluckhohm’s and Strodtbeck’s views in her description of the interconnectedness of cultural and personal value systems:

The meaning and experience of being a person is therefore completely interdependent with the beliefs, values, and meaning systems embodied in particular sociocultural environments. Thus, where cultural meaning systems and theories of the person differ, the nature of the self and identity will also differ. ... Ultimately, investigations into these and other questions raised by cultural comparisons will open new windows of understanding into the ways that self and society are mutually constituted, and their effects on human behavior and well-being. (p. 177)

Utilizing the theory and concepts of value orientations that have been researched and documented by Kluckhohm and Strodtbeck (1961) to raise questions while investigating and seeking cultural comparisons offers promising opportunity in the multicultural classroom. It has potential of opening new windows of understanding into ways that individuals and society are interdependent and mutually formulated. My utilization of

cultural value orientations in my unit is a tool for raising questions and opening up new ways to examine and discuss aspects of culture. The dynamic and complex nature of culture will become increasingly evident, with a constant flow and influx of many different angles and influences affecting each person's cultural identities, ideals, and interpretations.

### Other Curriculum Strategies

The structural framework for the curriculum unit used in this study built upon the concepts of artworlds and value orientations and supported a constructivist view of learning. The curriculum unit used in this study included several opportunities for participating students to work in groups and be involved in cooperative learning situations.

### *Constructivism*

Ethnographic inquiry into works of art can be approached through constructivism. A constructive, multicultural art-centered unit must begin with art that evokes a personal response and the art must be presented in context. Students will learn to value art if they discover ways that art relates to their personal experiences and affects their own thoughts and feelings. Three contexts play essential roles and must be in operation throughout the learning process; the interpretive context of students and teacher, the context of artist and artwork; and the cognitive and affective contexts of critical thought (Stout, 1997). Students' value orientations were important tools used in the curricular unit to promote the interpretive context of students. The context of the artist and artwork was addressed through *artworlds* and historical context. The cognitive and affective contexts of critical thought were sought through students' interpretations of

the poem “Alabama Centennial” by Naomi Madgett (Appendix A, p. 177) and the selected works of art as well as the production of their own works of art and artists’ statements.

Stout (1997) references a host of scholars who support the idea that the foundation for teaching and fostering critical thinking is the belief that learning is a constructive process. At the heart of this theory is the idea that knowledge cannot be simply transmitted, but we must make sense of things for ourselves. The ways knowledge is processed and how it reflects human interests, ideology, and experiences need to be a part of the curriculum. Constructivist theory affirms students creating their own interpretations. The constructivist process consists of students posing their own questions and analyzing their own data (Hernandez, 2001; Banks, 2001; Mehan, Lintz, Okamoto, & Wills, 2001; Pekala, 1991; Jensen, 1998). My study sought evidence of students’ critical aesthetic inquiry. The pre-museum visit activities included the introduction of the focused works of art (see Appendix A). Students were instructed to write down questions of which they would like to learn answers. New interpretations were sought with each addition of new contextual information. Students were prompted to continually reexamine the works of art in light of new information.

### *Cooperative Learning*

Critical dialogue is encouraged by the employment of cooperative, group activities in the classroom. According to Slavin (2001), research has shown a strong positive effect of cooperative learning on intergroup relations and student achievement. Teachers, acting as facilitators, can group children for optimal learning. Cooperative learning methods use the strengths of classroom diversity, with students working

together in small groups that reflect the composition of the class as a whole.

Cooperation is emphasized and various methods are structured to give each student a chance to make a substantial contribution to the team (Slavin, 2001; Saravia-Shore, & Arvizu, 1992; Brooks and Brooks, 1993). The thoughtful structuring of cooperative groups puts students in learning environments that they would not normally or habitually design. Yet, becomes a valuable platform for dynamic cultural dialogue and interaction. Cooperative groups were utilized in my unit with the pre-museum visit lesson, and when making interpretations of the poem and art utilizing value orientations and historical contexts.

The effects of cooperative learning on student achievement can be understood through information on brain research in Eric Jensen's book, *Teaching with the Brain in Mind*. According to Jensen (1998):

Essentially we are social beings and our brains grow in a social environment.

Because we often forge meaning through socializing, the whole role of student-to-student discussion is vastly underused. When used properly, cooperative learning is highly brain compatible. Talking, sharing, and discussing are critical; we are biologically wired for language and communication with one another. (p. 93)

Nieto (1999) notes that culture itself is socially constructed. Cooperative groups are essential for students to be able to interact and learn from one another. Cooperative groups are a primary curricular strategy that seeks to engage every student in the creation and not just the reception of culture.

## Brief Historic Overview of Critical Thinking and Critical Pedagogy

As my study seeks the effects of a curricular unit on students' critical, cultural consciousness, associations to the concepts of critical thinking and critical pedagogy need clarification. Critical thinking and critical pedagogy share many of the same concerns, each valuing "critical-ness" as an essential educational goal. Both critical thinking and pedagogy desire students to be active participants in their education. Students need to become competent in thinking for themselves, exercising critical judgment, solving problems and acting as responsible citizens. Yet, upon closer examination, critical thinking and critical pedagogy have their own textual reference points, favored authors, and desired audiences (Burbules & Berk, 1999).

Stout (1997) quotes The National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking Instruction defining *critical thinking* as: "the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action" (p. 99). It is a process of digesting ideas and finding meaning through one's own thinking. It includes the ability to perceive and appreciate complexity and deal with it in a rational way (Stout, 1997). And Nieto (1999) describes *critical pedagogy* as: "an approach through which students and teachers engage in learning as a mutual encounter with the world. ... (I)t expects students to engage in learning with others, to be curious, to question, and to become problem solvers" (p. 104). At this point, there appears no clear separation of critical thinking and critical pedagogy, except Nieto's reference to learning as less of an individual pursuit, and one that is socially constructed.

## *Critical Thinking*

The names in the United States most frequently associated with critical thinking include Robert Ennis, John Mc Peck, Richard Paul, Israel Scheffler, and Harvey Siegel. This tradition is concerned with students becoming discerning in “recognizing faulty arguments, hasty generalization, assertions lacking evidence, truth claims based on unreliable authority, ambiguous or obscure concepts, and so forth” (Burbules & Berk, 1999, p. 46). Richard Paul describes critical thinking as addressing the basic problem of irrational, illogical, and unexamined living.

The prime tools of critical thinking are the skills of formal and informal logic, conceptual analysis, and epistemological reflection. The primary preoccupation of critical thinking is to supplant sloppy or distorted thinking with thinking based upon reliable procedures of inquiry. Where our beliefs remain unexamined, we are not free; we act without thinking about why we act, and thus do not exercise control over our own destinies. For the critical thinking tradition, as Harvey Siegel states, critical thinking aims at self-sufficiency, and “a self-sufficient person is a liberated person...free from the unwarranted and undesirable control of unjustified beliefs (Siegel 1988, 58)” (Burbules & Berk, 1999, pp. 46-47).

The critically thinking students learn to use textbooks and other information analytically. They are taught skills in evaluating materials for accuracy and perspective, to examine arguments and evidence, and make rational judgments and decisions. The real power of history is believed to rest in students' ability to use an understanding of the past to inspire and legitimize their present actions (Hernandez, 2001). “To the extent that we intelligently participate and independently think, rather than passively

respond, we are free, for we, not external factors, determine the nature of our responses.... In learning to think, we are learning at the same time to be free moral beings" (Rosenthal, 1993, p. 385).

Webster (1997) portrays the teacher's role of probing "students' reasoning, paying attention to the acquisition of specific skills of inferring, analyzing concepts, empathizing with different viewpoints, and evaluating arguments" (p. 184). Students would be provided experiences in critical learning such as: reasoning within multiple points of view; raising key questions; evaluating and distinguishing opinions, beliefs, and assumptions. Schools would serve all intelligences by focusing on the development of students' analytical reasoning and empathic skills. The emphasis is not on content itself, but teaching students how to think critically about the content (Stout, 1997; Greene, 1972; Paul, 1993; Weil, 1994; Webster, 1997).

Richard Paul clarifies a distinction between "weak-sense" and "strong-sense" critical thinking. For Paul, the "weak-sense" means the learner acquires new skills and can demonstrate them when asked to do so. The "strong-sense" requires one to incorporate new skills into a way of living that requires one's own assumptions to be reexamined and questioned. According to Paul, a critical thinker in the "strong-sense" has a passionate drive for clarity, accuracy, and fairmindedness that includes self-reexamination (Burbules & Berk, 1999). It appears to be in this "strong-sense" that Dan Weil (1994) states: "Anything short of critical thinking as a vehicle for promoting diversity appreciation and multicultural awareness is mere reform, and can act to actually reinforce stereotypical irrational thinking and behavior" (p. 19). Weil infers that the critical thinker in the strong-sense will reflectively reexamine his/her own cultural



values and as s/he critically approaches all knowledge and experience. Yet, critical thinking does not focus on cultural issues as a general, overriding theme, but tends to address issues only in an item-by-item fashion (Burbules & Berk, 1999).

Critical thinking has played a key role in art education, especially within the discipline of art criticism. Elliot Eisner (2000) described art education resulting in children developing “both the attitudes and the skills required to experience, analyze, interpret, and describe the expressive qualities of visual form, qualities found not only in works of art, but also in the forms we encounter in the environment at large” (p. 40). David N. Perkins emphasized critical inquiry into works of art as a way to develop what he calls the “intelligent eye.” He speaks of the goal to develop reflective thinking, a capacity of mind that implies “patience, open-mindedness, concern, commitment, persistence, and a spirit of investigation” (Smith, 2000, p. 120). Perkins’ focus of his book *The Intelligent Eye* is the way looking at art “provides a context especially well suited for cultivating thinking *dispositions*.” He argues that a disposition as “a felt tendency, commitment, and enthusiasm” is more than a simple thinking strategy. Eisner and Perkins appear to fall in the camp of critical thinking with their emphasis on open-mindedness as one investigates, analyzes and interprets visual forms.

### *Critical Thinking and Multicultural Education*

Multicultural education includes the language and ideals of both critical thinking and critical pedagogy. It is the critical thinkers that underscore for students to succeed in this new century they must have the ability to synthesize and analyze new information, think for themselves, and adapt quickly. Many schools, businesses, and parents claim they want students that are critical thinkers, with a strong commitment to

worthwhile goals, and dedicated to peaceful ideals for humanity (Thornton II & McEntee, 1995; Rosenthal, 1993). Rosenthal explains:

Because the growth of self and growth of community go hand in hand, the educational process requires that students and teachers alike understand themselves as part of an ongoing community process. ...Teachers, then, should approach students creatively, experimentally, exploring their interests, attitudes, creativity, and capabilities, and thus draw them into the enriching dynamics of community life. ...The uniqueness of diverse cultures, as representative of the individual perspective, must be maintained not through separation from, but through a dynamic interplay with, the common perspective, bringing about a resultant enrichment of each.... If the educational process fails to draw upon the enriching potentialities of multiculturalism, then the destructive alternatives of assimilation or isolation will reign supreme (pp. 387, 389).

Rosenthal points out that individual growth will influence community growth, or affect the on-going creation of culture. Critical thinking that includes self-reexamination encourages learners to reflectively reexamine personal cultural values within the dynamic interplay with diversity in the community.

According to Banks (1996), though all may accept the democratic ideas of the United States, there is a gap between those ideals and reality. He claims that teachers should expose students to all types of knowledge and be taught how to create their own interpretations of the past and present. Students need to learn to identify their own positions, interests, ideologies, and assumptions. “ ‘Teachers should help students to become critical thinkers who have the knowledge, attitudes, skills and commitments

needed to participate in democratic action to help the nation close the gap between its ideals and its realities' (Banks, 1996, p. 5)" (Salili & Hoosain, 2001, p. 10). Banks identifies five types of knowledge that students need to know: 1) personal/cultural; 2) popular; 3) mainstream academic; 4) transformative academic; and 5) school. Though these are only "approximations," Banks stresses that multicultural educational reform need incorporate ethnic components and help students understand how knowledge is constructed (Salili & Hoosain, 2001).

My unit implemented in this study attempted to offer some beginning steps toward confronting these five types of knowledge. The value orientations and personal cultural memberships surveys (see Appendix E and A) pointed to ways personal/cultural, popular, and school knowledge interrelate to one another. By including activities of critical aesthetic inquiry with information about *artworlds* and value orientations, students partook in formulating new interpretations based on different types of knowledge. Ideally, the eventual outcome is a realization that knowledge is constructed with various factors playing different roles at different times. The goal of critical cultural consciousness is greater awareness of the factors and variants that affect the types of knowledge and understanding we encounter and in which we participate.

### *Critical Pedagogy*

Critical pedagogy derives both its name and its basic conceptualizations and interest from the critical theory of the neo-Marxist Frankfurt School, which originated around 1930. The early critical theorists believed that Marxism had underemphasized the importance of the cultural and media influences on the persistence of capitalism.

Critical pedagogy was a reaction by progressive educators against such institutionalized functions (Burbules & Berk, 1999; Miedema & Wardekker, 1999).

It is an effort to work within educational institutions and other media to raise questions about inequalities of power, about the false myths of opportunity and merit for many students, and about the way belief systems become internalized to the point where individuals and groups abandon the very aspiration to question or change their lot in life. (Burbules and Berk, 1999, p. 50)

Whereas critical thinking expresses a generalized concern to assure students are able to critically evaluate materials for accuracy and perspective in order to make rational judgments and decisions, critical pedagogy, as reaction to a specifically perceived inequality of power, expresses a concern to raise students' awareness their plight in order to make decisions.

Some of the authors most strongly associated with this tradition include Paulo Freire, Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, Ira Shor, Michael Apple, Joe Kinchloe, and Maxine Greene. Paulo Freire is most noted for articulating the goals of critical pedagogy. His writings originally were within the specific context of promoting adult literacy in the peasant communities of Brazil and Chile. Freire, through *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, sought to develop and employ a pedagogy that would enable intellectuals, in partnership with the urban and rural poor, to transform the conditions of the oppression. Freire used *conscientizacao*, or consciousness-raising, to make those he believed to be oppressed aware of their collective capacity to analyze and critique a larger social context for the injustice in their lives (Huiskamp, 2002). Freire firmly believed that liberation could only come when the oppressed liberated them selves

(Fain, 2002). Critical pedagogy recognized the role each individual most play in his/her own liberation, but it put intellectuals in the role of the consciousness-raisers. The original goals of critical pedagogy were specifically targeting a perceived injustice.

Freire's writings were "unabashedly grounded in Marxist-socialist thought. Without question, when Freire spoke of the 'ruling class' or the 'oppressors,' he was referring to historical class distinctions and class conflict within the structure of capitalist society--capitalism was the root of domination" (Darder, 2002, p. 39). This Marxist-socialist grounding was a main reason Miedema & Wardekker (2002) concluded "critical pedagogy is now considered by many to have been a stillborn child that is interesting mainly for historical reasons"(p. 68). Critical pedagogues may appear as relics of bygone times. Their preoccupation with emancipation and the wrongs of society seem outdated in a postmodern era. The postmodernist would question who determines what is wrong or unjust. McKinnon (1997) notes that a simple category such as "oppressed" can no longer serve the complexity of power relations that students face today. Yet investigation of critical pedagogy is a component of my study.

As one investigates the principals and practices of Freire's critical pedagogy, there are many ideals, thoughts and issues that have influenced educational policy, practice and research. As Paulo Freire (1997) stated: "The progressive educator must always be moving out on his or her own, continually reinventing me and reinventing what it means to be democratic in his or her own specific cultural and historical context" (Darder, 2002, p. v). Thus with this statement, my study does embrace critical pedagogy, not as it has historically been interpreted or applied, but as a progressive pedagogical theory that "reinvents" Freire to fit my context. I will argue, as did Huiskamp

(2002), “that the power of Freirian pedagogy lies in its ability to promote participatory attitudes and behavior, as opposed to a specific set of predetermined strategies and outcomes” (p. 75).

A key concept of critical pedagogy is its emphasis on the dialogical process. This process includes students’ reflection on their personal lived experiences as well as working collectively to change their world. “Identity is seen as an active construction by the individual, which uses and transforms the culture it finds itself in” (Miedema & Wardekker, 2002, p. 73). Critical pedagogy argues that as students understand and learn to define themselves as political beings, they will see the power they have to change the course of history. “(S)tudents learn to build learning communities in which they freely give voice to their thoughts, ideas, and perceptions about what they know and what they are attempting to understand, always within the context of a larger political project of emancipation” (Darder, 2002, p. 103). Literacy, itself, according to Freire, is dialogical. Dialogue with others who speak from different histories, locations, and experiences are crucial for understanding. It is a critical “reading of the world”, alongside a critical “reading of the word.” Personal knowledge and understanding will always contain blind spots; hence multiple voices are an essential part of the critical inquiry (McLaren, 1997; Darder, 2002; Stokes, 1997).

Within the umbrella of the dialogical process is what Henry Giroux calls “border pedagogy.” It is a concept that encourages teachers and students to develop a relationship of non-identity, in order to participate in an ongoing process of adopting another’s position or perspective from which to critique, thus moving across “borders” (Janmohamed, 1994). Border pedagogues affirm students’ meanings and

understandings, “but at the same time interrogate the interests, ideologies, and social practices that such knowledges serve when viewed from the perspective of more global economies of power and privilege” (McLaren, 1994, p. 213). It appears border pedagogues, as intellectuals, serve as the consciousness-raisers. Critical pedagogy manifests itself to be hierarchical in nature. Emphasizing the need for the border pedagogues to continually question their students’ understandings against more global perspectives of which the pedagogues have more understanding.

A considerable amount of critical pedagogical writings are dedicated to the teacher’s role. Freire believed educational practice was a very serious endeavor.

Teachers are participants in the development of people, at all ages. Teachers may help them or set them back in their search. ... Incompetence, poor preparation, and irresponsibility in our practice may contribute to their failure. But with responsibility, scientific preparation, and a taste for teaching, with seriousness and a testimony to the struggle against injustice, we can also contribute to the gradual transformation of learners into strong *presences* in the world. (Freire, 1998, p. 33)

Freire believed education is an act of love and of courage. He insisted that true dialogue could not exist in the absence of love and humility and believed it was impossible to teach without educators knowing what took place in their students’ world. Involvement with parents in substantive ways was sought to increase classroom dialogue, along with using students’ lived experiences to meaningfully connect to their curiosity and imagination (Darder, 2002). For this reason, “the critical pedagogue is

always someone who teaches from where the student is at, rather than from where the teacher is at" (Mostern, 1994, p. 256).

A primary Freirian idea was contrasting "banking" education, where teachers deposit factual information, to a liberatory educational process where teachers seek to help students learn how to "problem-pose" their reality, in order to critique and collectively change it. Freire noted that banking education anesthetizes and inhibits creative power, attempting to dull or submerge consciousness. Problem-solving education involves a constant unveiling of reality, striving for the emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality (Darder, 2002).

The teacher brings valuable knowledge to the classroom. However, all knowledge must be open to questioning. Knowledge is viewed as historically produced, contextual, and always existing in a partial state. There is a teaching and a learning on-going process between the teacher and the students. The teacher, through the students, is able to continually uncover uncertainties, rights, and wrongs. Humble and open teachers will find themselves continually rethinking and revising their positions (Darder, 2002; Freire, 1998).

### *Critical Pedagogy and Multicultural Education*

My search in this study is to define educational philosophies, relate the philosophies to how each has historically been implemented into practice, and therefore, seek new strategies that better connect ideals to practice. I have described and embraced the Freirian ideals of critical pedagogy such as the dialogical process and banking education. This section includes how critical pedagogy and multicultural education have historically interconnected both philosophically and practically.



Historically multicultural education has had a strong link with critical pedagogy with common goals of criticism of global capitalism and its resulting injustices. Mainstream schooling has been viewed as reinforcing the dominant cultural values and pedagogy and accepting its interpretations as truth. This has resulted in the marginalizing of nondominant groups. Both multicultural and critical pedagogy are “ ‘standpoint epistemologies for certain type of actions and social interests’ (Sleeter et al., 1995, p. 7)” (Salili & Hoosain, 2001, p. 6). Multicultural education uses critical pedagogy as its underlying philosophy when the focus is put on using knowledge, reflection, and action (praxis) as the basis for social change (Nieto, 1992; Gay, 2001).

Critical pedagogy acknowledges cultural, linguistic, social class, and other forms of knowledge based on student diversity and encourages students to use their experiences as the starting point in which to extend their learning. Critical pedagogy includes the need for students to interrogate critically their inner histories and experiences to understand how they are “reinforced, contradicted and suppressed as a result of the ideologies mediated in the material and intellectual practices that characterize daily classroom life” (Giroux, 1997, p. 81). Giroux describes a multicultural curriculum as providing conditions for students “to imagine beyond the given and to embrace their identities critically as a source of agency and possibility” (p. 252).

Though there is a strong link between critical pedagogy and multicultural education, each, also, have their own textual reference points, favored authors, and desired audiences. In reference to critical theory, Gordon (2001) notes that the discourses on “otherness” and “marginality” have had

a narrow and limiting engagement with the works of African American scholars who make problematic the regimes of truth operating within dominant and emancipatory narratives that constitute schools curriculum (B.Gordon, 1992). Indeed, the issue of race seems not to be part of feminist or critical pedagogical discourse; both relegate race to a liminal category (p. 189).

Ladson-Billings (1997) asserts that a “critical race perspective always foregrounds race as an explanatory tool for the persistence of inequality.... For African Americans, their understanding of inequity is filtered through the lens of race and racism” (p. 132). In other words, for African Americans, inequity is a primarily a race issue, yet race has been a marginal issue in critical pedagogy.

Many critical pedagogy scholars have critiqued multicultural education literature as not having developed discourse in the systemic forms of racial, class, and gender oppression, and an analysis of power through collective solidarity. Sleeter (2001) described the critical theorists’ critiques of multicultural education as writing from outside the field and “tacitly dismiss(ing) the work of U.S. educators of color.” This dismissal has given the implication of critical theorists believing that

White neo-Marxists have greater insight into the nature of racial oppression than do African-Americans who actively developed multicultural education. ... Neo-Marxism is the most well-developed body of discourse in the United States, but it is dominated by Whites, usually marginalizes race and gender, and stems from the White working-class experience that people of color have long historic reasons not to trust (see, e.g., Roediger, 1991). (p. 90)

Sleeter observes that the radical discourses are written mainly by theorists for an audience of theorists and the purpose is not to mobilize public opinion, rather it is to influence scholarly debate.

While White neo-Marxists can get away with radical discourse because they are protected by their race, people of color who address racism do not have that protection, and are often reluctant to discuss systemic White racism in front of Whites because of a history of negative reactions (Barnes, 1993; Wiley, 1993). (pp. 90-91)

Sleeter explains that White racism is a primary concern of serious scholars of multicultural education, yet White educators are rarely receptive “to appeals for change that are framed around racism.” In fact a radical discourse can itself marginalize people—thus causing “more harm than good” (p. 90). According to Sleeter the radical discourses of some well-intentioned critical pedagogy theorist not only does not mobilize public opinion, but also may produce a negative, marginalizing effect.

When confronted with the need to apply critical pedagogy to a course she was teaching on anitracism, Elizabeth Ellsworth (1989) records: “I found myself struggling against (struggling to unlearn) key assumptions and assertions of current literature on critical pedagogy, and straining to recognize, name, and come to grips with crucial issues of classroom practice that critical pedagogy cannot or will not address” (p. 303). Ellsworth notes that the critical pedagogical “emancipatory authority” implied by Shor and Freire, is that the teacher knows the object of study “better” than the students. Yet, as a White middle-class woman and professor, she did not understand racism better than her students, “especially those students of color coming into class after six months

(or more) of campus activism and whole lives of experience and struggle against racism” (p. 308). Ellsworth confessed it made more sense to redefine “critical pedagogy” so that it did not need “utopian moments of ‘democracy,’ ‘equality,’ ‘justice or ‘emancipated’ teachers—moments that are unattainable (and ultimately undesirable, because they are always predicated on the interests of those who are in the position to define utopian projects)” (p. 308).

Ellsworth experienced the critical pedagogical dialogue formula expressed by Giroux to be both “impossible and undesirable.” “Giroux’s formula for dialogue requires and assumes a classroom of participants unified on the side of the subordinated against the subordinator, sharing and trusting in an ‘us-ness’ against ‘them-ness’” (p. 315). This does not account for the dynamics of multiple and contradictory forms subordination in the classroom. And acting as if the classroom was a safe place for “democratic dialogue,” did not make it so. Ellsworth witnessed many things not being said for a number of different reasons.

Ellsworth came to a realization that we can never completely know and understand the experiences and knowledges of other affinity groups. “

Realizing that there are partial narratives that some social groups or cultures have and others can never know, but are necessary to human survival, is a condition to embrace and use as an opportunity to build a kind of social and educational interdependency that recognizes differences as ‘different strengths’ and as ‘forces for change. (p. 319)

She sites Gayatri Spivak who declares the search for a coherent narrative counterproductive, and further maintains that there are no social positions exempt from

becoming oppressive to others. Any group, at any position, including critical pedagogues, can move into the oppressor role. Oppression must be clarified by preventing “oppressive simplification” and “insisting that it be understood and struggled against contextually” (p. 323).

Finally, Ellsworth summarized the classroom practice that presently seems most capable of authentic dialogue:

If you can talk to me in ways that show you understand that your knowledge of me, the world, and ‘the Right thing to do’ will always be partial, interested, and potentially oppressive to others, and if I can do the same, then we can work together on shaping and reshaping alliances for constructing circumstances in which students of difference can thrive. (p. 324)

According to the classroom experiences described by Ellsworth, border crossing is not an achievable or even desirable goal of critical pedagogy. Instead, we can come to consciously realize we come with limited abilities to understand one another. We each have the potential to exercise domination and thus oppress one another.

My research led me to surmise that historically critical pedagogy has been linked to multicultural education most strongly as both have attempted to emancipate and address the wrongs of society. Though both were proponents of these high goals, the directions and strategies taken were points of departure. I included the varying discourses because they laid the groundwork for my position. When the primary focus of critical pedagogy is limited to a predetermined set of strategies or outcomes that narrowly defines levels of “oppressed” and “oppressor,” it will fail to meet its goals. I suggest that such a narrowing of focus is not true to the underlying philosophy set out

by Freire. I therefore suggest that historically critical pedagogues and multicultural scholars and educators have attempted to put critical pedagogy into practice in a limiting and often ineffective manner. For critical pedagogy to be utilized in today's diversely multicultural classroom, it must be open to promote participatory attitudes and behaviors with no predetermined outcome.

### Some Critical Thinking and Pedagogy Comparisons

Both critical thinking and critical pedagogy believe there is something given, against which mistaken beliefs and distorted perceptions need to be tested. Both require that one be moved to do something, whether it is seeking reasons or seeking social justice. However, critical thinking emphasizes fostering individual skills and disposition, and critical pedagogy puts the emphasis on collective action to produce change. "The task of critical pedagogy is to bring members of an oppressed group to a critical consciousness of their situation as a beginning point of their liberatory *praxis*" (Burbules & Berk, 1999, p. 51). With critical pedagogy, critically reflecting and interpreting the world is not enough; one must be willing to act to change it. "For Freire, criticality requires *praxis*—both reflection and action, both interpretation and change: 'Critical consciousness is brought about not through intellectual effort alone but through *praxis*—through the authentic union of action and reflection' (Freire 1970a, 48)" (Burlules and Berk, 1999, p. 52).

Freire believed there was no such thing as a neutral educational process. Education was either an instrument to "enculturate the young into the logic of the present system," or it was a "means of dealing critically in the transformation of their world" (Murrell, 1997, p. 19). Critical pedagogy deems students as already having been

indoctrinated and can only be brought to criticality by alerting them to the social conditions that have brought this about. Though critical thinkers claim to teach one how to think critically, not how to think politically, critical pedagogy says that is not possible.

An interesting comparison of critical thinking and critical pedagogy can be made through the lens of the *relational* cultural value orientation. As discussed earlier in this chapter, Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) identified the three subdivisions of this orientation are the *Individualistic*, the *Collateral*, and the *Lineal*. Under such lens, the critical thinking proponents would be aligned with the characteristics of an Individualistic orientation. The emphasis is on each individual's responsibility to the total society and his/her place in it. The goals of critical thinking relate to autonomy by preparing students to synthesize and analyze new information, think for themselves, and adapt quickly. Critical thinkers include a strong commitment to worthwhile goals and dedication to peaceful ideals for humanity, realized through each individual's unique contributions.

Critical pedagogy appears as a *Lineal* orientation with its authoritative role of the intellectual teacher who is aware of the students' oppressions. The teacher's role is to unveil the hidden realities as students come to understand the power they have to change their own political situations. Critical pedagogy also includes a *Collateral* orientation as it stresses the importance of students uniting together into a larger political project of emancipation.

Critical thinking assumes no set agenda of issues that must be addressed. Critical pedagogy addresses power and the way in which it structures social relations as "the big picture" in which all issues are framed. Critical thinking is reluctant to prescribe any particular context for a discussion; critical pedagogy centers on the particular

context that views social matters within a framework of struggles over social justice, the workings of capitalism, and forms of cultural and material oppression (Burbules & Berk, 1999). As a proponent of critical pedagogy, McLaren (1997) stresses that “social facts can never be isolated from the domain of values or removed from forms of ideological production as inscription” (p. 105). Social facts are never neutral for the critical pedagogue.

### *Critical Thinking in Relation to the Curricular Unit*

The art-centered curriculum, utilizing specific tools to promote critical cultural consciousness used in this study, does support theories of critical thinking. Critical thinking, described as the process of incorporating new skills into a way of living that requires one’s own assumptions be constantly reexamined and questioned, is a key premise. Yet, unlike critical thinking, I chose not to be reluctant to prescribe any particular context for discussion. I am embracing a critical pedagogy that centers on the particular context that led students to critically analyze specific works of art that have addressed social matters within a framework of struggles over social justice.

I also embraced critical pedagogical ideals that believe it is impossible to teach without educators knowing what is taking place in their students’ world. The cultural value orientation and free-word association surveys were utilized in conjunction with such ideals. Classroom dialogue and students’ lived experiences were entry points in which to meaningfully connect to their curiosity and imagination. I did not adopt the ideas related to “border pedagogy,” the concept that encourages teachers and students to develop a relationship of non-identity. In agreement with the writing by Ellsworth (1989), border crossing is not an achievable or even desirable goal of critical pedagogy.



Instead of seeking empathetic understanding of one another, one of the goals of this curricular unit is to gain a consciousness of our own cultural influences and begin to understand how we are connected one to another with the potential of an on-going re-creating of culture. Whereas critical pedagogy argues that students should understand and learn to define themselves as political beings, the emphasis of this unit is that students gain a critical conscious awareness of themselves as *cultural* beings.

### *Critical Theory as Applied to the Disciplines of Art*

Many of the ideals of critical thinking and critical pedagogy as discussed in this paper have some very important contributions to make to the field of art education. Both critical thinking and pedagogy theories have played significant roles in multicultural education. As we, as art educators, attempt to apply these theories and issues into the curriculum the relevance will never be simple, nor will it be complete. The relevance is the degree that we, as teachers and learners, continually reflect critically on our own lived experiences and the conditions of our knowledge. The relevance will be to our continual understanding and interest in our particular, unique students. It is an on-going pursuit.

The underlying principles employed in the curriculum unit of this study are in alignment with many ideas of critical theory as they apply to art history, aesthetics and art production. One unit of study designed for 5th grade students can only begin to address the ideas held by critical theorists. Principles of critical theory that acknowledge cultural, linguistic, social class, and other forms of knowledge based on student diversity and encourages students to use their experiences as starting points to extend their

learning is supported in the conception and implementation of the curricular unit, “Respect and Homage.”

### *Critical Thinking Applied to Art History*

Critical theory applied to art education was address by critical art historian Carol Duncan (1993) in her essay “Teaching the Rich.” She challenged the elitist versions of art history and aesthetic value that the art curricula of prestigious liberal arts colleges present. Because critical theory recognizes the domination of one form of knowledge over others as a mechanism of oppression, this is a serious issue to be considered (Cary, 1998).

The mainstream art world has associated power with aesthetic value. Traditionally conceived histories of art have defined art history as a progression of differing, competing styles. Critical art pedagogy recognizes the importance of considering the cultural contexts surrounding a work of art and it does not place one aesthetic expression over another.

Critical *praxis* in art education includes the art of the dominant culture as well as other art forms conceptually integrated as a non-hierarchical category of human achievement with both commonalities and differences. Critical art pedagogy embraces postmodernism, and especially its inclination to connect the art object to its context and its denial of the myth of the independent art object. (Cary, 1998, p. 18)

Mayer (1999) presents some of the implications of viewing and interpreting art through “The New Art Histories.” Mayer sites Moxey (1994) who emphasized meaning as “not a historical treasure to be ‘found,’ but ‘constructed’ in the context of the present”

(p. 41). Instead of teachers seeking to find the best cultural *treasures* to present to their students, they are to act as guides in the construction of interpretations. “The work of art becomes an open text for interpretation, not an object circumscribed by a single, truthful interpretation. Interpretation is neither subject-centered nor object-centered, but a wonderful interpretive dialogue between subject and object” (Mayer, 1999, p. 42). The possible interpretations of the artwork are equal only to the number of students viewing it. The “New Art Histories” place students as active, cultural agents in the interpretive process of works of art.

Critical theory when applied to art history, however, includes a non-hierarchical integration of art forms from diverse cultures as examples of human achievement within a cultural context. Critical theory as it applies to art history, also recognizes the context of the viewer as an important component. Historical meanings or interpretations involve the cultural and aesthetic contexts in which the object was created in combination with, or in dialogue with, the cultural and aesthetic contexts of each viewer.

### *Critical Thinking Applied to Aesthetics*

Critical aesthetics seeks to address how a society defines art and aesthetic value, how the roles and functions of art and aesthetic value are played out, and how art and aesthetic value relate to issues of power and freedom. As highlighted earlier, much research in art education concluded that the aesthetic experience has cultural factors, personality or readiness factors and it takes place in a given context (McFee, 1978, 1998; Collins & Sandell, 1984; Congdon, 1987, 1989; Gardner, 1987; Lowry & Wolf, 1988; and White & Hart, 1990; Hart, 1991). To help children and young people learn to understand other people’s art we have to expose them to far more than the art object or

event itself. They need a rich understanding of all the cultural factors that help the artist give it form. Critical theory as it applies to aesthetics, as well as it had applied to art history, includes examination of the functions art plays and the places, events, and people involved in the creation of the art object. Aesthetics and art history are interrelated one to another. Both involve the ongoing questioning and reexamining of previous conclusions and interpretations as new information is incorporated. Both are involved in what I labeled in my study as *critical aesthetic inquiry*.

Carol Becker (1994) encourages art educators with their students, to stand outside the work with some critical distance and ask:

- From what ideological position was it formed?
- For whom was it made?
- Whose interests does it represent?
- Whose does it serve?
- What underlying questions does it ask?
- What implicit power relations frame it?

Some questions suggested by Cary (1998) include:

- Who defines art?
- Who sets the aesthetic values and economic worth of art objects?
- In whose interests do the definitions and values operate?
- What is 'talent' and how do we define, value and use it?
- How can one use art to support or to subvert the status quo?

Critical aesthetics involves the subversive interrogation of controlling structures and official assumptions so as to discover and expose the oppressive influences of power interests.

### *Critical Thinking Applied to Art Production*

In the discipline of art production, Carol Becker (1994) suggests that art students with political consciousness will face the dilemma of desiring an audience beyond the art gallery world, yet finding work that crosses over to a more mass audience will not find its recognition in the art world.

This fashionable assimilation is a contradiction for work whose goal is social criticism and criticism of the exclusivity and elitism of the art world from which it has emerged. ... It would be ideal if work could break out of categorical boundaries and be simultaneously avant-garde and popular, but in practice, this is difficult to achieve. (p. 109)

With this in mind, art educators must seek ways to help students step outside their own subjectivity and think about their work within a larger societal context and to consider who their audience will be. It is important to have students explore how artists have functioned at other moments in American society and when they have successfully aligned with social movements committed to change.

### Summary

In this chapter relevant research and scholarship were examined and discussed. Discussion that higher levels of multicultural art education have not been reached because of a narrow definition and understanding of the complex and broad nature of both culture and art was presented. This chapter suggested the importance of an

ethnographic inquiry into culture that is comparative and holistic in nature, viewing a diversity that seeks to recognize shared, universal cultural perspectives as the context for greater appreciation and understanding of human and cultural differences.

Constructivism and cooperative learning were highlighted as forums for such inquiry.

Curriculum issues pointed to using big themes, stressing the use of studio projects that encourage students to tell their own important stories, and noting the “functions” of art.

The key people, places, activities, and ideas of an artworld offer additional curricular strategies to increase awareness of the distinctive activities and ideas of a culture.

Discussion and examination of the Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck model (1961) of cultural value orientations was made as a response to Sue and Sue (1999) declaring it to be one of the most useful frameworks for understanding differences among individuals and groups. And finally, ideas of the ongoing processes of liberation, and critically rethinking and revising one’s positions and understandings of all forms of knowledge were discussed through examination the ideals of critical thinking and critical pedagogy.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design and Goals

As stated in chapter 1, the purpose of this study was to describe the implementation, structure, content and outcome of an art-centered unit developed for 5th grade students to promote critical cultural consciousness. The implementation of the curriculum unit took place during the 2003 winter/spring semester. The research methods used in this investigation were qualitative. This study lent itself to qualitative research because it was concerned with nonstatistical methods of inquiry and analysis of social phenomena. The data collection techniques used were: 1) classroom observation collected through audio/video taping and field notes of classroom discussions and activities; 2) written and visual document of students' literary and visual art works and written survey accounts; and 3) informal interviews with teachers and students. (Each of these will be discussed later in the "Methods of Data Collection" section.) It drew on an inductive process in which themes and categories emerge through analysis of data collected (McCoy, 1995).

The art-centered unit (see Appendix A) utilized artworlds (Appendix C) and cultural value orientations (Appendix E, F) as frameworks to promote critical inquiry of works of art thus increasing students' cultural consciousness. The curricular unit focused on selections from the Walter O. Evans Collection of African American Art because the works of art offered powerful images exemplifying the curricular theme "Respect and Homage" and because the student participants had the opportunity to view the original artworks at the Tyler Museum of Art during the time of this study. The

Museum visit provided students additional personal experiences with the works of art, giving more weight to the curriculum content. The selected artists were members of artworlds within European, Mexican, African, and American cultures, thus reflecting personal cultural connections of the participating students. In addition, The Tyler Museum of Art is an example of an artworld in the students' community, further reinforcing this concept used in the unit.

This study examined the ways in which 5th grade students define and identify *culture* as a general concept and in relation to their personal experience. Evidence of participating students' broadening understanding of the varied and complex nature of *culture* was investigated. Documentation of students' understanding of *cultural value orientations* were examined to gain insights into the ways a consciousness of cultural value orientations affects 5th grade students' critical, aesthetic inquiry, or on-going wondering and questioning, into works of art. Utilization of a curricular strategy incorporating the concept of *artworlds* was examined for its affect on participating students' ability to incorporate contextual information into their interpretations and understanding of works of art. In summary, the examination of the evidence of participating students' understanding of *culture*, *cultural value orientation*, and *artworlds* was made in this study to determine the effect each played in fostering students' development of critical cultural consciousness or holistic appreciation of the multi-faceted nature of *culture*.

Because the field of educational research needs all perspectives, this study incorporated grounded theory and ethnography methods of qualitative research. Grounded theory, as an inductive method, is to identify, develop, and relate concepts



that can become the building blocks of theory. More commonly its goal is the identification and description of core categories or themes. Ethnography puts the focus on description and context while comparing the actors, settings, specificities, and the explanation of the patterns of behavior and relationships within the culture. As researcher, I was actively making constant comparisons between and within cases and linking previous research and theory to emerging findings (Gilgun, 2001; Radnor, 2001; Lowery, 2001).

### Participants and Location of Research

The participants selected for this study were all the students in three 5th grade classes of an arts magnet school located in East Texas. Students in this age group were chosen because they have generally become more socially aware and conceptually sophisticated than in younger years. Preadolescent children develop a wide range of interests; are receptive to instruction in technical art skills; and are ready to relate their personal art-making to issues of other artists throughout history (Hurwitz & Day, 2001).

The participants attended an elementary school that took on the identity of the district's magnet arts academy in the fall 2001. The student body consists of students who live within the district's geographic boundaries for that particular school (50%) and students throughout the district who specifically applied for admission because of the emphasis on fine arts (36% magnet students and 14% children of district employees as transfer students). Admission to the school is based on interest not on any academic or artistic requirement or accomplishment and acceptance is on a first come, first serve basis. The school employs fine arts teacher specialists in art, music, drama, and dance.

The administration and faculty are open to innovative, arts-centered curriculum ideas and were willing to co-operate with me to accomplish this project. The faculty and administration involved in this study included the three 5th grade classroom teachers and one visual arts teacher, with approval and support from the principal and instructional consultants.

The general demographic data of the school revealed the student population at about one-third of European, one-third of Mexican, and one-third of African descent. Gender is about equally divided, male and female. These percentages closely match those of the entire school district. Though not specified for this particular school, students identified as economically disadvantaged for the school district were listed about 55% and the *At Risk* percentage was about 47% of the student population.

### Structure and Implementation of Curriculum Unit

#### *Pilot Studies*

A pilot study was conducted to test some of the structure and questionnaire instruments for my research curricular unit (see Appendix E). It represented a first attempt to examine if and how 4th and 5th graders are able to identify and discuss their value orientations and transfer such awareness into interpretations of works of art. The pilot study involved two 4th and two 5th grade classes while in an art class. Each class lasted about 35 minutes and I was able to hold a discussion with them for about 20 minutes during each period.

It was concluded from the pilot study that 5th graders were capable of understanding value orientations as they relate to their personal experience and were capable in transferring such awareness into interpreting works of art. The study did not

directly identify specific issues of *culture* and *cultural consciousness* by name, but I was persuaded of the validity of incorporating value orientations into the art-centered curricular unit for the final study. This pilot study identified my need to refine the survey instrument, especially noting the third situation should be a situation of *misfortune* but not of *devastation*, as I had originally designed it. I was also convinced that providing historical, cultural, and biographical information on the art and artists in conjunction with value orientated self-reflection would yield meaningful connections between the works of art and the students.

A second pilot study was conducted to test the methodology of a student survey to be used as one of the data collection techniques. The pilot study involved three sixth grade language arts classes. The students were asked to list words they associate with the meaning of “culture” and “functions of art.” I wanted to see how much explanation was needed for students to understand the kind of word associations I wished to survey. I tested three different levels of preliminary explanation. The pilot study led me to utilize a limited, yet moderate amount of explanation to students as introduction to the survey instrument.

Finally, in preparation for writing and implementing the curriculum unit, I observed three school tours of 5th graders to the Walter O. Evans Collection exhibition at the Tyler Museum of Art. These observations gave me important information and insights about what works of art were discussed in the tour, the overall exhibition format, and responses of the students to the art in the museum galleries.

## *Structure*

As noted earlier, of particular interest in this study was the design of the curricular unit (see Appendix A) utilizing the two specific strategies, artworlds and cultural value orientations, to promote critical cultural consciousness. The unit was written to incorporate a museum visit taken by the students that provided the opportunity for them to view the original works of art. After the museum visit, students began to examine the artworlds of the selected artists, Romare Bearden, Charles White and Elizabeth Catlett. Introduction of the artworlds was achieved through a dramatic reading with student volunteers playing the role of each artist. Examination of specific works of art, under the theme “Respect and Homage” followed, allowing students the opportunity to apply artworld contexts into their interpretations of the works of art. The works of art were: *Woman Worker*, (1951) by Charles White, *The Black Man in the Making of America*, (1960) by Romare Bearden, and *Homage to Black Women Poets*, (1984) by Elizabeth Catlett, from the Walter O. Evans Collection of African American Art. Lessons included interdisciplinary connections with social studies and literature as students read and discussed the historical accounts of the civil rights movement in America and the poem, “Alabama Centennial” by Naomi Madgett. The students applying cultural value orientations as lenses for understanding explored further interpretations of the works of art.

An important element of the art-centered unit was the students’ personal art making. Within the contexts thus studied, students created their own art under the theme “Respect and Homage.” The art assignment was the student creation of a mixed-media, two-dimensional work that paid respect or homage to important people,

activities, and/or places in each student's life. Media included digital photographs taken by the students, utilizing self-portraits and/or portraits utilizing friends and teachers. I suggested the use of symbols and some limited text. Other media included drawing in crayons, oil pastel, color pencils, and markers. Watercolor paint was added into larger background areas of their pictures. The watercolor provided the unifying component of their compositions.

Technical instruction in the use of digital cameras was necessary. A guest instructor from the school district's technology administrative staff came into the classroom and conducted a hands-on mini-workshop with students on how to use and care for digital cameras. This lesson included a short time of students observing and discussing the facial features and bodily gestures of the figures in the selected works of art, noting the ways artists communicate meanings through visual imagery. Students were instructed to set up their classmates in various poses that communicate different ideas and practice taking at least two pictures using the digital cameras.

Preliminary drawings, made in early class sessions, were redistributed later when students had the opportunity to take the digital photographs to use in their art. Instructional time included holding up some of their pictures and discussing compositional ideas, such as placement of images, color, and value. I demonstrated some watercolor techniques and ways to possibly add their digital photos to their art. Students were encouraged to put the photos in more than one section of their picture and to utilize other cut-outs to aid in an unified composition. Finally, each student wrote an artist's statements applying their understanding of the functions of art, artworlds and cultural value-orientations to their personal artistic expression.

### *Implementation*

Communication with the administration and cooperating faculty began in spring of 2002. General dates for implementation were finalized in the beginning days of the new school year in September of 2002. The implementation of the curricular unit developed for this study took place in the art and general classroom. I provided teachers with the designed curricular unit at the beginning of the spring semester and received feedback as to its classroom implementation. Though I was the principle presenter of the art-centered unit, the teachers played an active role by: inserting related information and responses; helping engage and involve students; offering support with classroom management; and providing casual reports of their observations. An independent assistant was trained and utilized for student interviews at the latter part of the study.

Conducting my research in the classroom during school hours required creative and flexible scheduling. The pre- and post- museum visit activities had to correlate with each class' scheduled field trip to the Tyler Museum of Art in early March. I was not able to continue presenting the unit until the end of March, due to spring break and other scheduling conflicts. Early field research was in the art classroom during the students' regular art time (45 minutes weekly), with special blocks of time (1-2 hours) scheduled during the final month in the general classroom as well. The total implementation and field research time with the participating students was about 12 hours with each class conducted at varying times throughout the spring semester.

I visited the three classes in February before and following their tour of the Walter O. Evans Collection of African American Art at the Tyler Museum of Art. We briefly

discussed how art can provide clues about the times and culture, as well as personal information related to the artist. I asked students such questions as: “Why is art important? Why do people choose to create art? Why would someone wish to collect art?” I, also, gave students biographical information on Linda and Walter Evans and reasons for their collecting and loaning this collection. It was almost two months after the field trip to the museum before I began concentrated segments of time with students teaching the unit.

Twenty students were enrolled in each of the three classes involved in this study, however, not all students were present at the classroom sessions in which data was collected. Time spent implementing the curriculum to each class was equal, however the arrangement of the schedule resulted in different lengths of time, times of day, and spacing of the sessions I spent in the three participating classrooms. As in all classroom settings, such variations had effects on students’ attention spans, receptivity to new curricular information, memory of past lessons and performance in curricular activities. For example, one class did not have time to discuss cultural value orientations in relation to the focused works of art or to write their personal artist’s statements. For reasons mentioned above, I was not able to complete all of my data collection with those participants.

Some key data were gathered from transcriptions of class discussions, but, as is most often the case in whole class discussions, time only allowed a limited number of students to voice their thoughts. Though I recorded whole class sessions, time spent reading or discussing historical information from the textbook is not quoted in this paper. I focused only on key examples of discussions that related students’ interpretations of

the works of art within the historical contexts. The written documents provided an important dimension to the data, because I received written documents from all of the students present at the time. The written documents, in conjunction with key transcriptions of class discussions and student interviews, guaranteed that every student have had a voice from multiple perspectives.

### Methods of Data Collection

The purpose of this study was to describe the implementation, structure, content and outcome of an art-centered unit developed for 5th grade students. It was designed to be an example/model of specific tools and procedures that teachers can use in the art and general classroom to promote critical cultural consciousness. The data collected was in a variety of ways to offer documentation from varying perspectives. The data was analyzed in relation to the three main research questions, with certain data serving to address specific questions in particular.

### *Classroom Observation*

Classroom discussions and activities were recorded through audio/video taping and field notes. Evidence of utilizing artworlds, historical context, and cultural value orientations in initiating meaningful critical inquiry was sought. Classroom activities were recorded to study how critical cultural consciousness was developed and displayed through student discussions and peer interactions. Ethnographic methods of describing, comparing, and linking observable patterns and relationships were used through an inductive approach of searching for and identifying core categories and themes.



### *Written and Visual Documents*

Documents used in this study included a pre- and post- word association survey, cultural value orientation identification survey, student-created works of art, and student artist's statements (each document is described and included in the curriculum unit, Appendix A, D, E respectively). Document analysis is effective for supporting conclusions that are made through the other research methods. Glesne (1999) explained that documents are able to corroborate your observations and interviews, making your findings more trustworthy. They may also raise questions about your hunches and thereby provide new directions for observations and interviews. Written documents also provide you with historical, demographic, and sometimes personal information that may be unavailable from other sources.

One document for this study was a free word association survey designed by the researcher to measure students' viewpoints and understanding of the main unit ideas (see Appendix A). By "free word association," I mean, the students were asked to list any words or word phrases that came to mind that related to *culture*. The survey also included students listing words that suggest *cultures in which they are personally members*, and words that suggest the *functions of art*. The survey was designed to identify students' unconscious stereotyping of *culture* and *art*, specific issues I addressed in the curriculum unit and discussed in Chapter 2. This survey was given as a type of pre-test before any teaching took place, and again as a post-test at the end of the unit to assess students' responses to the main unit ideas (Grant & Sleeter, 1998; Hernandez, 2001; and Cross, 2000).

A second document was a self-report questionnaire designed by the researcher to help students identify and bring to a conscious, awareness level some of their cultural value orientations (see Appendix D). This was adapted from the concepts described in the Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck Value Orientation Model (1961). I limited this study to the investigation of three of the core value orientations, *time*, *activity*, and *relational*. The Value Orientation Survey was given to students following their study of the historical and cultural contexts of the focused artists and works of art. I read the survey aloud, allowing time for students to write down their choices. Upon completion, I collected their papers, and we discussed some of their answers. Pekala (1991) suggests that the use of introspective questionnaires to measure cognitive scripts can be reliable in yielding valuable data. These cognitive scripts can be defined as conscious identifiable thoughts. The personal insights gained from the value orientations self-report were examined, discussed, and incorporated into other aspects of the curricular unit, such as students' artist's statements and interpretations of the works of art.

A portion of this research study involved the analysis of students' works of art and artist's statements (see Appendix B). Evidence of a developing consciousness of the dynamic, complex nature of art and culture and the functions of art were sought. These documents also provided evidence of how 5th graders define and identify their culture and cultural value orientations.

#### *Informal Interviews*

Evidence of critical, aesthetic development was sought through documentation of student interviews made in the latter days of this study, conducted by a research assistant. The assistant went to each table in the art classroom, where 2 – 4 students

were seated. Interviews with students took the form of casual questioning, desiring a non-threatening way of seeking honest, spontaneous responses from the participants. The interview questions focused on students' understanding and knowledge of artworld concepts in relation to the artists studied and students' personal art. Interview responses were used to add increased clarity and possibly hinder misinterpretations of observable behaviors.

The interview questions were:

- Can you identify the artist who created this work of art?
- Why do you think the artist made this artwork?
- What were some of the influences on this artist?
- What influences your own art?

#### Data Analysis

As an inductive study, I used an open-ended approach of watching for emerging patterns and processes; identifying core variables; and then gradually developing hypotheses and/or detailed descriptions of the data. Because inductive researchers rarely have random samples, the findings are not generalizable in the probabilistic sense. Yet they are generalizable in that they aid in understanding and being applied to other situations or particular settings, a form of analytic generalizability. For example, researchers can design studies within the same parameters of another study and determine if the cases described can be transferred. Findings on how the research ties in to the development of a theory or other empirical findings can then be constructed. This type of research derives its validity from the thoroughness of its analysis (Glaser,

1992; Gilgun, 2001; Cronback, 1975; Franklin & Ballan, 2001; Burgess, 1984; Radnor, 2001).

Triangulation was used to include different types of data from varying perspectives. The content for the analysis of study findings were based on ideas expressed by Erickson (1997), Hernandez (2001), Nieto (1999), and Trueba & Wright (1992) concerning aspects of culture, especially covert culture. The following is a summary of these ideas.

- Culture is dynamic, multifaceted and embedded in context.
- Culture is constantly evolving.
- Culture is socially constructed and all people are capable of constructing culture.
- Overt culture includes such aspects as dress, speech, food, and holiday traditions.
- Covert cultural includes such aspects as values, attitudes, fears, and assumptions.

The observable effects would include: evidence of an expanded list of the functions of art and evidence of an expanded definition of culture and the cultures of which students are members.

Content for the analysis of the study findings will also be based on ideas expressed by Cary (1998), Mayer (1999) and Becker (1994) distinguishing some specific characteristics of critical theory in art.

Critical theory recognizes:

- a work of art becomes an open text for interpretation;

- one's own background and experience affect one's interpretations;
- the importance of considering the cultural contexts surrounding a work of art;
- multiple voices are an essential part of the critical inquiry;
- the need to address how a society defines art and aesthetic value;
- the need to address how the roles and functions of art and aesthetic value are played out;
- the need to address how art and aesthetic value relate to issues of power and freedom.

The observable effects would include: an ability to identify specific artworlds of which these artists were members; the ability to express ideas of how specific artworlds influenced an artist and his/her artwork supported with specific examples; and evidence of an appreciation of multiple interpretations of the art that are supported with persuasive reasons.

Content for the analysis of the study findings will also be based on constructivist theory (Hernandez, 2001; Banks, 2001; Mehan, Lintz, Okamoto, & Wills, 2001; Pekala, 1991; Jensen, 1998). Analysis will seek evidence of students:

- engaging in learning with others;
- being curious;
- posing questions;
- becoming problem solvers.

And, finally, content for the analysis of the study findings will also be based on characteristics of the advanced stages of multicultural education (Banks, 1989; Sleeter

and Grant, 1987; Stuhr, 1994; Zimmerman, 1990; Chanda, 1992b) and of aesthetic development (Parsons, 2000). Analysis will seek evidence of:

- lessons presented will relate to members of different groups;
- lessons will include various social and cultural exemplars and perspectives;
- emphasis on respect for a variety of human rights;
- students' consideration of the role that power and knowledge have played;
- interpretations are reexamined in an on-going, critical manner;
- interpretations and judgments are considered through active dialogue with others;

The observable effects would include:

- demonstration of understanding cultural value-orientations by interpreting works of art using definitions and supportive reasons;
- demonstration of reflective ideas about personal artworld value-orientations in student artist's statements and works of art;
- the ability to discuss how art relates to power and freedom with supportive reasons;
- evidence of students stepping outside their own subjectivity and thinking about their artwork within a larger societal context.

Together, these definitions and characteristics of culture, critical theory, and advanced stages of multicultural education and aesthetic development provided a framework for evaluating evidence of students' development of critical cultural consciousness. The promotion of critical cultural consciousness in the classroom is in

harmony with the goals of multicultural education—fostering students' ability to view the world beyond their limited personal, racial and ethnic perspectives to advance learning. My study examined the effects of using works of art as the focal point for critical aesthetic inquiry. An ongoing questioning and reexamination of interpretations of the selected works of art evidenced the critical aesthetic inquiry. Critical aesthetic inquiry represents an important aspect of critical cultural consciousness in relation to an art-centered unit of study.

Analysis was performed to observe and document the effects an art-centered curricular unit applying artworlds and cultural value orientations played in fostering students' critical, aesthetic inquiry into works of art and students' development of critical cultural consciousness.

Miles and Huberman (1994) define data analysis as an ongoing activity of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction, as explained by Miles and Huberman, begins prior to data collection and continues after the fieldwork is complete. It is the process of selecting, focusing, and simplifying the data collected through notes and transcriptions. By focusing on the key research questions, data reduction of the field notes, written documents, and recordings made in the classroom was utilized.

Data display involves how the data is organized to allow for conclusions to be drawn. These display techniques are meant to organize information into an immediately accessible, compact form so that the analyst can see what is happening and either draw justified conclusions or move on to another step of analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Designing certain types of categories and graphs were used to examine the classroom

transcripts, the students' surveys, literary and visual arts works, and the interview responses (see Table One and Table Two).

Miles and Huberman (1994) describe drawing conclusions to involve the recognition of such phenomena as patterns, explanations, and possible configurations. This process must involve testing conclusions for their adherence to research principles. Drawing conclusions includes coding or assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study. Coding for this study focused around the concepts listed at the beginning of this section—culture, critical theory, and advanced stages of multicultural education and aesthetic development. Student responses, writings, and works of art were evaluated to determine the identification and development of these concepts throughout this study.



## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

A discussion of the outcome of an art-centered unit developed for 5th grade students to promote critical cultural consciousness is provided in this chapter. Using descriptive categories, major themes and related issues that emerged provided important information about the role and effect of the specific tools and methods utilized in the classroom setting to foster critical cultural consciousness. The participating students' definitions of culture and their personal cultural identifications recorded early and later in the study are examined followed with evidence of an expanded understanding of the functions of art. Students' personal value orientation identifications and its effect on students' critical aesthetic development is discussed, as well as the effects of the curricular strategies utilizing artworlds and historical context. Finally, students personal reflective ideas as documented in interviews, artists statements and personal art making is considered in relation to critical cultural consciousness and critical aesthetic inquiry development.

#### Students' Definitions of Culture

An important characteristic of advanced stages of multicultural education is the implementations of lessons that relate to members of different groups and include various cultural perspectives (Banks, 1989; Sleeter and Grant, 1987). Studies reviewed by Mehan, Lintz, Okamata, & Willis (2001) stressed the importance of teachers learning about the dynamic cultures of their particular students, over an attempt to generalize knowledge about ethnic or cultural groups. Therefore, specific curricular strategies and activities were utilized and examined to gain some understanding of ways 5th grade

students define and identify *culture*, both generally and personally. Effects of the art-centered unit on students' ever-broadening understanding of *culture* were also examined.

### *Culture, in General*

Evidence of the ways 5th grade students define and identify *culture* both generally and personally was accumulated through the completion of a free-word association survey administered before instruction and at the conclusion of the curricular unit (See Appendix A). The survey instrument consisted of students being handed a blank sheet of notebook paper and a pencil. The survey was conducted at the beginning of Lesson Two and of Lesson Five. Students were asked to write a list of words about culture. I told students to list "anything you can think of that might define, that is a part of, or that relates to *culture*. For example, 'languages.'" As shown in Table 1, the 58 participating students listed a total of 356 words for the pre-test. I categorized the lists into 9 major groups. Before instruction, the 5th grade students listed many diverse examples of various aspects of culture. The largest group, *survival*, consisted of words such as: "food, homes, animals, rich, poor, lifestyle, transportation, money, and farming." The second largest category, *clothing/outward adornment*, included such words as: "clothing, hair, shoes, make-up, and style." The *language* category was high, but it was the example I used when assigning the pre-survey, so it is not a true test of the students' usage. Not many countries were actually identified under the *ethnicity/nationality* group. It mostly consisted of such words as, "skin color, people, flags, and ways of defense."

The pre-instruction word association surveys revealed students' rather broad understandings of culture. Though the majority of words referred to overt aspects of culture, it is apparent students are capable of understanding and, in fact, have an awareness of the complex, multifaceted nature of *culture*. The survey gave evidence that students understand that *culture* involves nationality, ways of taking care of physical needs, physical appearances, pleasure, the arts, religion, and history. The pre-instruction survey included seven words that showed a sophisticated understanding of covert aspects of culture. These were: "attitude, fears, thoughts, ideas, and spirit."

Observable effects of students' development of critical cultural consciousness include evidence of an expanded definition of *culture* (see Figure 1: Conceptual Framework). The post-instruction instruction survey was administered during one of the last sessions with participating students. I simply stated the same directions as I had for the pre-instruction survey: "Make a list of anything you can think of that might define, that is a part of, or that relates to *culture*. For example, 'languages.'" As shown in Table 1, the number of total responses was less than the pre-instruction survey, from 356 to 242. Of particular interest is the notable decrease in the *survival* category from 101 in the pre-survey, to only 24 in the post- survey. It seems students had less interest in listing some of the words such as: "plants, materials, farming, rich, poor, and transportation" as they had in the pre-instruction survey. The most important contrast in the post-instruction survey of this study is the increase in the *thoughts/feelings/ideas* category from 7 to 20. The post-instruction survey revealed an increase in some students' realization of the more covert aspects of culture with words such as: "meaning, ideals, how define, and character."

The inclusion of more covert aspects of culture by students succeeding instruction, strongly suggests an increased cultural conscious level. It is such covert aspects of culture, such as attitude, fears, and values that are most often outside of our conscious awareness and are, therefore, not appropriately addressed or effectively utilized within the school environment (Erickson, 1997; Hernandez, 2001). This expansion in students' definition of culture following directed instruction offers a positive example of 5th grade students' increasing abilities to identify and understand covert aspects of culture.

TABLE 1: Pre- and Post-Instruction Word Association Surveys.

	Pre- Instruction	Post- Instruction
<b>1. Terms related to “culture”</b>	685	603
Categories		
Survival	101	24
Clothing/outward adornment	67	41
Language	44	42
Arts	43	29
Ethnicity/ nationality	40	43
Religion	21	24
History/traditions	20	7
Entertainment/activities	13	12
Thoughts/feelings/ideas	7	20
<b>2. Personal cultural identities</b>	154	176
Categories		
Nationality/ethnic	113	124
Community/family	15	17
Religion/church	13	14
Talents/interests/activities	11	21
Misc	2	
<b>3. Functions of art</b>	175	185
Categories		
Emotions/feelings	45	35
Decoration	40	31
Technique/elements	17	9
Pleasure/fun	17	21
Profit/promotion	17	9
Personal identity	11	7
Expression	10	9
Historical/cultural	6	9
Religion	4	3
Special occasions	6	7
Tell stories	1	22

### *Students' Personal Cultural Identifications*

Examples of the ways 5th grade students define and identify the cultures in which they personally are a member was also accumulated through the pre/post-instruction free-word association surveys (see table 1). After listing words that related to *culture*, students were directed to: "Name the cultures of which you personally are a member. These might include what some people call 'micro-cultures.' For example, we are a part of a large American culture, and other, smaller cultures."

In the pre-instruction survey, of the total 154 responses, 113 of them were in the category *nationality/ethnic*. In contrast to participating students' first lists that included many various aspects of culture, when asked to actually identify their own cultures, most responses were names of specific countries. I gave "American" as an example and it was listed in 23 of their responses. In my instructions, I specifically suggested their inclusion of micro- or sub-cultures in their lists, but by students' responses, it appears they were not prone to relate their associations of the broad nature of *culture* into specific examples of cultures of which they were members. It seems likely that by my requesting students to actually give a title or name to specific cultures of which they are members it may have caused more narrow, stereotypical responses in their original survey.

Other main headings were *religion/church*, with such words as "church, Methodist, Christian, and Catholic." The *talents/interests/activities* category included such micro-cultures as, "Girl Scouts, basketball, and track." Six responses in the *community* category included the name of their school.

Concluding implementation of the unit, the post-instruction word association surveys of students' personal cultural identities, recorded an increase in total responses from 154 to 176. Slight increases in all categories were recorded, with almost a doubling in the *talents/interests/activities* category from 11 to 21. This increase supports students' greater awareness of sub- or micro-cultures in which they are members, such as: drama, dance, music, and specific club names. A slight expansion in students' understanding or consciousness of the broad and dynamic nature of *culture* as it pertains to them personally is apparent. The expanded list of personal micro-cultures was a result of class discussions throughout the curriculum unit in which students shared their answers and ideas about the survey questions. The cultural groups in which 5th grade students personally identify offer avenues for multicultural lessons development that relate to the students' experiences.

#### Expanded Understanding of the Functions of Art

McFee and Degge (1977) and Chalmers (1996) stressed the importance of directing students to the many different functions of art appropriated by different cultures. By comparing and contrasting examples of cultural functions of art, students are able to better understand the context of one cultural group within holistic cultural orientations (Saravia-Shore and Arvizu, 1992). The pre- and post-instruction word association survey included a third section that was participating students' free-word listings of the functions of art (see Table 1). Evidence was sought of an expanded list of students' ability to identify the varying roles of artists following their involvement in the art-centered unit. Later in this chapter the results of students' own explanations of their personal roles as an artist are also revealed.

When administering the free-word association survey seeking how 5th grade students identify the roles of art, I said: "Make a list of the functions of art. Why art? Why do artists make art? Why is it important? An example would be 'to express feelings' and another one is 'decoration.'" The two functions that made the top of both lists were, of course, my two examples, "feelings" and "decoration." The "feeling" category also included students listing actual feelings, such as: "love, hurt, fear, happy, and excitement." In the pre-instruction survey, a total of 175 functions were recorded. I categorized their lists into 11 major groups. The pre-instruction survey included 17 responses in the *techniques/elements* category, with such words as "color, texture, collage, and painting." Also, 17 responses were listed in the categories, *pleasure/fun* and *profit/promotion*.

The post-instruction survey had a total of 185 responses, with 13 major groups emerging. The post-instruction survey included two additional categories, *social issues/actions* and *assignment*. Some of the words in the *social issues/actions* group included: "protest, rights, admiration, describe threat, get help, and courage." (The *assignment* category I believe was in my behalf, as it sometimes was accompanied with a smiley face!) Also, what had been labeled *explain* in the pre-instruction survey listed by only one student, was expanded to *tell stories/explain* in the post-instruction survey with 22 responses falling into that category.

The art-centered unit utilized such curricular tools as artworlds, cultural value orientations, and historical contexts. There were no activities specifically addressing the functions of art, except indirectly in class discussions. I directed students' discussions around questions identifying to whom the selected artists were paying homage and



what each artist was communicating in regard to the honored subjects. Discussions were also directed to students' interpretations of what was important to each artist as expressed in his/her works of art. Because the post-instruction survey exhibited an expanded list of art functions, especially in the categories of *tell stories/explain* and *social issues/actions*, there is evidence of the effectiveness of utilizing artworlds, cultural value orientations, and historical contexts, in fostering students' critical cultural consciousness as described in the conceptual framework of this study. By exercising critical aesthetic inquiry, the participating students examined the selected works of art in my curricular unit. Students had opportunities to apply their knowledge of each artist's *artworld*, the historical contexts read in class, and students' own understandings of value orientations to their ongoing interpretations of the art. Students' expanded lists of the functions of art in the categories of *tell stories/explain* and *social issues/actions* suggest that from these curricular strategies, students were taking steps toward learning how art can be used to better understand elements of culture (by telling stories and explaining) and that artists can play important roles in the creation *culture* (by exposing and acting in response to social issues). The increase in students' identification of art functioning to tell stories and to describe social issues is evidence of 5th graders' growing ability to actively address characteristics of critical theory such as how the roles and functions of art are played out and how art may relate to issues of power and freedom (Cary, 1998; Becker, 1994).

#### Students' Value Orientations Identifications

Sue and Sue (1999) declared one of the most useful frameworks for understanding differences among individual groups is the Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck

(1961) model. I limited this study to the investigation of three of the core value orientations, *time*, *activity*, and *relational*. The Kluckhohm and Strodtbeck model was utilized in the curricular unit of this study in three specific ways. First, I wrote a situational survey (see Appendix D) that related to the students' lives to provide students with a way for personally understanding and identifying with the core value orientations. My Value Orientation Survey was administered during Lesson Four, following students' reading and discussion of the general American historical context contained in their textbooks and in a selected example of literature, the poem "Alabama Centennial" by Naomi Madgett. Secondly, students transferred their understanding of cultural value orientations gained from the value orientations survey into their interpretations of the selected works of art. And thirdly, some students chose to express their personal value orientations in their artist's statements (Appendix B).

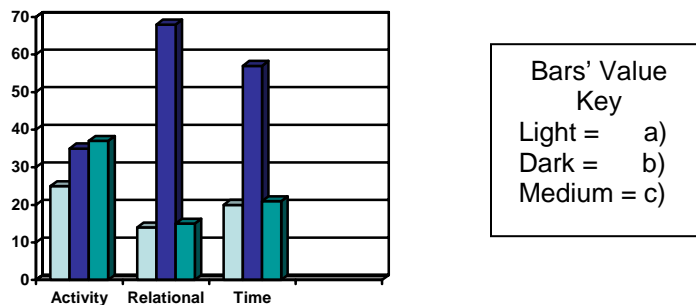
#### *Activity Orientations and Discussions*

The value orientation survey provided a means for students to understand the concepts of value orientations and to identify their personal choices. The results give evidence of how 5th grade students identify their cultural value orientations, as summarized in table 2. The first category is the *activity* value orientation. As a reminder of the *activity orientations*, as explained by Kluckhohm and Strodtbeck (1961) and discussed in Chapter 2, the *being-in-becoming orientation* was one of containment of desires, stressing the development of all aspects of the self as an integrated whole. The *being orientation* exemplified more spontaneous expressions in activities and the *doing orientation* valued measurable standards of achievement in activity. Students identified their *activity* value orientation more as *being* and *being-in-becoming*, though *doing*

received many points as well. The *doing* orientation was cited by Kluckholm and Strodtbeck in 1961 as characteristic of the dominant (adult) culture in America. Students in this study show that, some forty years later, American culture has evidence of cultural change, at least as expressed by these nine- and ten-year olds.

Table 2: Students' Responses

Value-Orientation	Total
<i>Activity</i>	117
a) <i>Doing</i>	25
b) <i>Being</i>	35
c) <i>Being-in-becoming</i>	37
<i>Relational</i>	97
a) <i>Lineal</i>	14
b) <i>Collateral</i>	68
c) <i>Independent</i>	15
<i>Time</i>	98
a) <i>Past</i>	20
b) <i>Present</i>	57
c) <i>Future</i>	21



Some classroom discussion followed students' completion of the survey. In describing their choices, many students expressed the idea of a coach, whose desire to win games predominates the individual needs of team members, as being "too strict."<sup>1</sup> Some students believed having fun was as important as "winning." Others expressed the importance of attitude and mental development, citing the difference in sports such as football and Tae Kwon Do. One student expressed the value of Tae Kwon Do as *being-in-becoming* because emphasis is placed on personal skills, self-defense, and "it is more about yourself." Another student expressed surprise that other classmates chose the *being-in-becoming* value orientation as he did. He thought his classmates would choose *being*, because he thought all they cared about was "just having fun," yet the *being-in-becoming* placed an emphasis on character and inner strength.<sup>2</sup>

When discussing the use of free time, one student went into great detail explaining her view. She expressed how just *doing* class work all of the time, did not

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<sup>1</sup> Some of the discussions surrounding the *activity* orientation included:

**Me:** So which one did you pick? [in reference to #1, Team Choice]

**Student:** I put B [*being*]

**Me:** So you want to have a good time too?

**Another Student:** I put C [*being-in-becoming*]

**Me:** You think everything is important? Attitude, mental development... Did anyone put A [*doing*]?

**Many students together:** Too strict!

**Me:** Do you think there are any coaches like that?

**Many students together:** Yes!

**Me:** Do you think Super Bowl teams that win are more like A [*doing*]? Some of them might be more like C [*being-in-becoming*]... With A [*doing*], you are mainly there to win games...

<sup>2</sup> **Me:** Were all of your answers the same, or did you think your classmates would be different?

**Student:** I said the same.

**Another Student:** I thought most of my classmates would say B [*being*] is best.

**Me:** So what did you think was best?

**Same Student:** I thought C [*being-in-becoming*]

**Me:** So maybe your classmates are more concerned with every aspect of their lives more than you thought...

necessarily mean one was learning in the best way. It was important to work for improvement *only* if that was what you needed, not just for the sake of *working or staying busy*.<sup>3</sup> Another student boldly expressed his choice as a *being orientation*. He continued, “Like right after I get out of school I like to hang out with my friends and stuff and then I get serious.” Following this comment, the classroom teacher asked what did he think was the best value orientation while still in school, when left with “free time.” He quickly said he would choose the *being-in-becoming orientation*, adding he believed his teacher preferred the *doing orientation*!<sup>4</sup>

These discussion excerpts are examples of students discussing covert cultural elements that they thought were important and significant. Ideas about competition and self-discipline in sports and ideas about complying with academic requirements whether or not the assignments are advancing their knowledge were thoughtfully expressed in these excerpts. Subcultures, such as school and team sports, were introduced and discussed through the Value Orientation Survey situations. Discussions revealed ways students’ personal value orientations might differ from value orientations supported by the decision-makers, such as coaches, teachers and principals, in the subcultures of

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<sup>3</sup> Part of another class discussion on the *activity* orientation:

**Me:** What did you put? [in reference to #2, Nonworking time]

**Student:** I put C [*being-in-becoming*]. Let me tell you why. A [*doing*] the one spending all the time with school work, I thought to practice that you wouldn’t learn the whole, say, multiplication facts without saying, “I learned some multiplication that I *wanted* to know.”

**Me:** Which kind of “practicing”?

**Same Student:** For improvement, C [*being-in-becoming*]

**Me:** C [*being-in-becoming*] is doing things you think need to be done. Whereas, A [*doing*] is just staying on task to make sure you are always *doing*? (Student shakes head in agreement.)

<sup>4</sup> **Me:** Which of these do you think your teacher would think best?

**Same Student:** A [*doing*].

**Me:** Did all of you put A [*doing*] for your teacher? (Many answer “yes” and “no” all at once.)

which students are members. Such discussions can lay important foundations for an ongoing analysis of culture. Such discussions are examples of foundations needed for students to realize how each person might play a role in the creation (not just reception) of culture—crucial elements of critical cultural consciousness.

### *Relational Orientations and Discussions*

The *relational* value orientation chosen by the participating students was overwhelmingly the *collateral orientation*, receiving 68 of the total 97 responses. Kluckhohm and Strodbeck (1961) described a *collateral* orientation as having the primary goal to be the welfare of the laterally extended group. This shows a sharp contrast from what Kluckhohm and Stodbeck identified as mainstream America's (adult) individualistic, autonomous orientation in 1961. One particular class discussion highlighted the classroom teacher's awareness of this change in school culture from an *individualistic* to *collateral orientation*. The discussion began with one student describing the best way to resolve disagreements. The student stated: "Everyone keeps their ideas—say, I say, 'blue' and someone else says, 'I think it should be red.' And then we *all* decide to make it green." This statement was met with agreement by another student saying, "Everyone needs to decide on the same thing because [otherwise] they'd be left out." Quickly the classroom teacher reflected, "That is the focus now—they focus on everyone coming to an agreement." This *collateral orientation* emphasis marked a change from the school culture in which the teacher (and the researcher) grew up and began her teaching career.

Another student's comments also exemplify how *relational* orientations have changed from the past generation. She explained her mom's tendency to be more

*independent oriented*: “My mom—She won’t tell people her opinion. She is quiet in that she doesn’t go off and ask for help when she needs stuff. I mean she won’t even honk her horn in traffic! She does everything by herself.”

These excerpts offer evidence of ways class discussions in conjunction with value orientations provided desirable opportunities for examples of the dynamic nature of *culture*. The classroom teacher was able to verbalize a value orientation change in the school culture, one from a more individualistic to more collateral *relational* orientation. When various social and cultural exemplars and perspectives are presented through active dialogue, opportunities for advanced stages of multicultural education become possible.

#### *Time Orientations and Discussions*

The third value orientation presented in the survey was the *time orientation*. More than twice as many students’ choices were the *present* value orientation, receiving 57 of the total 98 responses. The other two, *past* and *future orientations*, were almost equal with 20 and 21 responses. As in the previous value orientations, the students’ choices do not reflect the mainstream American value orientations as cited by Kluckhohm and Strodtbeck in 1961, who noted America as one that placed a high emphasis upon the *future orientation*. Value orientations reveal personal and cultural orientations. The students revealed their personal orientations in response to each situation in the survey. My tally of students’ value orientations as a whole group of 5th graders suggests the value orientations of the subculture represented by these students—5th graders of a particular elementary school at a particular time. The importance to me, in reference to my study of critical cultural consciousness, is not just

to highlight the specific value orientations chosen by the students, but also to highlight the process of defining, explaining, and analyzing covert aspects of culture of which these 5th graders were engaged. The following excerpts of class discussions are examples of vital elements necessary for the promotion of critical cultural consciousness.

One class discussion about the *time* orientation was in reference to what is important in training children. One student expressed his belief that you should teach a child to look toward the future. He explained, “The past has changed so you can’t depend on that. It is not going to work.” Another student added to this discussion by saying, “Indians on reservations don’t want anything to change.” I added to that comment with the ideas of *past* and *future* orientations by saying, “Many people do believe the traditions of his/her past are most important. They don’t want to loose that. But some people don’t mind loosing it—they are always looking ahead.” Finally, another student stated, “You can’t do anything about the past.” And I commented, “You can’t do anything about it, but you may desire to continue those traditions.”

A second example of a class discussion on the *time* orientation was in relation to students’ belief about their future standard of living. A student volunteered his choice of a *present* orientation “because no one really does know [about the future]—it could be worse.” When asked what orientation his parents would choose, he said “probably still the *present*, even though they would want me to be better off than they had been.”

The discussions were evidence of 5th graders’ ability to express significant beliefs, ideas, and opinions about important covert aspects of culture. Evidence of students’ understanding of cultural value orientations in their ability to give personal



examples during classroom discussion was recorded. Results showed students' cultural value orientations were strongly supporting a *collateral relational* orientation and a *present time* orientation. Students favored *being* and *being-in-becoming activity* orientations. All of the cultural value orientations most supported by these students were not ones that had been identified by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck as representing the mainstream American, adult value orientations in 1961.

#### *Cultural Value Orientations Effect on Critical Aesthetic Development*

Lesson Four of my curricular unit included the presentation of historical contexts, students' identifications and discussion of their personal cultural value orientations and culminated with the opportunity for students to re-interpret the selected works of art. Until Lesson Four, the previous lessons primarily utilized the formal, visual elements of the selected works of art and information about *artworlds* for students' interpretations. Lesson One included the pre- and post-museum visit activities. The pre-visit activities included questions students had about the selected works of art. The post-visit activities provided opportunity for students to review their previous questions and discuss some of their answers. Lesson Two included the introduction of each selected artist's *artworld* information through a dramatic reading (see Appendix A). After the reading students were given opportunity to interpret the selected works of art for evidence of how *artworlds* influenced each artist.

Assessment of students' critical aesthetic development can be made through documentation of their new interpretations of the works of art following identification and discussion of cultural value orientations. Critical, aesthetic inquiry is defined as an on-going wondering and questioning about art. It would include evidence that students

were engaged in active dialogue with others so as to consider different voices for new interpretive ideas about the works of art. Students would show evidence of incorporating new contextual information, with a continuing reexamination of their views in light of new information and understanding (Parson, 2000; Cary, 1998; Mayer, 1999). Critical aesthetic inquiry is used in my study as an important component of an art-centered unit designed to foster critical cultural consciousness. Evidence of critical aesthetic inquiry being portrayed by the participating students was sought.

Following identification and discussion of students' own value orientations, they were divided into cooperative groups. Each group was given two or three examples of art by one of the three selected artists, Catlett, White, or Bearden. I directed students to discuss their interpretations of the selected works of art within the context of cultural value orientations. However, in the scheduled time allotment, only two of the three classes had time to transfer principles of value orientations into class discussion of their interpretations of the works of art.

#### *Interpretations of the Art of Romare Bearden*

The post-museum visit lesson included my presentation of some of Bearden's biographical facts. We were able to verify the media after seeing the original works at the museum. I asked if students had ideas about the meaning of the circles, colors, and events (questions they had asked in the pre-museum visit lesson). Student responses were few. A student in one class suggested that one object looked like a bridge and one like a sewer pipe or smokestack. I asked where one would find such things, "in the city or the country?" Together students said, "The city." I mentioned the title again, and asked what it might suggest. There were no volunteered responses.

In another class one student mentioned the figure in the center of the painting who was holding up two fingers. A student raised his hand in similar fashion and said, "Peace." I agreed that the hand gesture was used as a peace sign during the time this painting was created, thus invoking a short discussion about symbols. Most early class discussions revolved around describing and analyzing the visual imagery used in the art.

Following the dramatic reading that presented the *artworlds* and additional biographical information of the selected artists during the implementation of Lesson Two, I had very little time in the schedule to seek new interpretations of the art. Therefore, the cultural value orientations proved to be important tools in which to seek students' interpretations of covert aspects of culture represented or suggested in Bearden's art.

Student comments made during Lesson Four following the Value Orientations Survey, in reference to the art of Romare Bearden expressed interpretations of him "holding onto the past by the things he used in his pictures." A student explained he was holding on to the past because of the style in which he painted, saying people do not paint like that anymore. Several interpretations included ideas that Bearden believed in working together because "in the pictures there are lots of groups." Students expressed their idea that Bearden believed in a *being activity* orientation stating, "he did this picture because he was enjoying himself and socializing with his family and friends about his art."

The comments pointing out Bearden's inclusion of multiple figures to suggest collateral *relational* orientations and being *activity* orientations were evidence of small,

yet definite steps taken by students to incorporate new knowledge into previously noted visual clues resulting in new interpretations.

### *Interpretations of the Art of Charles White*

Discussions during the post-museum visit lesson were longer and more insightful in conjunction with *Woman Worker* by Charles White than with Bearden's *The Black Man in the Making of America*. Many ideas were offered for where the portrayed woman was sitting. Students' ideas included: "in a small room;" "in jail;" "in a office;" and "in a kind of booth or something." When questioned about the emotions of the portrayed woman, students suggested: "sad;" "like she is not really looking at you, but looking past you;" and "looks like she is thinking or praying." We discussed the woman's appearance, such as clothing, hair, and hands in reference to the type of work she might do. Students suggested: "building or working on the railroad, that is why she has big muscles;" and "housework." Students offered various interpretations as they sought to find meaning in the way White portrayed the woman in his painting.

Within the context of cultural value orientations, students expressed additional insightful interpretations about the artwork of Charles White. In reference to White's historical portraits, such as *Fredrick Douglass* (1940), students commented that the artist was most involved in the past "so he would remember the person in Black history as he was." But the painting, *Working Woman* expressed a *present* orientation in that "it expresses the attitude at that time. She is solid, not changing right now—she is thinking about her world right now." One cooperative group agreed that White worked individually, supporting their interpretation by saying, "in both of his pictures there is just one person and that was it." And group members agreed that White expressed a *being-*

*in-becoming* value orientation that believed strong character was most important. This was supported with visual clues such as, “we don’t see socializing because they don’t talk or anything. They aren’t with anyone—so if they would be socializing they would be having fun.” Students’ noted how the figures are “more solemn” and “seem to be thinking” or “waiting for something.” One student explained why the *activity* value orientation was not *doing*, in the painting *Working Woman* because, “If he wanted her working he would have her standing by a stove!”

The value orientation lenses resulted in interpretations that included such words as “solid, not changing” and “strong character.” Students’ interpretations using value orientations are to be noted not so much for the conclusions, but for emerging evidence of covert aspects of culture being incorporated and discussed in their interpretations.

#### *Interpretations of the Art of Elizabeth Catlett*

Post-museum visit discussion revealed students’ surprise and attraction to the large size of *Homage to Black Women Poets* (almost life-size and displayed on a platform, raising her height above that of the students’). As with Bearden’s hand gesture symbolizing peace, students suggested Catlett’s woman with her fist held high was symbolic, representing Black Power. We spoke about how the arm was straight and angular in form, further suggesting strength or power. When discussing what the woman in the sculpture was wearing, students did not offer any interpretations.

The cooperative groups examining the art of Elizabeth Catlett in reference to value orientations offered additional interpretive insights. The *past* value orientation was noted for both *Harriet* and *Homage to Black Women Poets*. The work portraying Harriet Tubman was described as looking “like she wants freedom, but now we have freedom.”

The sculpture *Homage to Black Women Poets* showed an interest in the past in the way “the woman is so bold and her clothes.” Other students commented about Catlett’s *individual orientation* working, because “she always included one main figure in her artwork, who appears to have strong character on the inside.”

Students’ interpretations of the selected works of art incorporating an understanding of the three cultural value orientations, *time*, *relational*, and *activity* showed evidence of value orientations as useful tools in students’ beginning critical aesthetic development. Students’ comments reflected an incorporation of their understanding of value orientations for reexamination of and application to their interpretations of the works of art. The cultural value orientations offered specific lenses by which students could reexamine the works of art and as tools to ignite dialogue about covert aspects of culture such as a desire for freedom and inner strength.

### Effects of Artworlds and Historical Contexts

#### *Pre-Instruction*

A way to measure the effects of utilizing artworlds and historical context as curricular tools to develop critical aesthetic inquiry into works of art was to begin with some description of the participating students’ initial aesthetic understanding. In my pre-museum visit with participating students, I divided each class into three cooperative groups. I gave each group a photocopy of one of the works of art that would be the focus of this art-centered curricular unit. I asked each group to write down five questions they would like answered in relation to the work of art, with two of the questions about the artist and three about the artwork. Upon completion, each group read their questions to the rest of the class.

Questions compiled by the students in cooperative groups about the artists included biographical questions such as:

- When was the artist born?
- When did the artist die?
- Where did the artist live?
- Does the artist have children?

Other questions focused on choices the artist made in creating the art such as:

- Why did he choose those colors?
- How did she come up with the idea to carve this sculpture?
- Why does he have all those circles in the pictures?

Other questions about the works of art were concerned with media and techniques.

Examples of their questions included:

- Why did she make it out of wood?
- What tools did she use to carve it?
- Is it a collage or just a painting?
- How long did it take to make it?

A final set of questions sought an understanding of what the artists were trying to communicate based on the subject matter used in the works of art, such as:

- What is happening in the picture?
- What is the emotion of the woman in the picture?
- Where was the picture made?
- What is the thing wrapped around her leg?
- Why does the man with the white hat have a blue mask-like face?

- Why does she have big muscles?
- Did the artist know that person?

The students were interested in aspects of the artists' lives that most people would want to know upon being introduced to someone new, such as when and where they lived. Having personally created art using various media, the students were also curious about how and why each artist made his/her art as s/he did. Finally, the last set of questions reflected an understanding that artists are depicting specific messages beyond simply mirroring the physical world. According to Parsons (2000), this level of understanding is a more advanced stage of aesthetic development. The earliest stages of aesthetic understanding identified by Parsons (2000) are characterized by responses that simply judge works of art according to the viewer's intuitive attraction or by what the viewer believes is a skillful, realistic representation of the subject. These questions, however, exemplify students' awareness that artists use style, elements, and subject matter as modes for expressing certain meanings.

### *Artworlds*

To provide students with some cultural contexts of the focused artists, I used the principles of *artworlds*. *Artworlds* are micro-cultures containing members whose identity are related in some way to art (Erickson, 2002). Students were introduced to some of the specific artworlds of Bearden, Catlett, and White, such as art schools, political and social associations, and artist friends, mentors, and companions. This was initially incorporated into the curriculum through a dramatic reading that I compiled and student volunteers read to their classmates.



Immediately following the dramatic reading, very few minutes were left in the school schedule in which I could engage discussion. However, an attempt was made to assess their memory and understanding of specific examples of artworlds of which each artist was a member. When students were asked the cultures of which these artists were members the responses were a few isolated comments such as:

- (about Catlett) She sought power and freedom for her country and she became a Mexican citizen.
- (about Bearden) He did collages and he cut and pastes.
- (about White) He died in 1971 and he married Catlett.

The oral responses expressed very little recall of information that was presented in the dramatic reading. The video recording taken during the dramatic readings revealed evidence of the student audience paying more attention on the costumes, antics, and expressions of their performing classmates than on the specific content of the dramatic reading.

The presentation of *artworlds* in the form of a dramatic reading was made very early in the curriculum unit implementation (in Lesson Two, Appendix A). However, references were made during other lessons of the unit. Students had no prior knowledge of particular universities, artists, or social organizations (*artworlds*) of which these artists were a part. Thus the introduction of the artists' *artworlds* was not information that students could readily connect or relate to.

Evidence of critical, aesthetic development was sought through documentation of student interviews made in the latter days of the study. One question of the student interview asked students to identify influences on the selected artists. This question was

specifically designed to assess the affect of applying *artworld* concepts into the unit of instruction. Of the 33 responses to the question, 19 students answered they did not know, implying that more than half of the students did not make a connection with the curricular unit's presentation of the artists' *artworlds* as examples of specific influences on their art. Nine responses did included comments that family, ethnic background, other African-American art, and a desire for power over personal circumstances were influences on the focused artists. Such responses showed limited connection and understanding by some students of *artworlds* as influences on artists' works.

### *Historical Context*

About 75 minutes with each class was devoted to reading the chapter in students' textbook on the Civil Rights Movement in America.<sup>5</sup> It included class

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<sup>5</sup> Class discussions in connection to the text reading focused on having students recall the key people and main ideas presented. Discussions included students' ideas about protesting. Here is one example:  
**Me:** When you see social injustice in a country like America, where you do have the freedom of protest, what are some of the ways? For example, if you see something in your school that doesn't seem like it's fair, what are some of the ways that you can protest? What are some ways that we've read about to protest?

**Student:** Boycott

**Me:** We've read about a boycott.

**Student:** Yep

**Student:** You could go to court

**Me:** You could have a lawsuit.

**Student:** Protest

**Student:** Food fight?

**Me:** What else could you do to protest?

**Student:** Letters

**Me:** Good. Letters to whom?

**Student:** President, principal, major leaders

**Me:** Who else?

**Student:** Well, if it happened at school, we could write them to teachers

**Me:** OK, teachers, principals, and whoever has the power. Who else?

**Student:** You can go to the superintendent

**Me:** Sure can, you can go all the way to the top.

**Student:** President Kennedy wanted to help but he couldn't because the laws wouldn't let him

**Me:** That's true. He still had to go through the courts that made the laws...

**Student:** through the supreme court

**Me:** he did, through the courts

How about the media? What could you do as far as protesting there?

**Student:** newspaper, magazines, TV

discussions, a reading of the poem “Alabama Centennial” by Naomi Madgett (Appendix D), and interpretations of the poem as students worked in cooperative groups.<sup>6</sup>

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**Me:** If you saw something really wrong, you could tell the TV station, have them come out and film it, you could write letters to the newspaper couldn't you? Have letters to the editor.

**Student:** In my book, *Lives of Extraordinary Women*, it was talking about this woman who was put in jail unjustly and she had it televised so everyone would know about it.

**Me:** It's a good way, isn't it? That works really well

**Same Student** (looking in her book): here it is: “calling a press conference to publically say I've been mistreated

**Me:** good, good. So how about our artists? If you were an artist, is there some way that you could make some kind of protest if you saw something not being done the way that you thought it should?

**Student:** Like something wrong you could draw about it, paint a big mural to stop it.

<sup>6</sup> **Me:** Let's break this poem down and see what the poet is saying—

(from the poem) “They said ‘wait’ and I waited a hundred years”

Who is saying what? What is that 100 years?

**Student:** Waited for freedom

**Me:** What do you think 100 years might be?

**Student:** a long time

**Student:** Seemed like forever

**Me:** Yeah—it could be that, also it could be—civil rights started in the 1960s, after 100 years of segregation after the end of slavery – there really wasn't the freedom that should have happened at the end of slavery. Couldn't that also be “the 100 years of waiting”?

[from the poem] “Cotton fields, kitchen balconies, breadlines”

Showing you what segregation has done—put a class of people—a race of people in situations that were not as good as White people. It wasn't just African-Americans. We read in the text, it included Mexican-Americans and American Indian—having to fight for these rights...

[from the poem] “outside of schools and voting booths...” What would that be referring to? What was happening in the schools?

**Student:** Segregation—Black students weren't allowed to go to a White school

**Me:** What about voting booths?

**Student:** Blacks weren't allowed to vote

**Me:** Even when they could vote there were ways to keep them away by intimidation.

What is the [from the poem] “new wind and new voice”?

**Student:** New people speaking out

**Me:** Yes, we learned of Martin Luther King Jr and Malcolm X speaking out

**Student:** Rosa Parks

**Me:** I think so too. Don't you think that describes her? [from the poem] “strong and determined and sure?”

**Student:** Thurgood Marshall

**Me:** Thurgood Marshall—You bet. “fighting for the strong, determined and sure”

(from the poem) “walked to, sang to, prayed to” “other voices echoed there... walked the streets of Montgomery, Alabama.” What is being talked about there that we just read?

**Student:** Martin Luther King Jr —speeches

**Me:** Speeches and marches—they were gathering forces. How many marched in Montgomery?

**Student:** a lot

**Me:** 250,000 that is a lot gathered—so their voices increased.

**Me:** The words “of patient acquiescence” ... what that means is passively accepting things as they are—so they are no longer going to patiently accept things the way they are. Going to break that chain, right?

In another class, while discussing the poem, one student exclaimed: “I want to say something. When I started actually trying to pay attention to our part of the poem, I think it is talking about, like a summary of

Discussions during this lesson provided opportunities to suggest ways the cultural contexts, such as historical times and artworlds, influenced the art of Catlett, Bearden, and White. Student comments during class discussions in association with the historical accounts revealed evidence of their ability to interpret works of art within the historical contexts. I directed students' attention to each work of art, in reference to the unit theme, "Respect and Homage," seeking their interpretations of what each artist was communicating.

Students expressed ideas about "power" in relation to *Homage to Black Women Poets*, by Catlett. When I asked: "What do you think the artist thinks about Black women poets?" One student said, "She thinks they're powerful and their words, they express themselves really good." This statement is an example of a direct connection of the artwork to the poem, by Naomi Madgett, which was read in class.

I asked students of what Charles White was honoring or showing respect in *Working Woman*. One response was: "He is saying, 'like good job that women worked for equality for all women.' They worked hard because they wanted to be treated like men—wanted to work the same jobs and stuff like that. So he is probably saying that they are very brave sacrifices." Other student responses mentioned the fact that White grew up alone with his mother and that White wanted "to show that women work too." Student responses made reference to the American Equal Rights Movement and to White's personal history.

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a story telling you about what happened. It is about the details so this whole poem is what the Black Americans had before and what they gained and what they had to do, the process.

**Me:** How to stand up for change. I think so too. After reading what happened in your history books you have a better understanding of the meaning of the poem. That is like looking at art too. It makes you appreciate it more.

When interpreting the meaning of Bearden's *The Black Man and the Making of America*, one student made reference to Thurgood Marshall. I found this comment extremely interesting, because some of the imagery in the painting might initially suggest "the making of America" in a physically, constructing or building sense. The student's comment brought the interpretation to a higher plane, suggesting "The Black Man," such as Thurgood Marshall, contributed to the fight for freedom and equal rights for all Americans, or "the making of American" into the democratic nation it should be. The student's comment directed me to note much of the physical construction of the buildings and the strong American economy was a result of "the Black man," but, also, and as pointed out, the quest for equal rights for all Americans was a result of "The Black Man and the Making of America."<sup>7</sup> The student comments are strong evidence of steps toward advanced stages of multicultural education and of aesthetic development. Students' responses that are recorded expressed a respect for a variety of human rights including those of women and African Americans. Students expressed a growing awareness of the role that power played in historic events such as the marches for equal rights and in works of art such as *Homage to Black Women Poets*. The interdisciplinary historical and literary contexts were employed in students' reexamination of their interpretations in an on-going, critical manner and through an active dialogue with others (Banks, 1989; Sleeter & Grant, 1987; Stuhr, 1994;

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<sup>7</sup> **Me:** What about Romare Bearden in *The Black Man and the Making of America*. This was done in the sixties, right when they were talking about equal rights. What might he be saying?

**Student:** Like Thurgood Marshall.

**Me:** That is interesting because I was thinking they were "making of America" more like constructing or building. But Thurgood Marshall and others we just studied, were making us become a democratic nation—they were fighting for rights to make us be more who we should be.

Zimmerman,1990; Chanda,1992b; Parsons, 2000).<sup>8</sup> Students' responses reflect many of the characteristics of critical theory and more advanced stages of multicultural education.

Whole class discussions do not provide opportunity for all students to contribute. The comments recorded in the class discussions were made by students who were confident in their ideas and interpretations and thus willing to respond orally. Further evidence of critical, aesthetic development was sought through documentation of student interviews made in the latter days of the study to smaller groups of 2 – 4 students seated at tables in the art classroom. The interview began by showing a reproduction of the selected works of art and asking students to identify the name of the

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<sup>8</sup> (from another class discussion):

**Me:** Let's look at this one. Romare Bearden, he is paying homage to everyday events in his life. How is he showing us everyday events in his life?

**Student:** Well, I forgot what is that when you take, like... you cut out...

**Me:** Collage

**Student:** I knew it was something...

**Me:** So he decided it was good to show homage to everyday things in his life because he wanted to emphasize African American lives, how everybody's lives are valuable. OK. A couple of things I wanted to bring up and then we'll work on our own art!

We talked in the beginning about functions of art and we didn't really talk about some of the functions that we've seen right here from the poetry and works of art.

They can actually be for protests. What are some other types of protests or some art forms of protest, or something you've seen in our textbooks?

**Student:** boycotts

**Me:** Right—boycotts are a sign of protest. What else?

**Student:** non-violent ways

**Me:** Yeah, what were some of the nonviolent ways?

**Student:** Singing

**Me:** Yes, singing, speeches. What else?

**Student:** Just like refusing to do what they didn't believe in

**Me:** Yes! Standing firm in what they believe. Refusing. You got it. All are ways to protest. How can an artist show protest, do you think?

(no one answers)

**Me:** What are some ways artists could show protest?

**Student:** Like they could show people walking for marches or something.

**Me:** Yeah, they could show an image of a protest. They could just show how horrible the conditions are, couldn't they?

**Student:** They could show like what the people are doing to make people want to protest.

**Me:** Yes, show examples of reasons for the protest? So we have artists also showing protests and also paying respect and homage to things or people that are important to them.

artist who made it. All the student groups (and all in unison at many tables), with one exception, were able to correctly identify the artist by name.

Students were then asked: “Why do you think the artist made this art work?” The assistant recorded a total of 33 responses. A categorical breakdown of the responses, with sample statements included:

- 6 were generic (shows his feeling, he felt like it, for fun);
- 6 used the word, *freedom* (trying to talk about freedom and his life, for freedom, he wanted independence);
- 5 used the words *strength* or *power* (to show women as strong, Black power, to show power to her people);
- 4 of the responses referred to slavery (to say something about slavery, fight the power so there will be no more slavery, looks like it’s from the past—they’re running away from slavery);
- 4 referred to work or jobs (shows that women are hard workers, to show that women, mothers, not just men can work); and
- 2 referred to formalistic qualities (liked to cut and paste, done out of wood).

Of the 33 responses, all but 8 had cultural or historical reference. These interview responses support previously transcribed examples of classroom discussions that exhibited students’ incorporation of historical and cultural contexts into their interpretations and aesthetic judgments of these works of art.

## Summary

Many of the original questions that students proposed to have answered about the focused works of art showed evidence of a more advanced stage of aesthetic development. The students exemplified an awareness that artists desire to communicate specific meanings. The art-centered unit used in this study utilized the identification of the focused artists' *artworlds* and historical contexts and the concepts of cultural value orientations. The recorded excerpts of class discussions, cooperative groups' interpretations, and informal interviews described in this section presented some supporting evidence of the inclusion of historical contexts and concepts of cultural value orientations as having observable effects on students' critical aesthetic inquiry and development. Students supported their own interpretations of the works of art with reasons acquired from historical information and value orientation identifications. Class discussion revealed evidence of students suggesting several interpretations of the art, supported with specific historical or value oriented reasons. In contrast, class discussions and individual, interview responses showed less evidence of students obtaining a clear understanding of *artworlds*, as it was presented in this curriculum unit, and how specific *artworlds* influenced White, Bearden, and Catlett as artists.

### Students' Personal, Reflective Ideas

In my final sessions with the participating students (Lesson Five), they had opportunity to complete their works of art and write their personal artist's statement. I asked students to write out their artist's statement on the form I provided (see Appendix B). They were instructed to give a title to their work and answer at least 3 of the following questions:



1. What is the function of your art?
2. What or who has influenced how you make your art?
3. Why is your art important?
4. Describe the value-orientations that are important to you in your art (*time, activity, relational*).
5. Who or what events are you honoring in your art? Why?
6. What would you like people to think about when they see your art?

### *Students' Homage*

In *Celebrating Pluralism* (1996), Chalmers stressed the importance of using studio projects to encourage students to tell their own important stories, and therefore, take on different cultural roles of an artist. By partaking in the various functions of art, students become players of the different roles of artists and become involved in the making of meaning. Accordingly, I reminded students of how the focused artists made their art to honor certain people and activities that they thought were important. Some artists created art as a form of protest and other artists gave honor to contributors to our nation and/or their personal lives. Students were asked to identify two people that were important to them or that they wanted to pay homage to in their art, such as family, teachers, friends or historical people. Identification of two places and two activities that were important to each student was also requested.

A total of 38 artist's statements were written from two of the three participating classes. (The schedule did not allow enough time for students of one class to complete an artist's statement about their art project.) Of the 38 artists' statements, 13 specifically addressed who or what they chose to honor in their art. Most of the statements were

very personal, with students honoring people they love and who care for them, as well as their favorite things. A sampling of students' statements is provided:

- *I am honoring everything that is me!*
- *I am honoring nature because I love nature.*
- *My voice because I can sing. My friends who are loyal.*
- *School, home and shopping.*
- *My dad being brave enough to go to Kuwait.*
- *Nature's beauty and my friends because I like them both and they both influence me a bit.*
- *I am honoring my friends, Jesus, God, and family because they all help me especially through rough times.*
- *Fishing with my granddad*

Only two statements spoke of honoring people that were not personally involved in the lives of the students:

- *That Serena won the championship in tennis and Michelle won the championship in ice-skating.*
- *Mona Lisa picture*

In documenting the subject matter of students' art, most students chose to honor people, places and activities with whom or in which they personally were involved.<sup>9</sup> Of

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<sup>9</sup> After reviewing the focus artists and art, I said: So you see these artists are growing up in this time of protest. They made their art to honor certain people and activities that they thought were important either in their protest or just to give honor to them for their country and for what they had done for them in their life. That is what I want you to think about and to sketch up today. I want you to identify two people that are important to you or that you want to pay homage to in your art. It could be family or teachers or can be friends or it can be historical people. I, also, want you to identify and picture in some way two places that you think are important. Maybe it will be places that these people would be

the total 58 completed works of art, 42 pictures contained images, words, or symbols about their friends. Another 16 pictures contained images, words, or symbols related to students' teachers or school. A big factor in the frequency of friends and teachers would be the digital photography aspect of the assignment that offered the opportunity to take pictures of classmates and teachers. Another big factor was the timing of this assignment at the end of the school year. These classmates had been together for the entire school year, with many becoming close friends. Yet, the frequency of images directly related to school strongly implies the significant place school held as an influential cultural aspect in the lives of these children.

Other major categories that appeared in the art works were pictures, words or symbols related to: family, home, and/or pet (29); sports, such as fishing, tennis, soccer, basketball, swimming, coach (22); other pastimes, such as reading, checkers, kite, drawing, math (16); church or faith (16); vacation/ amusement parks (9); self-portrait (5); heroes, famous/historical people, such as Rosa Parks, Malcolm X, Serena, Michelle, Los Angeles Angels (5).

The artists' statements written by the students as well as their works of art demonstrated the subjective nature of these 5th graders' tribute to important people, places, and events. Only five examples were found in their art that represented the world outside of their personal experiences. Even the places and activities were ones in which the students had visited or participated or were expressions of personal goals.

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in. And finally I want two activities. Possibly something that person does... You're welcome to use a few words and your words can be done creatively as well. And you may use symbols.

### *Functions of Students' Art*

The four major categories that emerged in student artists' statements suggested how 5th grade students identified the functions of their personal art making. The categories were: *to please others*; *personal expression and identity*; *to inspire others*; and *personal gratification*. The category, *to please others* (with 17 responses), included statements about: desires to fulfill the assignment; of showing how much hard work and effort was involved in the making; of hoping viewers thought the art "is good," "is the most wonderful art they have ever seen," and worthy of purchase. The *personal expression and identity* category (13), included comments related to the expression of feelings, the identification of personal interests, and "to make people see that I'm different." The last larger category was *to inspire others* (10). Statements in this category included many reflective remarks such as:

- *When other people see my art, I would like them to be inspired so that they will appreciate their own life.*
- *I am telling people that don't let anyone let you down because you know who you are. They should think that I need to quit letting people upset me and make a change in my life. Because people should follow their hearts and mind and not what other people say.*
- *You should think about God and Jesus. Also think about your friends and maybe remember the good times you've had with her or him.*
- *When people look at my art I hope they say that it makes them want to go draw!*

- *Because it shows that even girls could do good in sports and that they could win the championships.*

Finally, the *personal gratification* (2) category contained statements that art made the student “feel wonderful,” and art functioned as a “joy and good time.”

The studio assignment was of a personal nature, requiring students to pay respect or homage to important people, places, and activities. Their artists’ statements expressed a desire to please and impress the viewer with the quality of their art. The 5th grade students saw their art making as personal expressions and they wished to inspire, impact, and please others through it. Students’ artists’ statements (especially in the *to inspire others* category) exhibit limited evidence of students stepping outside their own subjectivity and thinking about their artwork within a societal context, an aspect of critical cultural consciousness.

#### *Influences of Students’ Art*

Data was analyzed from student artists’ statements and combined with the informal interviews to gain insight into students’ identification and realization of their personal *artworlds*, or sub-cultures of which they are members that affect and contribute to their art. Students were asked to identify “what or who has influenced how you make your art” in their artists’ statement and “what influences your own art” in the interview.

The interview produced 54 responses and of the 38 total artists’ statements, 18 students chose to respond to the question of “influences.” The wording of the interview question, stating only “what” influences your own art, in comparison to the artist’s statement’s question of “what” or “who” has influenced “how you make” your art, resulted in different types of answers, even from the same student. The answers from

the interviews, also, often revealed the affect of answering in a small group setting, with students in seven of the groups responding with similar terms.

In 14 of the total 18 artists' statements, students gave reference to particular people who influence their art. Of those 14, nine of the responses were teachers at their elementary school, including the art teacher, the classroom teacher, and/or myself. Three of the responses were one or both parents, two responses were friends, and one student named her grandmother. One student listed an artist, Jacob Lawrence, as the person who influenced his art.

Only two of the influences named by students in their interview gave reference to specific people. Those two were "my Dad" and "my favorite artist Norman Rockwell." Instead of specific people, the influences students' mostly named in the interview referred to their personal interests, the environment, and/or the functions of their art. The categories with the frequency and samples of the students' interview statements were:

- Personal interests (17) – such as: baseball, basketball, low rider cars, animals, cheerleading, cartoons
- Functions of their art (13) – such as: to decorate, to be a good artist, to express myself
- Environment (12) – such as: nature, gardens, stuff you see

The sub-cultures, or artworlds, most identified by these participating student-artists were school and family. The most designated members of these groups were their teachers and parents. Students also named their personal interests, the environment, and/or the functions of their art as playing key roles in their art making.

These documents provided evidence of students' understanding of the functions of their art and consciousness of their own artworlds, or cultural influences on their art.

### *Art as Evidence of Students' Cultural Value Orientations*

Finally, I applied the principles of the cultural value orientations, *time*, *activity*, and *relational*, to students' art, interview responses, and artists' statements to shed further light on how 5th grade students have represented the cultural value orientations in their personal art and discussions of their art. The *present time* orientation was the most favored by students in the survey documents. Value orientations may also reflect student's developmental stages. Issues such as developmental stages, age and gender may all play cultural roles. The value orientations were not used in my study so much to accurately classify, as to spark new questions, dialogue, and awareness of the complex nature of culture. When paying homage to important people, events, or activities, students' art also strongly reflected the *present time* orientation in the content of their work. The only exceptions were three students who included references to *future* dreams. Two of those students expressed dreams of becoming singers and one student's future plan was to be a "great architect and artist."

Several of the functions of their art, as identified by students, could be interpreted as exhibiting a *future* orientation. These would include such statements as: "When other people see my art, I would like them to be inspired so that they will appreciate their own life;" and, "I want people to think of heaven and what God has stored for His children." There is only one documented influence (the art of Norman Rockwell) and two historical references in the students' artworks (of Rosa Parks and Malcolm X) that could be

classified as in the *past* orientation. But, more consistently as students described the functions and influences of their art, it reflected a *present time* orientation.

The *activity* orientations were the most equally distributed in the students' survey responses, with *being* and *being-in-becoming* in the lead. I would suggest that students' art content, as well as their comments on the functions and influences of their art also reflected all three, *doing, being and being-in-becoming activity*, orientations. Some students' statements that described what they would like people to say about their art suggested a *doing activity* orientation such as: "I want people to say, 'I would love to buy that picture;' and 'Wow! This girl is an artist! I want her on my company label.'" Or statements describing the function of their art to be: "because it was an assignment;" and "because I want an E in conduct" suggest students' desire to make art that results in a measurable outcome, conceived to be external from the person, or a *doing-activity orientation*.

The *being-activity* orientation was exhibited in such statements as: "My art makes me feel wonderful;" and "The functions of my art are joy and good time." And the *being-in-becoming-activity* orientation is suggested in students' remarks such as: "I am telling ...people should follow their hearts and mind and not what other people say;" and "My art is to show them how well I've worked on it." These last two statements could be interpreted as students referring to who they are as a whole and exemplifying all levels of thoughts, feelings, and effort involved in the creation of their artwork, characteristics of the *being-in-becoming-activity* orientation.

The survey documents revealed students' *relational* orientation to strongly support *collateral*. Students' artwork revealed the important place friends had in their



lives, thus corresponding to the *collateral* orientation as well. Students' responses that named teachers and parents as important influences on their art, may also reflect some *lineal* orientations, suggesting students' respect for what they have learned from older, more authoritative people in their lives. In general, students' art, interview responses, and artists' statements paralleled the same personal cultural value orientations identified in the students' survey documents.

### Selected Individual Results

Data was collected and analyzed from participating students as a whole group. The results presented in this chapter reflect the group as a whole for general effects because as the unit was taught, there were no specific students selected for more specific data collection. Such results failed to reveal how the curriculum strategies might affect an individual student. I selected three students from the two classes that completed all of the planned activities and expressed a high level of social consciousness in their final artists' statements. I then went back through collected data to look specifically at his/her other responses for a picture of how a developing critical cultural consciousness might take form.

#### *Shawna*

The first student, who I will call Shawna, wrote for her artist statement:

*I'm telling people that don't let anyone let you down because you know who you are. They should think that I need to quit letting people upset me and make a change in my life. Because people should follow their hearts and mind and not what other people say.*

Shawna's statement describes the "function" of her art. It was categorized in the "to inspire" section. In looking at Shawna's pre-instruction free-word survey, she listed three functions of art: *making money*, *to make a masterpiece*, and *to be the best of the best*. The functions Shawna first listed suggest her ideas that art function's for the promotion of the artist. Shawna's post-instruction free-word survey listed the functions of art to include: *to explain feelings*, *to give to people*, and *to make money*. Two of the post-instruction functions expressed Shawna's increased awareness of the function art as "to explain." The mention of art "to give to people" could possibly show an awareness of the benefits art can play in the lives of others, suggesting contrast to the self-promoting functions listed in her pre-instruction list. Shawna's own artist's statement expresses a personal desire to explain her feelings of following one's own dreams. She wanted her art to be an inspiration to those that viewed it.

In Shawna's Value Orientation Survey responses, she favored the *being-in-becoming activity* orientation (see Appendix E). She favored the type of coach that stressed other things than practice and winning games, believing personal development is most important. Shawna also agreed with the example of a student who spends most of her free time carefully blending a variety of time with friends, working out a puzzle, or working on something else that she thinks needs improvement to be best. Shawna's *relational* orientation was split. She chose a *collateral* orientation, agreeing everyone in the group should take part in deciding the project and who will do what. Yet, in "a time of misfortune," Shawna chose a *lineal* orientation by picking the best idea is to go to an expert, that usually manages things, and ask for help. The *present* time orientation was Shawna's choice in the survey. She agreed that children should learn about and take on

whatever new ways will best help them get along in the world today and that she did not know if, as an adult, she would be better off, the same, or worse off than her parents.

Shawna's pre-instruction list of free-word associations for "culture" included: *dress, religion, race, and animals*. The post-instruction list included: *language, the way they stand, colors, meanings, and character*. Shawna's personal cultures' lists for the pre-instruction were: *Black African-American*, and for the post-instruction: *American, African American, church, and school*. Both post-instruction lists show evidence of a greater awareness of covert aspects of culture. It seems possible that "the way they stand" could be referring to ways of standing up for one's beliefs or standing firm and strong as Catlett's image of the *Black Woman Poet* and White's *Working Woman*. The increase in Shawna's personal cultures to include church and school reveal her growing understanding that *culture* includes sub-cultures and that she is a member of and is influenced by many different micro-cultures.

The interview with Shawna conducted in the latter days of the study revealed the ideas of the unit that were most meaningful to her. The interviewer displayed works by Romare Bearden to the table of students in which Shawna was sitting. Shawna was unable to name the artist when his works were presented. When asked why the artist created the work Shawna replied, "To show freedom. To show that women, mothers, not just men can work." Shawna's reply would better fit the art of Charles White's or Elizabeth Catlett's art. Her reply suggests the general ideas of the unit with which she most identified, yet without her being able to support the responses with the visual properties of art in question. In response to what influenced Romare Bearden, Shawna said, "to want a better place in the world." This response gives further evidence of the

key ideas in which Shawna reaped from the art-centered unit, yet Shawna appears to be unable to justify her responses with supporting statements related to the particular work by Bearden. Finally, the last interview question asked for the influences of students' own art. Shawna answered, "wood carving, religion, and basketball." The response included "wood carving" which was the medium used by Elizabeth Catlett. It is probable that the wood sculpture piece, *Homage to Black Women Poets* will stand strong in Shawna's mind for years to come. It is probable too, that the image was in her mind as she stated in her personal artist's statement, "people should follow their hearts and mind and not what other people say." Shawna volunteered to and read one section from the history textbook, yet she did not contribute orally to the class discussions.

The written and interview accounts provide significant evidence of the affects of the unit on Shawna's development of critical cultural consciousness. Development of critical cultural consciousness is evidenced by Shawna expanding her list of the functions of art to include her awareness that art can inspire others as it explains feelings. Such functions of art were possibly brought to Shawna's attention or level of awareness as her cooperative group interpreted *Homage to Black Women Poets*. The cooperative group expressed interpretive ideas such as Catlett's art portraying a strong character on the inside. Development of cultural consciousness is evidenced by Shawna including covert elements of culture such as *meanings* and *character* in her post-instruction free-word survey. Shawna's awareness of her personal memberships in subcultures such as school and church suggest more illustrations of ways a developing consciousness of the roles culture plays in our lives and the roles our lives play in the creation of culture. Shawna's artist's statement, with words such as *people should*

*follow their hearts and mind and not what other people say*, could reflect a growing desire to think about her own artwork for the benefit of others—a desirable outcome of higher levels of multicultural art education.

*Trisha*

The second student, Trisha, wrote one of the only two artist's statements that honored specific people that were not personally involved in the students' lives. Her statement was:

*I am honoring that Serena won the championship in tennis, and Michelle won the championship in ice-skating. I want people to think the background is amazing and the picture really goes good with the title (Girl Power). My art is important because it shows that even girls could do good in sports and that they could win the championships.*

Trisha's artwork included images, words, and symbols related to Serena and Michelle's championships and to her personal family and friends.

The pre-instruction word survey revealed Trisha having many ideas about culture at the beginning of the unit. When ask to list words relating to culture, she wrote: *music, dance, language, holidays, art, clothes, money, hairstyles, and fairs*. The list exemplifies many categories including the arts, outward adornment, entertainment, language, and survival. In her post-instruction list, Trisha listed the very same words with only one addition, *religion (beliefs)*. It is interesting that the new list contained such an important covert aspect of culture. Not only did Trisha add "religion" (which could refer to an overt aspect of culture), but included "beliefs" in parenthesis (which specifies the covert nature of religion). This addition appeared again as Trisha listed the only personal

culture in her pre-instruction list as *American* and in the post-instruction she listed only *American* and *Church of Christ*.

In reviewing Trisha's responses to the value orientation survey, she identified her *activity* orientation as *Being* choosing a coach who understands other things are more important than making practice and winning games. Trisha, however selected the *Being-in-becoming* choice when asked about use of free time. Her *relational* orientation was *collateral*, thinking it best for everyone in a group to make the decisions and in time of misfortune, it was best to depend on relatives and close friends to help out. Trisha's *time* orientation was *future*. She chose it best for children to be taught what would make them want to find out for themselves new ways of doing things to replace the old, expressing her belief that if as an adult she works hard and plans right, she will be better off than her parents.

I selected Trisha for closer analysis because her artist's statement paid homage and respect to contemporary heroes. Closer inspection revealed Trisha's value orientations to suggest confidence and optimism as she looks to her future to be better off than her parents. Her initial understanding of aspects of culture was quite high as she listed words that reflected various categories. The post-instruction list of words relating to culture included a covert element of culture—beliefs. Of the four questions asked in the interview, the two responses made by Trisha were the correct identification of the artist's name and her saying "feelings" influence her art. Trisha's pre- and post-instruction lists of the functions of art are almost identical. The pre-instruction list is: *tell stories, decoration, expression, feelings, to be creative, and sell it to make money*. The only changes in the post-instruction list were the addition of: *just to have fun*, and

the omission of *sell it to make money*. Trisha was the only student that identified a function of art as to “tell stories” in the pre-instruction survey (there were 22 responses in that category in the post-instruction survey), suggesting she initially had a higher understanding of culture and the functions of art than the other participating students.

Trisha exemplified a higher stage of cultural consciousness at the onset of my study. Yet developing steps can be found in her addition of *beliefs* as an aspect of culture. Because Trisha began at a higher level than her classmates, it then follows that her higher stage of cultural consciousness would be expressed in her art. Thus she was the one (of only two) who honored specific people that were not personally involved in her life. Trisha’s homage to two African American women champions of tennis and ice-skating are in strong parallel to Catlett’s homage to Black women poets or White’s homage to a working woman. Trisha could have been referring to her pride and confidence as the “feelings” that influence her work. The selected artists of my unit provided cultural exemplars and models of which Trisha appears to have connected with and found to be motivating.

### *Tony*

I became particularly aware of Tony as I was leading the class through the cultural value orientations survey in Lesson Four. His intense desire to understand and answer each of the situations presented in the survey was what caught my attention. He required my repeating the reading of each situation and, as he thoughtfully pondered each question, most of the other students were ready to move to the next. The classroom teacher, realizing the situation, pulled her chair next to Tony and assisted as we continued through the survey. Tony’s same intensity and determination was

exhibited throughout the art making time and into the very last session I had with the participating students. It was Tony who continued to laboriously write and write his artist's statement for a long time after all other students were finished. It reads:

*The function of my art is joy and the good time you had a long time ago. Jacob Lawrence influenced me by letting me know that art is more than just drawing and having fun. It's about what you feel and how other people feel. My art is important because I express my feelings that's going on in my life, the past, and what I think about the future. My past has been up and down. I know I'm young but there have been some stressful times in my life. I plan for the future to be great and to be a "double A," architect and artist. I am honoring the Mona Lisa picture. I want people to think about my art, "I would love to buy that picture."*

The pre-instruction word association survey was administered in the art classroom at the beginning of Lesson Two. Tony did not give any answers for words related to *culture* or for the cultures of which he is a member. I told participating students to leave it blank if they could not think of anything. In looking back, I regretfully believe I failed to give Tony enough explanation or time to adequately respond to the first two questions. The post-instruction survey resulted in Tony responding to my request for words related to *culture*, with only "language," the example I gave. However he did list personal cultures of which he is a member including: *American, family, art class, music, dance, drama, and P.E.* There were no answers in his pre-instruction survey with which to compare, but Tony expressed an awareness that culture included subcultures, by his list of national, family, and school cultures of which he was a part for the post-instruction survey.



Tony did provide answers to my inquiry into the functions of art on both the pre- and post-instruction survey. In the pre-instruction survey, he said, *I think artists make art to express their feelings and emotions. Art can be both painful and good at the same time.* The post-instruction survey answered the function or why of art to be: *Maybe because of feelings and love. Sometimes it can be bad to describe a threat or hate. The good ways is maybe that art can sometime bring out your true feelings, like you can't say it but you can write or draw it.* When Tony spoke of art describing “a threat or hate,” we are unable to know if he is speaking in relation to the racism we read in the text or to his own personal life that has had its “ups and downs” and “stressful” times. It appears Tony began with some strong convictions as to the purpose of art and there is not enough evidence to know what part the art-centered unit might have played in his post-instruction responses.

Tony's *activity* value orientation was *Being-in-becoming* in that he believed the best coach stressed the players' personal development, but he chose the *Being* orientation for the nonworking time situation. However, Tony said that the student who spent his/her time completing school work (*doing* orientation) chose “best,” but he preferred talking and telling stories with friends. Tony thought it best for all members of a group to take part in the decisions, a *collateral relational* orientation, yet in time of misfortune, he chose the *lineal* example to seek help from a boss or expert. The *present time* orientation was picked in both situations: child training, to take on whatever new ways will help them get along in the world today; and expectations, that one cannot know how things will be in the future.

Though Tony answered the survey with a *present time* orientation, he was one of the only three students who included references to *future* dreams in his artist's statement, in predicting the "future to be great" and plans to be an architect and an artist. Tony made a sincere effort to address the *time* orientation; by saying his art expressed his feelings that are "going on in my life, the past, and what I think about the future." It appears he found a genuine interest in responding and making reference to the value orientations. Tony was the only student that gave reference to a historical artist as an influence on his art. Jacob Lawrence's art was a part of the Walter Evans' collection exhibited at the museum during this unit, but he was not one of the artists specifically studied in my unit. Therefore it seems most reasonable that Tony had been inspired and influenced by Jacob Lawrence before my study began.

A developing cultural consciousness for Tony was portrayed most forcefully in his intense desire to express his thoughts in his value orientation survey and his artist's statement. In early lessons when asked to respond in writing, Tony left some survey questions unanswered as time was too limited for him. Yet, in the later lessons Tony did not let the fact that everyone else had completed the assignment stop him from taking all the time necessary to express what he wished to say. Such determination offers evidence of Tony believing his ideas were valuable and warranted being heard and understood, an important aspect of cultural consciousness that nourishes a deeper sense of human dignity. Tony's self-determination gave evidence of the art-centered unit engaging his interest and attention and provides a picture of how higher levels of multicultural education establish a healthy environment that promotes learning.

### *Summarizing Observations*

Data of all three of the particular students contained some variations of ways critical cultural consciousness began to take root throughout the implementation of the art-centered unit of my study. Each student had an expansion of personal cultures of which they were members and each expressed some thoughtful responses for the functions of art. Tony exhibited determination to employ cultural value orientations in his artist's statement and Trisha successfully achieved the goal of the studio project in paying homage to her heroes. Shawna possibly exemplified the most evidence of significant personal development of critical cultural consciousness through her expanded lists of aspects of culture, her personal cultural memberships, her recognition of the roles of art, and her desire to inspire others through her own art.

### *Summary*

This chapter discussed the outcomes of an art-centered unit developed for 5th grade students to promote critical cultural consciousness. Important information was collected and analyzed to document the role and effect specific tools and methods utilized in the classroom setting played in fostering critical cultural consciousness. As illustrated in the Conceptual Framework (Figure 1), the specific tools and methods were associated with the concepts of historical and cultural contexts, cultural value orientations, *artworlds*, and personal art production. This chapter was devoted to discussion of the analyzed data to see ways 5th grade students define culture and identify their personal cultures, *artworlds*, and cultural value orientations. Evidence of students' development of critical aesthetic inquiry into the focused works of art was documented and discussed, along with evidence of students' expanded understanding

of art and culture. That evidence, added to students' personal, reflective ideas exhibited in the context of their personal art making, provided the record of students' growth in critical cultural consciousness used in this study.

## CHAPTER 5

### REFLECTIVE DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The underlying motive of this research was to augment the quest for effective ways of utilizing art to expand cultural awareness and understanding, thus promoting learning for all students. By analyzing the implementation and outcome of an art-centered unit of study developed to foster critical cultural consciousness, the purpose of this study was to document the relevance and applicability of specific curricular strategies, activities, and approaches. This research utilized the classroom setting as its laboratory, with the belief that it is in the context of the day-to-day educational experience that we begin to match theory with practice.

#### Students' Cultural Consciousness

The first research question sought insights into ways 5th grade students define and identify *culture*. Preadolescent children of this age group were chosen because they have generally become more socially aware and conceptually sophisticated and they have developed a wider range of interests than in younger years (Hurwitz & Day, 2001). A free-word association survey was administered before instruction, to assess students' initial ideas related to *culture*. This study documented evidence of students recognizing some of the multifaceted nature of *culture*, including nationality, ways of taking care of physical needs, physical appearances, pleasure or entertainment, the arts, religion, and history. Students' exhibited limited reference to covert aspects of cultures, such as attitude, fears, thoughts and ideas. Chalmers (2002) noted a lack of teachers' acknowledgement of the complexity of culture, yet the free-word survey records students' ability to associate many facets of *culture*, therefore exhibiting a

capability of critically investigating different aspects of cultures from different perspectives.

Educators such as Garber (1995), Hanna (1994), Chanda (1992b), Chalmers (2002), King (2001), and Banks (1988) expressed the belief that multicultural art education has failed to rise from a nominal, *contributions* and *ethnic additives approach*. The *contributions* and *ethnic additives approaches*, as described by scholars, are shallow without addressing issues critically from different perspectives, only emphasizing similarities in art forms and methods of making them. Yet, the participating students exhibited a receptive capability of appreciating the dynamic, complex nature of culture. After implementation of the art-centered unit, students' exemplified further awareness and recognition of covert aspects of *culture*. The post-instruction survey showed less interest in the category of cultural overt *survival* aspects, such as "farming, wealth, and transportation" and almost a tripling in the reference to covert characteristics, such as "meaning, ideals, and character." The increase of students' awareness of covert aspects of culture following the art-centered unit provides a positive starting point for gaining the ability to analyze covert elements of culture for a more holistic understanding.

Chalmers (2002) described a typical multicultural art curricula as only including a scattering of studio projects, such as imitating African harvest masks or Mexican "Day of the Dead" skeletons, with only simple references to foods and festivals. According to evidence in this study, such practice is not only a nominal level of multicultural education, it is far below students' intellectual and social levels of interest and understanding. Students' word associations, such as "meaning, ideals, and character"

appear to reflect a sophisticated understanding of core covert aspects of *culture*. An art-centered unit that challenges students to examine personal cultural values and investigates historical and cultural contexts within the process of interpreting diverse works of art does not appear too advanced for students as young as the 5th grade level. In fact, after the implementation of the unit, students' responses suggest a preference for the covert aspects and less interest in naming the words associated with outward appearances. Thus, the 5th graders' understanding of *culture* exhibited in this study stands as added testimony for the need to depart from a low-level of multicultural education, which only periodically includes some generalized explicit or overt cultural characteristics to an integration of diverse cultural exemplars and perspectives into *all* aspects of the curriculum.

Through curricular strategies, such as free-word association surveys and class discussions, this study documented students' appropriation of the broad nature of *culture* as they increased their personal identification of cultures of which they were members. Students identified an increased number of sub- or micro- cultures defined through common interests, talents, or recreational activities. Roosevelt (1998) argued that school classrooms had potential of being places where children were engaged in the creation, not just reception of culture as they are given power to pursue their own unique interests and ideals. Students with an extended perception or consciousness of the varied cultures of which they are members increases the potential of the classroom becoming a place for active exchange of cultural perspectives that equally values the contributions of all students from diverse backgrounds. Studies reviewed by Mehan, Lintz, Okamata, & Wills (2001) found that classroom strategies that lead to an increased

consciousness and understanding of the varying aspects of each student's cultures were far superior than any attempt of the teacher at standardizing a culture with generalized, static data. Through curricular strategies, such as word association surveys and class discussions about the varying aspects of each other's cultures, the teacher becomes knowledgeable of the diversity of her/his students and able to make meaningful connections and challenges to her/his students' prior knowledge and experiences.

### *Utilizing Cultural Value Orientation*

Further evidence of increasing consciousness, investigation, and interaction of varying covert aspects of each student's culture was achieved through the curricular strategies utilizing theories of cultural value orientations. This study recorded students' cultural value orientations as they were identified through a self-report survey. Though students highly favored a *collateral relational* and a *present time* orientation, many different voices were expressed. Students readily discussed their value orientation preferences with personal and persuasive reasons and examples. Discussions included such thoughtful student viewpoints as: having fun was as important as winning; and school work should not be done just to keep busy, but chosen because it was needed to achieve personal goals.

The results found all of the cultural value orientations most supported by these students to be counter to the mainstream American (adult) cultural orientations of the Kluckhohm and Stodbeck study in 1961. I think students' cultural orientation differences demonstrate how culture is constantly changing through people interacting and learning from one another. As our student population becomes increasingly diverse, cultural



value orientations will increasingly be hybrid, not pure in nature. How piercingly such results resound in connection with the writings of J.E. King (1991a, 2001), who addressed the inequity and exploitation that results when an unconscious and uncritical promotion of a culture-centered knowledge exists that upholds the dominant White middle-class as the only normative cultural model. Holding one cultural model as the *norm* is not only contrary to multiculturalism, but also contrary to the value orientations most sustained by these American children in our classrooms today. Students' variations of value orientations emphasize the importance of our educational institutions' need to continually reexamine what normative cultural model is being supported in the school culture.

I utilized Banks' (1988) hierarchy of multicultural education as benchmarks for the levels most identified with the results of this study. Parsons' (1987, 2000) stages of aesthetic understanding can be used in much the same way, as indicators of participating students' development of critical aesthetic inquiry. Parsons identified five stages of aesthetic understanding. The first stage "favoritism" involves the viewers' intuitive attractions based on visual elements or in response to subject matter. The aesthetic responses are based on personal experience with no distinctions of relevance or questions about objectivity. The second stage, as identified by Parsons, is "beauty and realism," which is organized by the representation of the subject. A work of art is judged by the viewers' ideals of beauty, realism, and skill. Stage three is organized around the idea of expressiveness, an advance from the first two stages because it rests on an awareness of the interiority experiences and it shows an understanding that realism of style and skill are not ends in themselves, but means of expressing certain

meanings. Parsons (1987) found some correlations with age and the first stages. Later stages of aesthetic understanding were noted as being the result of an education and history of encountering and thinking about works of art often and seriously, rather than being related to a person's age. Parsons labeled stage four as "style and form," emphasizing the way the artist used the medium, elements of design, and style as they relate to an art tradition. The final, most advanced stage of development is "autonomy," as labeled by Parsons. The fifth stage involves the realization by the viewer that s/he is responsible for judging and interpreting a work of art, yet there is an on-going reexamination of one's views in light of new information. The on-going wondering and questioning, affirming and amending of judgments includes active dialogue with others so as to consider different voices for an intersubjective understanding. "Art is valued as a way of raising questions rather than as transmitting truths.... It requires the ability to raise questions about established views and to understand the self as capable of answering them. This implies a perspective on the culture itself." (Parsons, 2000, p. 279).

Cultural value orientations as lenses by which students could interpret works of art were demonstrated in this study. In the pre-museum visit, students listed questions they had about the art they were to view. The students' questions reflected Parsons' stage three, showing students had an understanding that artists depict specific messages in the way s/he uses style, elements and subject matter. I suggest that students' initial aesthetic awareness at stage three was the result of their second year attendance at an arts magnet school. The students in this study received specific art instruction once a week for 45 minutes with an art specialist. It appears that previous art

instruction was taught mainly at a stage three level. Further evidence of the stage three level was revealed in students' repeated references to Romare Bearden's collage-style of art. Bearden was the only one of the focus artists of which the students had previous knowledge. Bearden's style of art continued to be the predominant characteristic recalled and identified by the student participants.

Students exhibited notable abilities of comprehending the essence of the value orientations and applying it to the interpretive process. Following the cultural value orientation identifications, cooperative groups' discussions and conclusions were insightful, proving to rate at the highest (stage five) aesthetic developmental stage. Examples of high level ideas were such statements about the art of Charles White as: "He was involved in the past, because in the portrait (*Fredrick Douglass*) it was from the past so he had to remember the person in Black history as he was.... But in this one (*Working Woman*), he was working with the present because it expresses the attitude at that time. She is solid, not changing right now—she is thinking about her world right now." The interpreted ideas expressed were the result of students carefully examining the works of art and applying concepts of cultural value orientations, historical context, and personal ideas to form their own judgments of the meaning and value of each work of art. Such remarks offer glimpses of the highest levels of multicultural education and aesthetic development. Levels, that I believe, could be maintained throughout students' school career under the guidance of critically cultural conscious teachers.

The results verify the usefulness of the self-report survey to explain and identify students' cultural value orientations. Yet, I found my method of implementation needed revising. One class, out of the three participating, was unable to complete the survey

and apply the concepts to the works of art in the scheduled time. The student survey took about an hour for that class to complete, and the videotape revealed at least three students' attention spans were challenged to stay focused for such a long time. I submit the more ideal classroom circumstances would be, to first introduce the theory of each cultural value orientation through students' identification survey in one, separate timeframe, and then make references to it for interpretation of works of art in appropriate future situations. The length of time it took students to complete the survey would be validated by the potential of many various future applications. Another alternative is to introduce the value orientations separately at different times, followed by opportunities to transfer understanding of the cultural value orientations to interpreting work(s) of art. Incorporating the student self-report and its applications in smaller "bites" would address the inability of some students to stay focused for extended periods of time and of applying too many new concepts all at once.

#### *Utilizing Artworlds*

The curricular unit introduced students to the *artworlds* of the focused artists through a dramatic reading in a simplified skit format. The data collected determined this activity to be rather unfruitful. Students offered little evidence of connecting to or retaining the bulk of the information. Upon reflection, I suggest a few revisions to its implementation. First, all students needed a copy of the narrative reading so they could follow along with their eyes as well as their ears. Second, as the teacher, I needed to make more personal connections for students of the *artworld* theory. Students needed to identify and discuss their personal *artworlds* more extensively to better understand how *artworlds* influence and what part they play for an artist. I needed to connect if and

how The Tyler Museum of Art could be part of an *artworld* and how it might influence art students or local artists. And third, the references to particular artist mentors, schools of art, and even political ideologies in the dramatic reading were unfamiliar to students, therefore were not retained. The facts related to *artworlds* that students' did recall in other discussions were: Catlett becoming a Mexican citizen; Catlett and White's marriage; and White's father dying when he was young. These are circumstances that ten and eleven-year-olds could personally relate to and, therefore, remember.

Student interviews and artists' statements revealed their personal sub-cultures, or artworlds, most mentioned were school and family, with the most influential members being teachers and parents. I think it follows that, if students become continually more familiar and conscious of artworld influences in their own lives, they will be more readily able to connect to artworld information about other artists. Identification and consciousness of personal artworlds would make the utilization of artworld concepts continually more effective.

### *Utilizing Historical Context*

Data collected of classroom discussions surrounding the reading of the Civil Rights Movement in America in their textbooks, showed students posing their own questions and making parallel associations with some of the information presented. Video transcriptions included student questions and genuine interest about events such as the assassinations of John and Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr.<sup>10</sup> One

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<sup>10</sup> Following a student's reading of the text:

**Me:** Who was the key player here?

**Student:** Malcolm X

**Student:** What is an assassin?

**Me:** What *is* an assassin?

**Student:** Someone who works for someone else or for themselves... how do I say this?

class spoke of a movie they had seen early in the school year about the turbulent times when young Black students' were integrated into previously all White schools, making connections with their new knowledge of history and a past memory of a movie. Evident in the transcriptions of class discussions and in student interviews, when given opportunity, students readily applied their new historical knowledge into interpretations of the focused works of art. I believe important steps were gained in students beginning to understand how artists have functioned at other moments in American society and when they have aligned with social movements committed to change. Students' comments addressed: the powerful, expressive words of Black women poets in relation to Catlett's sculpture, *Homage to Black Women Poets*; Charles White's desire to praise women for their work and sacrifice; and Romare Bearden's possible reference to such heroes and Thurgood Marshall, in *The Black Man and the Making of America*. Such examples, along with the 25 interview responses (of the total 33, when asked why the focused artists made the art) that contained a cultural or historical reference, strongly support theories expressed by Carol Becker (1994) and Erickson (2002). Evidence supports ideas such as students stepping outside their own subjectivity and thinking about art within a larger societal context. Artworks examined in historical and cultural contexts become very effective resources for instruction about one's own culture and about the culture of others, thus contributing to critical cultural consciousness at the fifth and highest level of aesthetic development.

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**Me:** to kill other people

**Student:** yeah

**Me:** When someone is assassinated or killed, it is more for political reasons.

I was your age at this time in history. John Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr., Robert Kennedy, Malcolm X... in about five years—there was lots of turmoil – I remember watching funerals on TV—so many emotions than just words in a book cannot describe—some scary times – OK. Question?

**Student:** Why President Kennedy? His brother?

Evidence of higher approaches to multicultural education is recorded with the utilization of an art-centered unit that incorporates cultural and historical context as lenses for interpretation. The two higher approaches, *transformation* and *social-action*, as described by Banks (1988), Zimmerman (1990), Chanda (1992b) and Stuhr (1994) involve an art curriculum that: reflects cultural and social diversity; considers the role power and knowledge have played in art communities; and encourages students to critically think and participate in their own ideas about change. The art-centered unit in this study, which included artworlds and historical contexts, was able to reflect cultural and social diversity and power issues such as: the civil rights of women and ethnic minorities; of ways artists addressed such issues under the theme “Respect and Homage”; and discussions and reflections of students’ own ideas in regard to such issues. Class discussions were directed to students’ interpretations of what was important to each artist as expressed in his/her works of art. Students’ post-instruction survey resulted in an expanded list of art functions to include the category *tell stories/explain* and *social issues/actions*. This expanded list is evidence of students’ own ability to understand the *stories* and *social issues* confronting the focused artists as students learned of the social and historical contexts.

#### *Utilizing Personal Art Making*

As in all art-centered units, an important component of student learning is through art making. Two foundational theoretical views applied to this unit were a belief in the limitations of a Western aesthetic system (Hart, 1991) and the importance of students partaking in the various functions of art and become players of the different roles of artists (Chalmers, 1996). These two theories correlate to each other very

significantly. If students are encouraged to compare and contrast cross- and trans-cultural examples of the roles of the artist and the functions of art, then they are no longer bound to a single aesthetic system.

The results of this study revealed participating students' lists of the overall functions of art expanding, especially in the categories of telling stories, explaining, and social issues. Students' identifications of the functions of their artmaking included personal expression or identity (13 responses), which most parallels the Western characteristics of "individuality" and "originality." However, students cited more functions (27 responses) that related to pleasing and inspiring others. Several students wanted their art to be thought of as "good" and "wonderful," and to be make the viewer "appreciate their own life" and "to know that girls could do good in sports and that they could win championships." Such statements offer evidence of students stepping outside their own subjectivity and thinking about the impact of their art in a larger, cultural context.

As the focus of students' art making corresponded more to the theme of "respect and homage," than to a specific form or style, they were given opportunity to tell their own important stories. When emphasis was placed on the *why* of art, reference points that connected to cultural value orientations, artworlds and historical/cultural associations could be made with theme of paying respect and homage to important people in one's life. I believe this study offers supporting data for the theories expressed by art educators such as McFee & Degge (1980), McFee (1986, 1998), and Chalmers (1973, 1980, 1996). These art educators were key players in emphasizing the importance of a multicultural art curriculum based on universal functions of art for



human beings, drawing our attention to how the universal functions of art will turn students' attention to why cultures need art and providing insights into the culture itself. Students expressed interpretations of the selected art in the role of telling stories about the Civil Rights Movement and paying homage to historical heroes. Cultural value orientations and *artworlds* were tools designed to aid in students' awareness of how our art can reflect the cover values of the cultures of which we are members.

This research adds weight to many multicultural art education theories such as expanding the meaning of art, directing attention to the functions of the artists, focusing on the cultural diversity within each classroom as a springboard for new learning, and utilizing *artworlds* and historical context, as they were applied and documented in the classroom setting. My examination of related scholarship found limited reference to the theory of cultural value orientations as a curricular strategy, yet I found it to be a viable and effective lens for fostering critical aesthetic inquiry and discussion of covert aspects of culture. I experienced first hand as a participant observer, the importance of students in the role of artist, personally reflecting and identifying how their art fits together in their lives, their cultures, and the world. Hopefully the data collected in this study and discussed in these last two chapters can be further researched and tested in the classroom setting and be used to advance our implementation of effective curricular strategies that advance learning for our diverse student population.

### Recommendations for Research

Qualitative research provides significant data to the field of multicultural art education. It is especially important because it uses narrative data gathered through observations, documents analysis, and interviews. This study incorporated the use of

such methodological practices and provided some useful insights into how 5th graders define culture and identify their personal cultures and cultural value orientations. Data presented examples of ways students apply new cultural and historical knowledge to their interpretations of works of art. This study, also, provided increased knowledge of 5th graders' perspectives on the functions of art in general and in relation to their roles as artists in particular. More research using narrative data is needed to better characterize and understand the cultural, intellectual, artistic, and social values, viewpoints, and growth of students in today's schools. While this study focused on 5th graders in one elementary school, future research might study other students in the same school, in similar schools of other communities, and in other levels of education, such as middle and high schools.

The findings in this study suggest the need for more arts-based research. This study examined how an art-centered unit could be used as pedagogy to foster students' development of critical cultural consciousness, aesthetic reasoning, historical connections, and meaningful art making. Integration into the disciplines of social studies, dramatic reading and poetry were used in this study. The pedagogical potential of including these and other art genres such as music and dance should also be examined for their potential effects on improving the cultural consciousness and educational achievement of the diverse American student population.

The focused works of art for the curriculum unit were chosen because of the opportunity of the participating students to view the original art at their community museum. I am reminded of students' exclamatory remarks as they came upon Elizabeth Catlett's sculpture. *Homage to Black Women Poets*, elegantly carved out of walnut,

stood larger than life in the corner of the gallery. In my pre-museum visit with the students, most of them guessed the sculpture's size to be about 24 inches. Measuring six feet high, what an impact the sculpture made. I believe the museum experience provided an important reference point for the curriculum and the experience added more impact to students' curiosity and interest in the works of art. Almost two months' time separated most of my curricular unit from student's museum visit, yet they would make reference to the location in the museum gallery specific works of art were displayed. Research to document the benefits of experiences with original works of art on students' attention spans, curiosity, and enthusiasm would aid in promoting such experiences as important curricular methods. An expansion of research is needed on the museum experience's effects on learning, and the effects of object-centered learning, in general. We would benefit from research comparing the effects of a unit centered on an object (an art object in this case) to other types of curriculum to foster learning of diverse cultures.

More research documenting the effects of such curricular strategies as artworlds, cultural value orientations, and the functions of art is needed to provide empirical verification of these theoretical principles. Research findings are necessary to further clarify theory. Future research should focus on these and other specific aspects of multicultural art education, such as how expanded meanings of art and culture, students partaking of the various roles of artists, and understanding of cultural value orientations affect the academic, social, and artistic achievements of diverse students in school communities. This research might include comparative dimensions, such as the effects on teaching in specialized art classes as compared to their incorporation in regular

subjects, and the effects of focusing on works of art from various cultural groups other than those shared by the students.

## Recommendations for Practice

### *Teacher Preparation*

Several implications for teacher pre-service and in-service professional development are ascertained from this study. First, educational reform cannot be accomplished without teachers' implementation (Day, 1997). Reform advocates must recognize the centralized role that teachers play in reform initiatives, understanding that reform will only come when teachers are involved. Unless teachers come to believe a theory will help them better deal with problems or be more effective with issues they recognize, they will not utilize new concepts or systems into their teaching practice (Tyler, 1978; Burgess, 1984; Levine & Lezotte, 2001; Erickson, 2002). Therefore, pre-service as well as practicing teachers must become aware of their own narrow views of art and culture. Steps should continually be made to encourage teachers of the need to understand culture as dynamic and complex. Teachers must come to realize we are all creators, not just passive recipients, of culture and they must be committed to multicultural art education as an underlying basis for their entire art program, not as a superficial add-on. Teachers must come to understand their own degree of ethnocentrism, and the degree by which s/he unconsciously measures the culturally different against its standard. I, personally, found the cultural value orientations an important and useful framework for understanding core cultural components. Teachers would profit from assessing their personal value orientations to gain a conscious awareness of the basic cultural ideals they value.

Second, it is imperative that teachers of art have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of all aspects of art, including art history, art criticism and aesthetics. Teachers must have a personal understanding and participation in the process of critically analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating art from various cultures across time with an emphasis on functions and basic human commonalities. Art history must be taught more thematically, with less emphasis on a Western, chronological study of style and form. Teaching framework methods by which to critically and authentically examine and study arts from various cultures, such as cultural value orientations, should be given as much attention as specific knowledge of the art object. Critical inquiry techniques must be included in art education courses, where prospective art educators learn ways to foster classroom dialog about the functions of art and the roles artists have played throughout history in diverse cultures.

A third implication in the preparation of art teachers is an emphasis on ways teachers may learn about their students. Teachers need to know a great deal about the ways students learn, the fundamentals of higher-level thinking, and different learning styles, to name a few. It is vital that teachers, also, gain an understanding of the values of their particular students, of their students' families, and of the local community. Much of this study emphasizes that cultural consciousness begins with each individual person becoming aware of the multifaceted nature of *culture* as we all learn from and influence one another.

I believe this study offered some specific tools that proved to be useful in the classroom for teachers to learn about the specific sub-cultures and cultural value orientations of their students. Teachers' knowledge of their students' cultural

memberships can be used for curricular development that connects to and extends from students' previous knowledge and interests. Cultural value orientation identifications offered meaningful contexts for discussion, interpretation of works of art, and motivation for personal art making.

A fourth implication for pre-service teacher education is preparing prospective teachers to integrate art museums resources, art galleries, public art and other community resources in their curriculum. Art teachers should be familiar with how to utilize various art resources of the community. Prospective art teachers should have personal experiences with the benefits of viewing original works of art from diverse cultures as compared with art reproductions, in order to personally recognize the potential educational value. Teachers, too, need to learn ways to collaborate with other teachers to make more field trip opportunities available to students.

#### *Instructional Resources*

Instructional resources that provide the type of cultural information necessary for teachers to efficiently utilize in their classroom are woefully lacking. For teachers to utilize reform initiatives in their classrooms, not only must they recognize the need to employ a new concept, but also teachers must be able to put it into practice without too extensive amount of preparation (Tyler, 1978; Burgess, 1984; Levine & Lezotte, 2001; Erickson, 2002). More resources are needed that address such strategies as art-centered subcultures (*artworlds*) and the functions of art from multicultural perspectives. An instructional unit that examines art subcultures is based on the belief that our understanding of art and how we experience it must take into account more the key people, places, activities, and ideas that are involved in its creation (Erickson, 2002). It,

therefore, follows that resources for teachers that provide information about those key people, places, and activities, and ideas of artists from diverse cultural memberships must be readily available. If we recommend that teachers focus on studying and learning from their own students' dynamic culture (Nieto, 1999), then resources need to be available that describe meaningful and practical ways to do it. Resources that include such tools as free-word association surveys, self-report cultural value orientations surveys, and other types of activities need to become accessible.

### *Teaching Methods*

The need for innovative and varied teaching techniques was another significant implication for practice derived from this study. This art-centered unit of study incorporated a museum visit, self-report surveys, free-word associations, integration of social studies and poetry, a variety of art media, and many forms of classroom and cooperative group discussions. Participants were invited to identify their ideas and values and then use them in relation to other curricular activities. Students' ideas and positions were connected to other, more formal information sources such as historical facts, literature, and art history. The diverse teaching methods demonstrated and the positive benefits the data revealed offer precedents for other teachers to follow.

### *Final Thoughts*

A multicultural art curriculum recognizes that learning is multidisciplinary and multidimensional. The student cannot be restricted to a single perspective, methodology, or way of viewing and processing information about this world. It must be a curriculum that "allows for, encourages, nurtures, and legitimizes nontraditional and

culturally varied forms of knowing by acknowledging and accommodating differing types and styles that come together in classrooms” (Thornton II & McEntee, 1995, p. 251).

My decision to focus on art education to expand cultural awareness and understanding was a very personal and passionate commitment. This study has added documented weight to the effect specific curricular strategies can have in fostering critical cultural consciousness in the classroom. The arts, as a tangible expression of human creativity and as a universal human phenomenon and means of communication, have the capacity to reflect the heart of the thinking, feeling and wanting of our fellow human beings (Sabol, 2000; Remer, 1982; Grant, 1992; Morris, 1998; Stout, 1997). What better arena, than arts-centered curricula, can there be for students and teachers to learn of and appreciate *culture*? Great potential exists to gain a more full view of our own cultures and behaviors by viewing them from the perspectives of different cultures as communicated through the arts! This study and the experience I had working with the participating students has only increased my desires to contribute in this important role of art education.



APPENDIX A

“RESPECT AND HOMAGE”: AN ART-CENTERED UNIT OF STUDY



## **Respect and Homage**

An art-centered unit  
of study  
by Deborah Kuster

*Images used with permission by The Walter O. Evans Collection of African American Art.*

## ***Respect and Homage***

By Deborah Kuster

### **Rationale and Overview**

An important role of art in America is recording and honoring the contributions made by people to the building and sustaining of this nation. Historically, the contributions of Americans from African descent have not been appropriately or adequately recognized. This unit will center on the art, artworlds, and the historical and cultural contexts of three African-American artists, Charles White (1918-1979), Elizabeth Catlett (b. 1915), and Romare Bearden (1912-1988). These three artists lived and worked during crucial times of growth and determination by African Americans to be heard and recognized for their importance in America. Students will examine through the theme, “Respect and Homage,” the works of art, *Woman Worker*, (1951) by Charles White, *The Black Man in the Making of America*, (1960) by Romare Bearden, and *Homage to Black Women Poets*, (1984) by Elizabeth Catlett, from the Walter O. Evans Collection of African American Art, combined with a few other selections by these three artists used for conceptual and stylistic examples. Throughout their study of these artists and works of art, students will acquire the skills and insights needed to create their own personal mixed media art of “Respect and Homage.”

Erickson (2002) describes an artworld as “a culture maintained by people a significant portion of whose identity is drawn in some way from art” (p. 18). This instructional unit is based on the belief that our understanding of art and how we experience it must take into account more than just its visual components. The key people, places, activities, and ideas of an artworld provide “concrete entry points for the introduction of the distinctive activities and ideas of a culture” (p. 18). This type of curriculum structure has potential of broadening and refining students’ understanding of art and culture. It reveals the ever-evolving nature of both art and culture, with each overlapping and influencing the other. Within artworld, historical, and cultural contexts, students can better interpret the meanings of art and the functions of art in society. It also reveals the importance support systems play in the making and understanding of art.

This unit was written in conjunction with a museum visit that provided students’ the opportunity to view the original works of art. After the museum visit, students will begin to examine the artworlds of Bearden, White and Catlett. Examination of specific works of art, under the theme “Respect and Homage” will follow, allowing students the opportunity to apply different contexts into their interpretations of the works of art. Opportunities for students to practice and explore digital cameras and the use of various art media will be given throughout the early lessons of this curriculum. Final lessons will include interdisciplinary lessons with social studies and literature; the making of students’ own art created under the theme “Respect and Homage;” and the writing of student artist’s statements applying an understanding of influences on their art.

### **Enduring Ideas of the Unit**

- An important role of art in America is recording and honoring the contributions made by people to the building and sustaining of this nation.
- Historically, the contributions of Americans of African descent have not been appropriately or adequately recognized.

- Our understanding of art and how we experience it must take into account visual components and include personal and cultural contexts.
- By their very nature, both art and culture are ever-evolving with each overlapping and influencing the other.
- It is important for subconscious aspects of culture to be brought to the conscious level for examination and reform to take place.

### Essential Questions

- How have artists in America recorded and honored the contributions made by people to the building and sustaining of this nation?
- Why has it been important for African American artists to record and honor the contributions made by other African Americans to the building and sustaining of this nation?
- In what ways do artworlds provide insights for interpreting works of art?
- In what ways does historical context provide insights for interpreting works of art?
- What is culture?
- What are the influences of art on culture and culture on art?
- What are value-orientations and how are they reflected in culture and art?

### Unit Objectives

- Students will be able to identify and discuss examples of ways artists record and honor people's contributions to the building and sustaining of America.
- Students will be able to recognize and describe the unique characteristics of the art of Charles White, Romare Bearden, and Elizabeth Catlett.
- Students will demonstrate a general understanding of the personal, historical, and cultural contexts of the African American artists, Charles White, Romare Bearden, and Elizabeth Catlett by identifying specific influences each context might have had on his/her art.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of value-orientations by describing their influences on culture and works of art through discussion using persuasive reasoning.
- Students will reflect on their personal artworlds, culture, and value-orientations and create their own artwork of respect and honor to significant people in their lives supported, in writing, with their own personal artist's statements.

### Overview of Lessons

- Lesson 1 Before visiting the Museum, students will identify personal questions about the three artists and works of art to be studied in this unit, through class and small group discussion. Following the Museum visit, students will review and discuss previous questions, answers, and any new ideas or questions related to the selected artists and works of art.
- Lesson 2 Students will identify their personal ideas of art and culture. They will read and discuss information on the artworlds of the three artists and identify insights artworlds provide to their questions and interpretations of the artworks.
- Lesson 3 Students will begin preparing for their own final work of art by reviewing how artists communicate visually, learning and practicing the use of digital cameras,

and sketching personal ideas of “respect and homage” in preparation of their final artwork.

Lesson 4 Through reading and discussion of the general American history context contained in their textbooks and through a selected example of literature, students will connect and expand their understanding of the three artists and their artworlds. Students will identify their personal and cultural value-orientations. Further analysis of artists and artworks will be applied within a framework of their understanding of cultural value-orientations.

Lesson 5 Students will create their own mixed media work of art paying respect and homage to 1 –3 key people or events in their lives. Students will describe the influences and meanings portrayed in their artwork through an artist’s statement.

## Resources and Materials

### Reproductions and Overhead Transparencies

- *Woman Worker*, (1951) by Charles White
- *The Black Man in the Making of America*, (1960) by Romare Bearden
- *Homage to Black Women Poets*, (1984) by Elizabeth Catlett
- Additional examples of each artist’s work
- Copy of poem, “Alabama Centennial,” by Naomi Madgett
- Optional: Examples of art by artists mentioned in Dramatic Reading (Picasso, Braque, and/or Matisse; Grant Wood; Orozco and/or Rivera)
- Optional: Examples of Jacob Lawrence

### Books

- 5th grade social studies textbook, *America’s Story*
- *Multicultural Artworlds: Enduring, Evolving, and Overlapping Traditions*, Mary Erickson & Bernard Young (Eds.) Reston, VA: NAEA, 2002.
- *The Walter O. Evans Collection of African American Art*, The Walter O. Evans Foundation for Art and Literature, 1999

### Websites (optional)

- [www.getty.edu/artsednet/resources](http://www.getty.edu/artsednet/resources)
- [www.tylermuseum.org](http://www.tylermuseum.org)

### Consumables

- Drawing paper, pencils, die-cut shapes, paper scraps, glue, markers, crayons, pastels, Watercolors

### Equipment

- Overhead projector
- Computer with internet online

## Vocabulary

*homage*—an external action or acknowledgement of reverence or respect

*culture* – a dynamic, creative, and continuous process that includes behaviors, values, and substance shared by people; Individuals identify with traditional cultures such as Native

American, African American, European American, or Latina/o

*sub-culture* – other sub-groups or micro-groups within cultures that individuals build important connections with because of more specific interests or experiences

*artworld* – a culture maintained by people a significant portion of whose identity is drawn in some way from art.

*gesture drawing*– drawing made in a quick, free style to capture overall form; no details.

*segregation* – separation of the races

*boycott* – a refusal to buy goods or services

*integration* – bringing together of people of all races in education, jobs, and housing

*centennial* – a 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary

*acquiescence* – the act of passively accepting; without disagreement

*consolation* – the act of comforting

*fusion*- act of melting together; blending together; coalition

*mixed-media* – art work done using a variety of different materials.

*artist statement* – a short, creative writing by the artist expressing personal ideas and meanings that are important in his/her art.

## LESSON ONE: The Museum Visit

### Overview

Lesson one is designed to get students thinking about the roles of art and of involving their own personal questions and experiences to the Museum visit and the later lessons of this unit. Pre-visit activities include a brief introduction of the Walter O. Evans Collection of African American Art exhibit. Students will discuss their ideas of the functions and importance of art, reasons people collect things, and why Dr. Evan might have chosen to collect the art in his collection. The class will be divided into three groups and will be provided one reproduction from the selected artworks of this unit. Each group will identify personal questions about the artist and works of art to be studied in this unit. Following the Museum visit, students will review and discuss their previous questions, answers they learned while at the Museum, and any new ideas or questions related to the selected artists and works of art.

### Objectives

- Students will identify personal reasons and examples of collecting.
- Students will identify personal ideas about the roles and importance of art.
- Students will identify personal questions to investigate while at the Museum.
- Students will identify personal discoveries and new questions resulting from the Museum trip.

### Materials and Resources

Reproductions and Transparencies

- *Woman Worker*, (1951) by Charles White
- *The Black Man in the Making of America*, (1960) by Romare Bearden
- *Homage to Black Women Poets*, (1984) by Elizabeth Catlett

## Planning and Preparation

Review background information on the Evans Collection. Review the suggested discussion questions.

## Vocabulary

*homage*—an external action or acknowledgement of reverence or respect

## Body of Lesson

Pre-visit Activities:

Ask students why they think it is important for them to visit an art museum.

- Why is art important?
- What are some of the functions of art?
- What does art communicate? How?

Give students some brief background information on Dr. Evans and his collection.

- Do any of you have a collection? Why? What is it?
- Why do people collect certain things?
- Why might Dr. Evans have chosen to collect works of art made by African American artists?

Give students some information on the absence of examples of African American artists in Museums and school textbooks and Dr. Evans' desire for his daughters to grow up with this art.

Divide the class into three groups. Give each group one reproduction of the selected artwork for this unit. Ask one student from each group to record five questions the members of the group have about that work of art, with two questions about the artist and three questions about the artwork.

When finished, put up a transparency of each artwork and have each group read their questions to the rest of the class.

Also ask:

- How do you think this artwork will look different at the Museum?
- What size do you think it is?
- What materials do you think it is made of?

Encourage students to seek answers to their questions while at the Museum.

Post-Visit Activities:

Put up a transparency of each artwork and ask the following questions:

- How was the "real" artwork different than this copy?
- What was its size? The materials used?
- What were some of your questions that you now have answers for?
- What questions do you still have?
- What are any other comments you wish to make about your Museum visit or this art collection?

If needed, provide answers to their first questions and take note of their new questions as discussion points for later lessons.

### **Summary and Closure**

Summarize discussion points and new questions. Tell students they will be learning more about each of these artists in art class and begin practicing and working on their own artwork in homage to important people in their lives.

## **LESSON TWO: Artists' Bios and Artworlds**

### **Overview**

Students will discuss personal ideas about art and culture and identify some of their own cultures and subcultures as a type of pre- survey documentation and for personal connections to artworld concepts. After introducing artworld concepts, students will be introduced to the biographies and artworlds of the three artists through the Dramatic Reading format and discuss the new information. They will be asked to identify insights artworlds provide in answering their questions about the artwork and artist and in providing new interpretations of each work of art.

### **Objectives**

- Students will identify and document their personal ideas about art and culture in a type of pre- test.
- Students will discuss personal ideas and show evidence of exploring new concepts about art and culture through teacher lead inquiry.
- Students will be able to recognize and describe the unique characteristics of the art of White, Bearden, and Catlett.
- Students will show evidence of making connections with artworlds information and interpretations of the three selected works of art.

### **Materials and Resources**

- Hand-outs of Dramatic Reading.
- Prop costumes such as coats and hats.

### **Transparencies and Reproductions**

- *Woman Worker*, (1951) by Charles White
- *The Black Man in the Making of America*, (1960) by Romare Bearden
- *Homage to Black Women Poets*, (1984) by Elizabeth Catlett
- Additional examples of each artist's work
- Examples of art by artists mentioned in Dramatic Reading



## Planning and Preparation

Make copies of the Dramatic Reading. Review Dramatic Reading and find examples of artwork by all artists that are mentioned. Make a nametag for each character in the Reading. Review discussion questions.

## Vocabulary

*culture* – a dynamic, creative, and continuous process that includes behaviors, values, and substance shared by people; Individuals identify with traditional cultures such as Native American, African American, European American, or Latina/o

*sub-culture* – other sub-groups or micro-groups within cultures that individuals build important connections with because of more specific interests or experiences

*artworld* – a culture maintained by people a significant portion of whose identity is drawn in some way from art.

## Body of Lesson

Explain to students that you will be asking them to write down ideas about some of the things they will be learning. You will be asking them to repeat this exercise at the end of the unit to see how their answers and ideas have changed. There are no right or wrong answers. Ask students to take a sheet of notebook paper and pencil. First write the word “culture.” Ask students to list five words that suggest the meaning of “culture.” Then ask students to list all the cultures in which they belong or are members. Finally, have students write the words “Functions of art.” Have students list all of the different functions that art can have. Have students put their name and the date on the papers and collect and save them.

Engage in a short discussion with students:

- What are some of the functions of art?
- What does “culture” mean?
- What are examples of different cultures in America? In Tyler? In this school?
- What do you think a sub-culture or micro-culture might mean?
- Name some cultures and micro-cultures you are members of?

Tell students: “We are going to investigate the lives and what are called ‘artworlds’ of our three selected artists. Artworlds are the cultures and sub-cultures that White, Bearden, and Catlett are members. We need two boy and two girl volunteers who are comfortable reading and standing in front of everyone. I wish that everyone watch and listen and be ready to discuss your ideas after the Reading.”

Assign each volunteer a part. An additional volunteer could hold up works of art that are being referred to or described in the reading. Optional: provide costume hats and coats for characters.

After the Dramatic Reading discuss some of the following questions:

- What are some other functions of art we had not mentioned?
- What were some of the artworlds these artists were a part of?
- What are some questions that you had answered in this Reading?

Put up the selected works of art one at a time and ask?

- What are ways that you think differently about this art, or news ideas you have about it after learning about the artist?

### **Summary and Closure**

Summarize how the artworld contexts have enhanced their interpretations and discussion of the works of art.

## **LESSON THREE: Personal Preparations**

### **Overview**

Students will begin preparing for their own final work of art by examining some specific methods Catlett, White, and Bearden used to visual express specific ideas and meaning. Of particular emphasis will be how White and Catlett used facial expression and bodily gestures. Students will also examine specific formal qualities such as shape/form, color, line, and balance used by Catlett, White, and Bearden. Specific skills necessary to use digital cameras will be practiced and preliminary drawings of important people, places, and events we be made by each student. Note: This lesson should be intertwined with Lessons 2-4, to combine reflective and technical art-making activities with discussion activities, to provide variety for students. Scheduled time allotments will specific how these lessons are implemented.

### **Objectives**

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of how artists use formal elements and principles and specific physical expressions and gestures to communicate visually.
- Students will have experience using a digital camera and posing classmates in different expressive positions and in costume .
- Students will sketch ways to personally represent their important people, places, and activities visually.

### **Materials and Resources**

Reproductions and transparencies

- *Woman Worker*, (1951) by Charles White
- *The Black Man in the Making of America*, (1960) by Romare Bearden
- *Homage to Black Women Poets*, (1984) by Elizabeth Catlett
- Examples of Bearden, Picasso and/or Matisse collages of human form
- Examples of Jacob Lawrence (he, too, used simplified shapes to portray human form)

Consumables

- Drawing paper and pencils

### **Planning and Preparation**

Choose costume props for student models. Have necessary supplies ready.

## Vocabulary

*gesture* – overall form used to communicate.

## Body of Lesson

Begin by examining *Working Woman* by Charles White, *Homage to Black Women Poets* by Elizabeth Catlett and *The Black Man in the Making of America* by Romare Bearden. Discuss ways these artists communicate ideas visually. Note especially the facial expressions used by White, the bodily pose use by Catlett, and the formalistic elements and principles of Bearden.

- What do her folded hands in front communicate?
- Why do you think they are enlarged?
- How would this painting communicate differently if she was looking to the side? Or if she was smiling?
- What kind of communication does this pose express?
- Why do you think the artists simplified her form?
- How did the artist use curves and angles? What do they suggest?
- Do you think these are portraits of real people? Why?
- Why do you think the artist chose to use un-natural colors?
- Why do you think some faces are abstracted?
- Describe the artist's use of balance.

Next, explain to students they will learn how to use a digital camera. Summarize how gestures are used by artists to emphasize different expressive ideas. Have students practice taking pictures of classmates in different poses and with different costume props correctly using the cameras.

The second exercise will be one of thinking and drawing. Students will make preliminary sketches that will be utilized for their final art project. Give each student a 9 x 12" piece of paper. Have them divide the paper into six parts, anyway they wish. Review ways the focus artists paid homage and respect to important people, events and activities. Students may use pictures, words, and/or symbols to answer the following assignment. In two spaces identify two important people in your life. In two spaces identify two important places in your life. And in two spaces identify two important goals or activities of your life. Think about how you can express these things on paper in a pleasing way to pay homage and respect to what is important to you.

## Summary and Closure

Collect and save all of student's work. Tell students they will be using the ideas and skills from this lesson in a final artwork later.

# LESSON FOUR: Historical, literary, and personal connections

## Overview

Through reading and discussion of the general American history context contained in their textbooks and through a selected example of literature, students will connect and expand their understanding of the three artists and their *artworlds*. Students will identify their personal and

cultural value orientations. Further analysis of artists and artworks will be applied within a framework of their understanding of cultural value-orientations.

### **Objectives**

- Students will demonstrate a general understanding of the historical context of the African American artists, Charles White, Romare Bearden, and Elizabeth Catlett by identifying specific influences each context might have had on his/her art.
- Students will identify their personal, cultural value orientations through a situational survey.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of how identification of value orientations provides a lens for new interpretations of works of art through discussion using persuasive reasoning.

### **Materials and Resources**

Reproductions and Transparencies

- *Woman Worker*, (1951) by Charles White
- *The Black Man in the Making of America*, (1960) by Romare Bearden
- *Homage to Black Women Poets*, (1984) by Elizabeth Catlett
- Additional examples of each artist's work

Books and Handouts

- History textbook, *America's Story*
- Hand-out copy of poem, "Alabama Centennial" by Naomi Madgett
- Hand-out for students' value-orientations survey
- Hand-out of cooperative group discussion questions

### **Planning and Preparation**

Review historical information in textbook of Chapter 19, Section 3 (pp. 588-593). Also review biographical information on Fredrick Douglass (pp 370, 388), Harriet Tubman (p. 398), and Sojourner Truth (pp. 370- 372). Make copies of student hand-outs of poetry, survey and discussion questions.

### **Vocabulary**

*segregation* – separation of the races

*boycott* – a refusal to buy goods or services

*integration* – bringing together of people of all races in education, jobs, and housing

*centennial* – a 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary

*acquiescence* – the act of passively accepting; without disagreement

*consolation* – the act of comforting

*fusion*- act of melting together; blending together; coalition

### **Body of Lesson**

Explain to student this lesson will add further insight into the historical times of the artists they are studying. Have students read aloud Chapter 19, Section 3 (pp. 588-593), "The Struggle for Equal Rights" in their social studies textbook.

Discuss together

- Describe some events of the 1950s and 60s in America?
- Who were some of the key people during this time? What did they do or say?

Hand-out student copies of “Alabama Centennial” by Naomi Madgett and read poem.

In smaller groups, have students reread an assigned section and discuss together, identifying vocabulary words. Ask: “What did the poet mean?” as you reread each section. Ask students to support their answers with information they learned in their history books and summarize with the whole class what the small group discussed.

Ask students to define “segregation” and “integration.” Review some of their past discussion about cultures and subcultures.

- What do you think the “American Dream” is?
- Does segregation or integration fit with the American dream?
- Why was integration so hard and long in coming to America?
- What makes it hard even today?

Tell students: “I would like for you to read with me some situations and then fill in the answers that best match what you think. There are NO right or wrong answers. There are NO best or better answers.” Pass out value-orientations survey. Read each situation aloud and allow time for students to mark down their answers.

Go back over each situation and discuss student’s answers.

Tell students: “Finally, we are going to discuss these value-orientations ideas in connection with our artists and art for this unit.” Divide students in three groups. Provide each group with reproductions of one artist and the questionnaire to fill out.

Put up transparency of each artwork and have groups tell the class their answers. Be sure answers are supported with specific examples.

Other ideas that might be discussed:

- How do you think the artist would think if s/he was growing up now?
- How do you differ or match how the artist’s thinks?
- How would the artist have made the picture different if s/he had different value-orientations?

### **Summary and Closure**

In summary, ask students: “What are some of the functions of art we have seen?”

## **LESSON FIVE: Personal Homage**

### **Overview**

This lesson will begin with a type of post-test administered to students, just as in Lesson Two, to document evidence of expanded ideas of art and culture. Students will create their own mixed media work of art paying respect and homage to at least two key people or events in

their lives. Students will describe the influences and meanings portrayed in their artwork through an artist's statement.

### **Objectives**

- Students will identify and document their expanded ideas about art and culture in a type of post-test.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the expressive qualities of bodily gestures when taking pictures with digital cameras.
- Students will demonstrate an ability to use collage techniques to express ideas,
- Students will create their own artwork of respect and honor to significant people or events in their lives that reflects their personal artworlds, culture, and/or value-orientations.
- Students will express, in writing, their own personal artist's statements that reflect their personal artworlds, culture, and/or value-orientations.

### **Materials and Resources**

#### Consumables

- Drawing paper, pencils, paper scraps, glue, markers, crayons, pastels, watercolors

Each student's practice work from Lesson 3.

Digital cameras, floppy discs

Costume props

Hand-out for artist statement

### **Planning and Preparation**

Have all supplies gathered. Make copies of artist statement hand-out.

### **Vocabulary**

*mixed-media* – art work done using a variety of different materials.

*artist statement* – a short, creative writing by the artist expressing personal ideas and meanings that are important in his/her art.

### **Body of the Lesson**

Begin this lesson by summarizing some of the discoveries students have expressed during this unit. Tell students you are going to ask them again to write down ideas about some of the things they have learned. There are no right or wrong answers. Ask students to take a sheet of notebook paper and pencil. First write the word "culture." Ask students to list five words that suggest the meaning of "culture." Then ask students to list all the cultures in which they belong or are members. Finally, have students write the words "Functions of art." Have students list all of the different functions that art can have. Have students put their name and the date on the papers and collect and save them. Compare with student's answers from Lesson 2.

Return each student's past practice drawings from Lesson 3. Review the meaning of "respect" and "homage" and how the artists, White, Catlett, and Bearden, expressed such ideas. Review ideas of symbols and body positions that express certain ideas. Ask students to look at their past drawings and reflect on all we have talked about and learn. Ask them to choose at least two of the people or events, from their drawings in Lesson 3, in which they wish to pay respect and homage.

Tell students they must have at least one person (figure) and one symbol in their picture. They may also have a few words if wish.

After thinking and choosing, have students begin designing the background for their final picture. They will begin in pencil and then go over pencil lines with crayons and oil pastels. Finally, have student use the printed digital photos for their picture. The figure(s) will be glued to the background paper. Larger areas will be filled in with watercolors.

Give each student an Artist's Statement hand-out and have them write their own artist statement.

### **Summary and closure**

Ask if any students wish to read their artist's statements. Display artwork with artist statements.

### **Resources**

*Multicultural Artworlds: Enduring, Evolving, and Overlapping Traditions*, by Mary Erickson & Bernard Young (Eds.) Reston, VA: NAEA, 2002.

*The Walter O. Evans Collection of African American Art*, The Walter O. Evans Foundation for Art and Literature in association with University of Washington Press, 1999.

*African Americans in Art: Selections from the Art Institute of Chicago*, The Art Institute of Chicago in association with University of Washington Press, 1999.

*The Art of Black American Women: Works of Twenty-four Artists of the Twentieth Century*, by Robert Henkes, Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 1993.

*Narratives of African American Art and Identity: The David C. Driskell Collection*, The Art Gallery and the Department of Art History and Archaeology, University, College Park, MD, 1998.

*The Negro in Art: A Pictorial Record of the Negro Artist and of the Negro Theme in Art*, edited and annotated by Alain Locke, New York: Hacker Art Books, 1979.

*Unit Assessment Rubric*

<b>Objective: Student will:</b>	<b>Novice (basic level)</b>	<b>Competent (median level)</b>	<b>Exceptional (highest level)</b>
be able to identify and discuss examples of ways artists record and honor people's contributions to the building and sustaining of America.	be able to name 1-2 artist(s) and his/her artwork that records contributions to the building and sustaining of America. The student will offer no discussion.	be able to name 2-3 artists and his/her artwork that records contributions to the building and sustaining of America. The student will support names with discussion of two functions of art.	be able to name 3 artists and his/her artwork that records contributions to the building and sustaining of America. The student will support names with discussion of many different functions of art with evidence of historical understanding.
be able to recognize and describe the unique characteristics of the art of Charles White, Romare Bearden, and Elizabeth Catlett.	be able to recognize but not describe the characteristics of the art of White, Bearden, and Catlett.	be able to recognize and give limited description of the characteristics of art of White, Bearden, and Catlett.	be able to recognize and give accurate description of the characteristics of the art of White, Bearden, and Catlett, offering some examples of influences on their art.
demonstrate a general understanding of the personal, historical, and cultural contexts of the African American artists, White, Bearden, and Catlett by identifying specific influences each context might have had on his/her art.	identify one or two contexts of the artists White, Bearden, and Catlett, without understanding their influence on the art.	identify at least one personal, one historical, and one cultural context of each artist with a possible example of an influence.	identify more than one personal, historical and cultural contexts of each artist with specific influences each context might have had, supported with persuasive reasons.
demonstrate an understanding of value-orientations by describing their influences on culture and works of art through discussion using persuasive reasoning.	identify one or two of their personal value-orientations with an example of each.	identify three cultural value-orientations and interpret a work of art using definitions.	demonstrate a holistic understanding of three cultural value-orientations by interpreting works of art using definitions and supportive reasons.
reflect on their personal artworlds, culture, and value-orientations and create their own artwork of respect and honor to significant people in their lives supported, in writing, with their own personal artist's statements	identify one personal artworld and value-orientation in artist statement. Student will honor one important person in his life in art.	identify two personal artworlds and value-orientation in artist statement. Student will honor at least one person and one event that is important in her life.	Identify and demonstrate reflective and creative ideas about at least two personal artworlds and value-orientations in artist statement. Student will creatively honor at least one person and one event that is important in his life.



APPENDIX B  
STUDENT'S ARTIST STATEMENTS INSTRUMENT

Write an artist's statement. Give your work a title that expresses the main idea. Structure your artist's statement by answering at least three of the following questions.

- What is the function of your art?
- What or who has influenced how you make your art?
- Why is your art important?
- Describe the value-orientations that are important to you in your art (*time, activity, relational*).
- Who or what events are you honoring in your art? Why?
- What would you like people to think about when they see your art?

Name:

The title of my artwork is:

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This is my artist's statement:

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APPENDIX C  
DRAMATIC READING (*ARTWORLDS*)

The Life and Art of Romare Bearden, Elizabeth Catlett, and Charles White:  
*A Dramatic Reading*

**Narrator:** This will be a brief introduction into the lives and art of Romare Bearden, Elizabeth Catlett, and Charles White. These three artists were born in America within a few years of each other. The first born was Romare Bearden.

**Bearden:** I was born in 1912 in Charlotte, North Carolina, but moved with my parents to Harlem in New York City when I was a young child. My father worked for the city and my mother was a newspaper reporter. Harlem, where I grew up, was an exciting place. I was surrounded by all kinds of leaders of the time: intellectuals, community leaders, artists, and musicians.

I earned a college degree in Mathematics. My art career began in what was called the Art Students League. I also studied with a German artist name George Grosz and later traveled to Paris, France and studied literature, philosophy, and the work of old and modern masters there. I am also a musician and many of my songs have been recorded.

**Narrator:** Next, we will meet Elizabeth Catlett.

**Catlett:** I was born in Washington, D.C. in 1915. I studied art under some very important artists at Howard University in Washington, then at the State University of Iowa, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the People's Graphic Workshop in Mexico (Taller de gráfica popular). I have spent my life as an artist and an art teacher in America and in Mexico.

**Narrator:** The third artist is Charles White.

**White:** I am an only child and was born in 1918 in Chicago, Illinois. My grandfather was a slave in Mississippi. My father was a railroad and construction worker and my mother was a domestic worker, which means she did household chores, like cooking and cleaning for other people. My father died when I was very young, so my mother and I were left to take care of each other.

I began training in art when I was about 15 years old. The schools I attended were the Art Institute of Chicago, the Art Students League in New York and the People's Graphic Workshop in Mexico (Taller de gráfica popular). I, too, have been an artist and an art teacher.

**Narrator:** As you have learned, these three artists would have known one another as they were close to the same age. Bearden and White were both students at the Art Students League in New York. White and Catlett were at the Arts Institute in Chicago and in Mexico as the same time. In fact White and Catlett were married for a few years

and went to Mexico together. We have now learned some important schools for African American artists at this time: the Art Students League in New York, the Art Institute of Chicago, Howard University in D.C. and the Workshop in Mexico.

Next, let's hear each artist tell us a bit more about the people and places that were important influences on their art.

Back to Romare Bearden.

*(optional: have another student hold up examples of Picasso, Braque, and/or Matisse)*

**Bearden:** As mentioned earlier, I went and studied in Paris in 1950. I have been influenced by the collage styles of the Spanish artists, Picasso and Braque and the French artist, Matisse. I helped start a group called "Spiral," an association which supported the work of African American artists during the civil rights movement of the 1960s. And I have written several books on African American artist masters.

*(optional: have another student hold up an example of Grant Wood)*

**Catlett:** Some important influences in my life include the artist Grant Wood. I studied under him in Iowa and he encouraged me to pursue subjects I knew well, and to look to my people for inspiration. When Charles White was my husband, we both taught at Hampton University in Virginia and an art educator, Viktor Lowenfeld, encouraged me to use art to discuss social injustices and human dignity. I became a Mexican citizen in 1962. I studied sculpture and printmaking in Mexico. My art contains influences of America, Africa, and Mexico.

*(optional: have another student hold up examples of Orozco and/or Rivera)*

**White:** During the late 1930s and early 40s I mainly painted historic murals. My murals were most influenced by such artists as Jose Clemente Orozco and Diego Rivera of the Mexican muralist movement. Then I shifted from large murals to drawing. My interest in the work of German artist Käthe Kollwitz influenced my black and white drawings.

**Narrator:** Great artists such as these are influenced in many ways and they in turn influence many others. It is important that you understand that artists are a part of what is called an "artworld." It is a sub-culture of people that hold art to be a very important part of their lives.

Finally, we will hear from our three famous artists as they tell us what is important for them to communicate in their art. Let's begin with Charles White this time.

**White:** I wished to communicate my frustration of the hardship and cruelty African Americans have historically faced. My art is about hope and despair. I have a deep respect for labor and I have shown the rich history and life of African Americans. I have been inspired by the dignity of African Americans and by my love for Negro spirituals, or sacred songs.

**Catlett:** A primary concern of my art is for all to see the dignity of the African American heritage. My sculptures and prints are realistic so they can be easily understood. I wish to serve mankind and demonstrate liberation and self-determination of African

Americans. I wish to show my deep respect and concern for women of color, and show their enduring strength.

**Bearden:** My art expresses the African Americans struggle for racial equality. I also have wanted to show the complexity and beauty of Black American life. I use personal memories and different symbols in my art, creating many layers of meaning. My artwork is a blending of styles, values, hopes and dreams which characterizes much of African American history.

**Narrator:** All three of these artists have art in all the major museums in America and across the world. They have won honors, influenced new artists, and left important messages for us to learn from. Charles White died in 1979 at the age of 61. Romare Bearden died in 1988 at the age of 76. And Elizabeth Catlett continues to live and work in Mexico and New York with her husband, a Mexican artist named Francisco Mora. She is 88 years of age.

APPENDIX D  
VALUE ORIENTATION SURVEY INSTRUMENT

## Value Orientation Survey Questions

### 1. Team Choice (*activity*)

A student had the opportunity to choose a team of his favorite sport to play on. The coaches were different. Listen to what they were like and say which you think would be the best one to play for.

A One coach was fair, and his/her team won most of their games. S/he insisted that all players work out hard, and be on time at every practice. If you missed a practice s/he thought is was right for you to be kicked off the team. (*Doing*)

B This coach did not win as many games but s/he was not so firm. S/he understood that other things were important and you might miss a few practices. When players did this s/he would take them back without saying too much. (*Being*)

C The other coach stressed other things besides practice and winning games. S/he was interested in what players felt and thought while preparing and playing a game. Every players' personal development is most important. (*Being in becoming*)

Which team would be best to play for in most cases?

Which team do you think most of your friends and classmates would this best?

What kind of coach do you think is best to be in most cases?

What kind would most of your friends and classmates think to best?

### 2. Nonworking time (*activity*)

Three students spend their time in different ways when they have completed their classroom work and have free time.

A One student spends most of his/her free time learning or trying out things that will help him/her with other school work. (*Doing*)

B One student spends most of his/her time talking, telling stories, singing, and such with friends. (*Being*)

C One student spends most of his/her time carefully blending a variety of time with friends, working out a puzzle, or working on something else that s/he thinks s/he needs improvement in. (*being-in-becoming*)

Which of these students has the best way to use their time?

Which of these students do you think you are more like?

Which of these students would most teachers think had the best way of spending their time?



### 3. Group work (*relational*)

Your teacher assigns you to a group to do a class project. There are 3 different ways to decide what the project will be and who will do the specific parts.

A There are a couple of students who are recognized as class leaders. They are the first to raise their hands and usually make high grades. They will make the decisions and every one else in the group will accept what they decide. (*lineal*)

B Everyone in the group will take part in deciding the project and who will do what. Lots of people talk and discuss. Nothing will be decided until most everyone come to agree on what is best to be done. (*collateral*)

C Everyone in the group holds on to his own opinion, and the group decides the matter by a vote. They do what the largest number want even though there are still some people who disagree and want to do it differently. (*independent*)

Which way do you think is usually best in most cases?

Which of the other two ways do you think is better?

Which way of all three do you think most of your classmates would usually think is best?

Which way would your teachers usually think is best?

### 4. Help in misfortune (*relational*)

The father of a family worked in construction. He hurt his back and was unable to work and provide for the family for many months. The family needed some help until the father recuperated. There are different ways of getting help. Which of these three ways would be best?

A One family depended mostly on other relatives or close friends to help out as much as each one could. (*collateral*)

B One family to tried to raise the necessary money and find help on their own in whatever ways they could (*independent*)

C The parents of one family went to his/her boss, or some expert, or a relative that usually manages things, and ask him or her to help out until things got better (*lineal*)

Which way of getting the help do you think would usually be best?

Which way of getting the help do you think is next best?

Which way do you think you yourself would really follow?

Which way do you think most other people in your family would think best?

### 5. Child training (*time*)

Some people were talking about the way children should be brought up. Here are three different ideas.

A Some people say that children should always be taught well the traditions of the past (the ways of the older people). They believe the old ways are best, and that it is when children do not follow them too much that things go wrong. (*Past*)

B Some people say that children should be taught some of the old traditions (ways of the older people), but it is wrong to insist that they stick to these ways. These people believe that it is necessary for children always to learn about and take on whatever of the new ways will best help them get along in the world of today. (*Present*)

C Some people do not believe children should be taught much about past traditions (the ways of older people) at all except as an interesting story of what has gone before. These people believe that the world goes along best when children are taught the things that will make them want to find out for themselves new ways of doing things to replace the old. (*Future*)

Which of these people had the best idea about how children should be taught?

Which of the other two people had the better idea?

Considering again all three ideas, which would most other persons in your class say had the better idea?

Considering again all three ideas, which would most other persons in your family say had the better idea?

#### 6. Expectations about change (*time*)

Three young people were talking about what they thought their families, when they grew up, would have one day as compared with their father's and mother's.

They each said different things.

A The first said: I expect my family to be better off in the future than the family of my father and mother or relatives if we work hard and plan right. Things in this country usually get better for people who really try. (*Future*)

B The second one said: I don't know whether my family will be better off, the same, or worse off than the family of my father and mother or relatives. Things always go up and down even if people do work hard. So one can never really tell how things will be. (*Present*)

C The third one said: I expect my family to be about the same as the family of my father and mother or relatives. The best way is to work hard and plan ways to keep up things as they have been in the past. (*Past*)

Which of these people do you think had the best idea?

Which of the other two people had the better idea?

Which of these three people would most other young people your age think had the best idea?

## APPENDIX E

### VALUE ORIENTATION COOPERATIVE GROUP QUESTIONS

### Value Orientation Group Questions

Discuss these questions as a group and be ready to give persuasive reasons for your answers.

1. Do you think this artist was most interested in the holding on to the past, making the most of the present or preparing for the future?
2. Do you think this artist believed it is most important to work hard individually, work together as a group, or work under qualified leaders to achieve our goals?
3. What kind of activity do you think was most important to this artist, working and doing, enjoying and socializing, or growing strong character on the inside?

APPENDIX F  
DESCRIPTION OF PILOT STUDY

January 2003

### Description of Pilot Study: Research Questions and Methodology

A pilot study was conducted to test some of the structure and questionnaire instruments for my research curricular unit. It represented a first attempt to examine if and how 4th and 5th graders are able to identify and discuss their value orientations and transfer such awareness into interpretations of works of art. The pilot study objectives were to test:

- Coherency of survey questions for this age group
- Length of time for holding their attention with discussion
- Types of responses and discussions with survey questions
- Evidence of transfer of value orientations in interpreting works of art
- Types of responses to specific works of art
- Types of responses to certain inquiry techniques and approaches

The pilot study involved two 4th and two 5th grade classes while in art class. Each class lasted about 35 minutes and the researcher was able to hold a discussion with them for about 20 minutes during each period. Prior to the study, the art teacher and school principal were contacted seeking consent to visit the art class and engage students in a class discussion as a pilot study. The art teacher presented to the class the researcher's reasons for being there and told students I was seeking their opinions and ideas about

some questions. I expressed appreciation for any insights the students wished to share. I recorded the students' responses (both verbal and non-verbal) with notes taken after each class' discussion.

I asked a set of different value oriented survey questions to each class so as to test the response to the whole survey questionnaire. Following the discussions of personal value orientations, I presented works of art from the Walter O. Evans Collection of African American Art. Observations and interpretations of the works of art were focused on the transfer of value-orientated issues previously discussed.

*Observations and Conclusions as They Relate to the Pilot Study Questions*  
*Coherency of survey questions to this age group.*

All but one question (# 5—change to less of a devastating situation) was worded satisfactorily. Students readily understood and responded enthusiastically. Additional questions were recorded that aided in relevant discussion and promoted understanding.

*Length of time holding their attention with discussion.*

Students were active participants and attention was held during the entire 20 minutes of discussion in all four pilot study classes.

*Types of responses and discussions with survey questions.*

Responses were reflective and personal. Students were capable of supporting answers with personal examples and reasons. Most all students in every class contributed to the discussion at some point. The most stimulating discussions were with the *relational* and *activity* value-orientations. The *time* orientations seemed to offer the least variation and the least depth of inquiry.

*Evidence of transfer of value orientations in interpreting works of art.*

Works of art were presented, with only the artist's name, title of work, and date of work. Students were capable of transferring their understanding of value-orientations from the previous discussions to interpreting works of art. The value orientations provided a valid and effective foundation for genuine, insightful interpretations. I noted that more information on the art and artist would be very important in adding to the quality of students' interpretations.

*Types of responses to specific works of art.*

Students responded enthusiastically to portraits and works related to music. Personal connections were easily made.

*Types of responses to certain inquiry techniques and approaches.*

Students were very receptive to the my valuing of their opinions and ideas. The situational questionnaire is very effective in soliciting candid responses. Students understood there were no "right" and "wrong" answers. It appeared the researcher might have received more open responses from students than a familiar teacher would have. The 4th graders appeared to be freer in self-expression and disclosure than the 5th graders. I noted that in working with 5th graders, issues of self-consciousness and the need for peer-acceptance must be taken into account.

*Final Comments*

I concluded from the pilot study that 5th graders were capable of understanding value-orientations as they relate to their personal experience and were capable in transferring such awareness into interpreting works of art. The study did not directly identify specific issues of *culture* and *cultural consciousness* by name, but I was persuaded of the



validity of incorporating value-orientations into the art-centered curricular unit for the final study.

The pilot study left me further convinced that providing historical, cultural, and biographical information on the art and artists in conjunction with value-orientated self-reflection would yield meaningful connections between the works of art and the students. I was left wondering what would be the most effective way to survey the students. An idea of a type of “game” that might illicit more authentic responses surfaced.

How much variety in the works of art and the value orientations with which to focus in the curricular unit was another issue I was left to ponder. I concluded that I must carefully identify the curricular goals and have the specific activities support them, instead of identifying worthwhile activities without clearly supported goals in mind.

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