



University
of Glasgow

Ashworth, Elizabeth Laura Auger (2010) *Elementary art education: an expendable curriculum?* Ed.D thesis.

<http://theses.gla.ac.uk/2403/>

Copyright and moral rights for this thesis are retained by the author

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge

This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the Author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the Author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given

Elementary Art Education: An Expendable Curriculum?

Elizabeth Laura Auger Ashworth, BA(Hons), BEd, MEd

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Education (EdD)

University of Glasgow
Faculty of Education
Department of Educational Studies

November 2010

Abstract

This ethnographic study was initiated by the concern that elementary art education is an endangered subject, not only marginalised but expendable. This concern was based on informal conversations with pre- and in-service teachers and observations during pre-service teacher evaluations in elementary schools in Ontario, Canada. From these conversations and observations, it seemed that the emphasis in elementary schools is on core subjects with anything else deemed to provide balance alongside initiatives to improve literacy, numeracy, character, and inclusion. The school day is teeming with subjects and initiatives and the resulting crowded curriculum may be affecting teaching and learning in non-core subjects, such as art, negatively. In addition to such external issues are individual challenges faced by generalist teachers with little or no background in visual arts. These teachers' lack of comfort with art might, I surmised at the start of this study, impede the effective planning, implementation, and assessment of art education.

To understand what impacts art education, specifically visual arts instruction, I used a variety of interpretive enquiry methods to interrogate what makes art in elementary schools a vulnerable if not an expendable subject. Initially seeking to find out if art was expendable, I went beyond this to explore perceptions of teachers on teaching art through a localised small-scale study involving 19 elementary teachers in two school boards in north-eastern Ontario. I conducted interviews, recorded observations, and read related documents to answer my research questions, which were as follows: Why is art education important, or not, for students, educators, parents, and other stakeholders? Is art jettisoned in favour of implementing other policies and curricular subjects? Do teachers use other programmes and initiatives as an excuse not to teach art? How do teachers feel about teaching art? Is art expendable?

Nussbaum's (1997) capacities (critical self-examination, connectedness with the world, narrative imagination, scientific understanding) provide the theoretical framework for the study, support the analysis of the state of art education, and help defend its importance at the elementary level. Possible barriers to effective art education (history, policy, practice, economics, geography) and how they may

affect learners' ability to connect with the capacities through visual arts instruction are also analysed and discussed.

Through this study, I found that elementary art education is threatened in the participants' schools for a number of reasons including external issues (minimal attention to, inconsistent delivery of, and poor funding for the mandated art curriculum; a high focus on literacy, numeracy, and other initiatives) and internal issues (discomfort with teaching art; wide range of concepts of art). The study concludes with concerns regarding overall problems with miscommunication and disconnection that threaten effective elementary art education. Recommendations for addressing external and internal issues, and these overall problems are outlined, along with plans to improve art education in pre-service teacher education, in-service practice, and the world beyond the classroom.

Contents

Abstract	ii
Contents	iv
List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vii
List of Appendices	viii
List of Photographs	ix
Acknowledgements	x
Chapter One: The Viewfinder	1
Introduction	1
What is art education?	3
The central research issue	5
Guiding questions	9
Outline of the dissertation	10
Chapter Two: The Lenses	11
Introduction	11
The conceptual ‘scrapbook’	11
Looking through the lenses	15
Summary	27
Chapter Three: The Filters	29
Introduction	29
Context filters	31
Voices against art education	52
Testing the assumptions	54
Chapter Four: Planning and Fieldwork	57
Introduction	57
The research approach	59
The research paradigm	59
Methodology	62
Methods	64
Trial study lessons	66
The participants	67
Scheduling the interviews	76
The interview questions	78
Bias issues	80
Data collection	82
Summary	88

Chapter Five: Into the Darkroom	89
Introduction	89
Descriptive coding additions	92
Topic coding and purposive reading	94
Analysis summary	120
Modeling relationships	120
Chapter Six: Scrapbooking the Issues	123
Introduction	123
Changing concepts	124
Re-visiting the guiding questions	135
Other questions	145
Conclusions	147
Chapter Seven: Reflections, Recommendations, Plans	149
Introduction	149
Reflections on the dissertation	149
Recommendations	153
Plans for positive change	161
Closing thoughts	168
Appendices	169
References	181

List of Tables

Table one: Descriptive coding one (pre-interview)	73
Table two: Descriptive coding two (post-interview)	92
Table three: Topic coding – External issues that participants noted impact art education in north-eastern Ontario elementary schools	97
Table four: Topic coding – Internal issues that participants noted impact art education in north-eastern Ontario elementary schools	98

List of Figures

Figure one: Map of Ontario, Canada	4
Figure two: Map of north-eastern and southern Ontario	6
Figure three: Concept map one	16
Figure four: <i>Guernica</i> , Pablo Picasso (1937)	21
Figure five: <i>Our house</i> , Sam Ashworth (2006)	23
Figure six: Concept map two	32
Figure seven: Map of Near North District School Board	68
Figure eight: Map of Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board	68
Figure nine: Contrast activity sample	116
Figure 10: Remembrance Day activity sample	117
Figure 11: ‘Bug’ name design sample	118
Figure 12: Water cycle diorama sample	118
Figure 13: Printmaking samples	119
Figure 14: Issues with a negative impact on art education in north-eastern Ontario elementary schools	121
Figure 15: Issues with a positive impact on art education in north-eastern Ontario elementary schools	121
Figure 16: Concept map three	124
Figure 17: Example of an ‘Art Matters’ bulletin board	179

List of Appendices

Appendix A: Letter of approval from the University of Glasgow Faculty of Education Ethics Committee	169
Appendix B: Letter of approval from the Near North District School Board	170
Appendix C: Letter of approval from the Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board	171
Appendix D: Sample of letter to Principals	172
Appendix E: Participant sign-up sheet	173
Appendix F: Sample of plain language statement	174
Appendix G: Sample of consent form	175
Appendix H: List of interview questions with probes	176
Appendix I: Ontario Ministry of Education arts achievement chart (1998)	177
Appendix J: Dissertation interview schedule	178
Appendix K: Changes based on recommendations (July-October 2010)	179

List of Photographs

Self-portrait photograph of author in foyer of the Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA), Glasgow, Scotland, May 2009.	1
Photographs of Duchesnay Falls, North Bay; a macro lens was used for the image on the left and a zoom lens was used for the one on the right.	11
Photographs of pine trees; no filter was used for the image on the left and a contrast filter was used for the image on the right.	29
Photograph of author's camera equipment.	57
Photomontage by author, inspired by HSBC advertisements in air bridges; includes <i>Eve after the Fall</i> , Auguste Rodin (1886) and <i>Head of a Baby</i> , Ron Mueck (2003).	89
Photograph of author's dissertation scrapbook (in progress).	123
Photograph of author with students, North Bay Hydro mural, May 1998.	149

Acknowledgements

This dissertation is the result of both an academic and personal journey of nearly five years and I have many people to thank who supported and encouraged me throughout the process. Without them, this study would not have happened.

First, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Nicki Hedge, who agreed to take me on despite her heavy workload. She was an excellent guide through an often messy process and always found time to listen, critique, and encourage. Next, I thank my EdD classmates and my professors who, through years of bonding via study weekends, e-mails, Skype meetings, and phone calls, supported me constantly during the course work and dissertation phases of the journey. The support services communities at the University of Glasgow and Nipissing University helped me to complete this journey by responding to my questions promptly, being flexible about tuition due dates, lending me laptop computers, and organising my teaching schedule around study weekends. I also thank my students who inspired and encouraged me to complete this study and learn from it in order to help them, and others, in the future. The teachers who participated in this study were excellent and willingly shared their triumphs and challenges regarding art education in their classrooms. They welcomed me into their teaching worlds and were wonderfully accommodating. The Directors, Superintendents, Principals, coordinators, and support staff from the Near North District School Board and the Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board were helpful by clearing the way for me to conduct this study in their schools and providing valuable information to help me 'crystallise' the data. My family and friends were there to listen, or stay away, whenever I needed them to do so. They fed me, bought me coffee, let me vent, and even traveled to Glasgow with me as part of their support. My dog, Angus, kept me company during the years of long reading and writing days by patiently lying on the floor beside my desk. Last, I want to thank my husband, Paul Ashworth, whom I met and married while on this journey. He has been, and continues to be, my best friend and unconditional supporter. I dedicate this dissertation to him.

CHAPTER ONE

The Viewfinder



Introduction

Snapshot one:

I became seriously interested in photography in August 1995 when I moved into a new classroom and discovered an unused darkroom at the back of it. After removing boxes from what I thought was a storage room, I found a few dusty enlargers, some stained developing trays, and copious chemical bottles. I wasn't sure what to do with them so I enrolled in an introductory photography course at the local college. From the first time I developed a roll of film and watched my prints appear in the developing tray, I was hooked. Since then, my work has been mainly black and white photographs taken with a heavy, 30-year-old Pentax K-1000 and developed in a makeshift darkroom. Lately, I have widened my scope to include colour photos taken with a more compact digital camera, plus artistic exploration using photo-manipulation techniques.

So, what does photography have to do with a dissertation about the expendability of elementary art education? I am an art education lecturer and I am also an artist. Although I have to be a 'Jill-of-all-trades' in order to teach pre-service teachers art (I need an understanding of drawing, design, painting, printmaking, sculpture, art history, and criticism), my main medium is photography. I like to look at the world through the camera's viewfinder and see my subjects in different ways through my lenses. This study was not much different than that composition process except

that, here, my view was informed by theory, experience, research participants, and other sources.

Like art education and bagpipes, photography is one of my passions and, in the spirit of Laurel Richardson (1997), it is the ‘guiding metaphor’ (p. 43) for this study. This metaphor suggests that research, like photography, is about making informed decisions. It gets better with experience, involves experimentation, illuminates a subject, and allows a wide variety of interpretations. Photographic elements appear throughout the dissertation in, for example, photographs and heading choices at the beginning of each chapter. Autobiographical ‘snapshots’ are included as a way of making explicit personal links to the study, as recommended by sociologists Eric Mykhalovskiy (1997), Laurel Richardson (1997), and Amanda Coffey (1999). Similar to recording details of photo shoots, I have also included first names (on first use) and, at times, professions and nationalities of my sources in order to show the genders, vocations, and/or range of countries represented among them.

At the heart of this study is my concern for the state of art education in elementary¹ schools. Prior to embarking on the study, I felt that it was, at best, marginalised and inconsistent in its implementation. At worst, it was missing altogether. I worried that some children might never have the opportunity to experience art and learn through it. These were my assumptions, based on experience and anecdotes shared by pre- and in-service teachers. I wanted, through this study, to probe these assumptions to find out how reasonable they were and to understand what was going on ‘out there’.

One of the first things photographers learn to do is to compose their photographs using the viewfinder. According to professional photographer John Hedgecoe (1998), the viewfinder is the aiming device on a camera that allows the photographer to see the scene encompassed by the lens in order to compose the photograph. The introduction to this study focuses on me as the viewfinder of my research. It focuses on what I see as the art education ‘scene’ that is not just

¹ Elementary schools are the North American equivalent to UK Primary, Junior, and lower Secondary schools. They can include students from ages four to 13.

‘encompassed’ but signified within the lenses of theory, experience, and practice. This includes a discussion of what art education is (and is not), a description of the central research issue (with links to professional practice), a list of guiding questions for the study, and an outline of the dissertation.

What is art education?

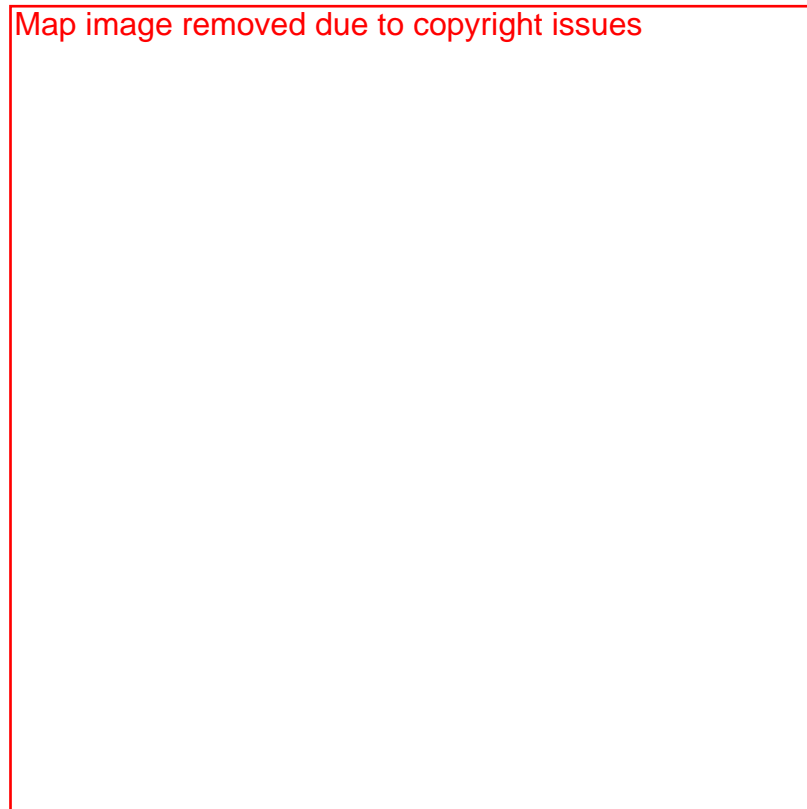
In order to clarify the subject of this dissertation, it is important to define what art education is and is not. Sometimes it is confused and linked with ‘arts education’; that is, the study of visual arts, along with dance, drama, and music. According to an American survey, conducted by National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) coordinators Hilary Persky, Brent Sandene, and Janice Askew (1998), music and visual arts are valued and taught more often in schools than dance or drama. The latter two are often integrated within physical education and English classes, respectively. Whilst the arts face similar value issues in Canadian schools, the focus of this dissertation is on art education as the study of visual arts.

The term ‘art education’ has many meanings and interpretations. For some art educationalists (Chapman 1978, Eisner 1978, Levi and Smith 1991, Dorn 2004, Davis 2008), it includes traditional studio workshops in drawing, design, painting, printmaking, sculpture, and emergent technologies, enhanced with the study of art history, criticism, and aesthetics. For others (Wilson 2000, Duncum 2001, Efland 2002, Freedman 2003, Tavin 2003), art education includes but goes beyond the traditional understanding of art to include the study of visual culture. Visual culture supporters welcome the study of popular culture artefacts such as music videos and cartoons. Still others (Pacey 1989, Frayling 1990, Mason et. al. 2000, Mason 2005) see crafts as an integral part of art education that should be taught alongside other media, especially in elementary schools. These crafts include anything from creating holiday images and string art to pottery and papermaking.

My understanding of art education is that it is a hybrid of traditional media, emergent technologies, crafts, and visual culture studies. Although my professional background stems from my art education studies during the Discipline-Based Art

Education (DBAE)² movement of the 1980s, my more recent experience with photography, media arts, and crafts, plus my growing fascination with Visual Culture Art Education (VCAE)³, place my interests in all three camps. When I prepare pre-service teachers, my focus is on what they need from all of these areas in order to teach art effectively.

Figure one: Map of Ontario, Canada (scale: 1" = approx. 300 miles) (Philip 2002, p. 70)



In the province of Ontario (central Canada; see figure one), the focus in art education tends to be straightforward in elementary schools, including those in the north-eastern part of the province where this study is located. Between the ages of four and 13, students learn how to use the traditional media listed above, plus crafts, with some art history blended in for support. It is usually not until high school (ages 14 to 17) that Ontario students explore these media in more detail

² According to Davis (2008), Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE) was created in the 1980s by Elliot Eisner and funded by the Getty Center. Its focus was art education as a serious, scientific study including aesthetics, art history, art criticism, and studio activities.

³ Visual Culture Art Education (VCAE), according to Chalmers (2005), is a recent and controversial movement in art education. Its focus is on the art of popular media and communications that children see, and with which they are engaged, regularly.

along with specialised technologies (photography, video, animation, web design) and visual culture studies. In high school, art history, criticism, and aesthetics are explored in more depth with an emphasis on developing one's personal style and considering art's impact on culture. According to art education historians Stuart Macdonald (1970), Charles Gaitskell, Albert Hurwitz, and Michael Day (1982), Roger Clark (1994), Ann Brodie (2002), and Peter Wright, Judy MacCallum, Robin Pascoe, Terry Church, Judith Dinham, Neil Brown, and Kathryn Grushka (2005), such has been the norm for the past few decades in many Western countries.

In this study, the focus is on elementary visual arts education and includes the media within that subject as mandated by the Ontario Ministry of Education (OME) in their 1998 arts curriculum document⁴. Although the OME (1998) states that the visual arts include '... drawing, painting, sculpting, printmaking, architecture and photography, as well as crafts, industrial design, commercial art, performance art, and electronic arts' (p. 28), the expectations listed in the document for elementary students include mainly traditional fine arts and crafts, along with the studies of art history, criticism, and aesthetics. Neither electronic media nor visual culture studies are mentioned in this document. They are present, however, in the expectations for the secondary level arts documents (OME 1999, 2000).

The central research issue

The central research issue under investigation here is the expendability of art education in north-eastern Ontario elementary schools, specifically in the North Bay area (see figure two). I could have explored this issue on a global scale and for all levels of education. As well, I could have chosen any region within Ontario to study this issue. My interest is in elementary education because I prepare pre-service teachers to teach art at that level and the area in and around the city of North Bay is familiar to me because I have lived and worked there for over 20 years. I have some knowledge of the teachers there and it was from them that I wanted to learn what impacts art education in their schools in order to inform my practice. Academics Diane Burns and Melanie Walker (2005) discuss

⁴ The OME (1998) arts document contained the mandated visual arts curriculum for Ontario elementary schools at the time of this study. The current elementary arts document (OME 2009a) had not yet been published.

‘insiderliness’ (p. 68) regarding the exploration of both the diversity and commonality of participants’ social realities. Like the fragmented self-portrait at the beginning of this chapter, I saw a variety of reflections of art education realities through my viewfinder but not one that was entirely clear. Accordingly, through this study, I wanted to understand what impacts elementary art education, especially in a local context, from the ‘insiders’.

Figure two: Map of north-eastern and southern Ontario (scale: 1”= approx. 100 miles) (Universal MAP 2002, p. 45)



Originally, I considered doing an extension of my Master of Education thesis (Duncan 2005) for this dissertation. That study was about effects of graphic design practices in digital slide presentations but, although it was related to my practice as a university lecturer, I was tired of looking at the influences of colour choices, font sizes, and layout techniques on learning. When I was looking for a dissertation topic, my supervisor asked me what gave me a ‘fire in the belly’ (N. Hedge, personal communication, October 2007). I knew immediately that it was art education advocacy, with specific reference to what I perceived as the expendability of art in the minds of school stakeholders. This topic had been burning inside me long before I started my doctoral studies.

According to American art educationalist Kerry Freedman (2004), ‘... doing research is a type of social service ... to the professional community’ (p. 100). Through this study, I sought not only to inform my practice but also to add to the

knowledge base of the professional art education community. I wanted to find out what it was about art education that made it potentially expendable. Was it external, political interests that place more value on core subjects than on optional subjects? Could geographic location have some bearing on the quality of art education implementation? Could the issue be more internal; that is, anxiety among elementary teachers when teaching art? And is art not an essential way of providing students with a well-balanced education? These questions will be explored further in chapters two and three.

In many Western countries, dialogue has ensued for decades on art education's place in the curriculum. I have been an art educator for over 23 years and, for most of that time, I have suspected that the study of visual arts in elementary schools is endangered. I felt that it was important to investigate my suspicions through a serious, practical, and authentic study that might illuminate the reasons why art is considered expendable by some school stakeholders. I also wanted this study to, as Richardson (1997) suggests, allow me to blend personal, political, and intellectual issues. That blending is reflected in the writing style used here, and, particularly, in the way I include photographic images as visual metaphors, extracts from my journal as textual 'snapshots' and, throughout, in my endeavour to write accessibly, as recommended by American educationalist Alfie Kohn (2004), blending theoretical constructs and research with the narrative of my personal research journey and the lessons learned from that.

The main motivation for the research was my professional and personal concern for the future of art education and its potential effects on children and learning. This concern made me question everything, including why and what I teach. When British academics David Heywood and Ian Stronach (2005) ask, 'Where do you stand on ... issues of certainty?' (p. 115), I can answer only, 'From my limited experience'. I have taught in elementary, secondary, and university classrooms and, during my career, I have seen a growing indifference towards art education among many stakeholders. This view is shared by arts education advocates Arthur Efland (1989), Elliot Eisner (1991), and Ken Robinson (1999), although they focus on the arts collectively (dance, drama, music, visual arts). Whilst I have taught art for many years, my experience has been mainly at the secondary and university

levels. I feel I am ‘out of the elementary loop’ which is problematic because I prepare future teachers who will teach mainly at that level. Knowing that my knowledge was limited, I wanted to find out, from elementary teachers, what impacts art education and what could make it expendable by focusing on elementary art education practice.

According to American art educationalist Lynn Galbraith (1995), university staff have a profound impact on art education in general and they need to critically examine their practices often. I prepare over 300 future elementary teachers annually for Ontario classrooms (and beyond) so any threats to art education could be potentially problematic not only for my practice but also for the wider community of teachers. I know that my influence can be strong, especially because I teach many who, in turn, will teach many. I want to do my best for them by staying current, relevant, and engaging. I also know that I am often fighting what seems to be an ‘uphill battle’. Many pre-service teachers bring negative assumptions about art into the classroom which, if not checked, can lead to what Canadian educationalist Dennis Sumara (2005) suggests becomes a ‘... perpetuation of existing normative structures’ (p. vi). These assumptions include attitudes towards art as a ‘frill’, art as an ‘opposite’ to science, art as a reward, and art as a subject only for the elite. For the past seven years, my day one practice has been to ask pre-service teachers the following three questions: ‘What is your name?’, ‘Where are you from?’, and ‘What formal/informal art background do you have?’. These three questions help me not only to get to know my students but also to understand the extent of their art education. Most reply, apologetically, that they have not taken art since elementary school and some share brief horror stories about why they stopped taking art. These include tales of art teachers telling them they were untalented and how friends and family had laughed at their artwork. Similarly, art educationalist Debbie Smith-Shank (1995) writes about ‘dragon teachers’ (p. 45), those who turn learners off art by being over-critical of their work. When students share these anecdotes, I feel even more inclined to help them exorcise their past art demons. I want to inform pre-service teachers about art, through its study and practice, and this reinforces the importance for me to further scrutinise and inform my practice through this research.

The schedule of the one-year Bachelor of Education programme where I teach allows for only 24 hours of art instruction in a 750 hour programme for elementary pre-service teachers. When I prepare teachers for their future careers, I have only those few hours to teach them not only the basics of drawing, design, painting, printmaking, sculpture, art history, art criticism, and art integration but also how to use those media and topics in effective learning and assessment strategies. I also have a textbook (Ashworth 2007) which students use as a resource for studio and assessment ideas and for information about media not covered in class (crafts, photography, video). I try to instil in pre-service teachers an appreciation for art, despite their narrow and sometimes distant backgrounds with the subject, wanting them to implement it well in their classrooms. I want them to be able to use basic techniques and understand how art moves people emotionally, provoking personal responses and creativity. As well, I want them to know how important it is for their students to have, as Elliot Eisner (1985) and Ivor Goodson (1993) suggest, curricular balance in the school day.

To me, this study's exploration of one area of art advocacy is, as educationalists Ardra Cole and J. Gary Knowles (2000) suggest, a '... process of continuing [professional] growth rooted in the "personal"' (p. 14). The issue is not new but it deserves investigation in my context to understand it more fully. My ultimate goal is positive change for art education. I want to inform my practice and influence fellow educators, policymakers, and the general public so that they can better understand, and generate support for, art education in their communities.

Guiding questions

The central research issue is neither new in education nor local to Ontario. My goals for this study include looking at why art is, or is not, respected in schools and exploring issues that impact art education in my part of the world. The following questions helped to guide me in my journey of understanding the central research issue and to find ways to move the field of art education forward. The theories behind these questions will be explored later in chapters two and three.

1. Why is art education important, or not, for students, educators, parents, and other stakeholders?

2. Is art jettisoned in favour of implementing other policies and curricular subjects?
3. Do teachers use other programmes and initiatives as an excuse not to teach art?
4. How do teachers feel about teaching art?
5. Is art expendable?

These questions provided only a starting point for this study and, like a viewfinder, helped me locate my initial goals. Further questions arose and these will be presented and addressed through the course of this study.

Outline of the dissertation

This chapter has presented the basic personal, practical, and intellectual goals of the study including some of the motivations behind the dissertation and introduced the guiding metaphor of photography with links to how the issue is connected to my professional practice. In chapter two, I introduce the conceptual framework that influenced key concepts of this study and the theories that informed these. In chapter three, I look through a variety of ‘filters’ to discuss the issues that impact art education in elementary schools in more depth and I also consider how these issues are connected to the study’s conceptual framework. Contrasting voices about the field and purposes of art education are included in these chapters. Chapter four focuses on the empirical research design element of the study and provides the details of the data collection process. Here I discuss the concepts behind the design of the study, the field work conducted prior to the data collection, and the logistics and complexities of the interviews and observations. Chapter five is the ‘darkroom’ where the analysis of the data is developed, honed, and shared. The conceptual framework and guiding questions are revisited in chapter six as part of the discussion section of the dissertation. Finally, chapter seven provides reflections on this study as a whole and outlines recommendations. This final chapter also considers potential future projects including where I may go next with my art education studies and practice as a result of this research.

CHAPTER TWO

The Lenses



Introduction

Photography is about making informed choices, including which subject to photograph, which view to take, which lens to use. There are similar choices to make in a dissertation: which subject to illuminate, which conceptual view to take, which theoretical lens to use. Photographers, like researchers, may use a variety of lenses in order to understand their subjects. By doing so, they bring both depth and breadth to their work. Standard lenses, for example, have similarities with how the human eye sees a subject: they have a good range of focus but are limited when viewing subjects clearly, either at a great distance or very close. Macro lenses are used to see the subject in a wide, panoramic view, such as in the photo above left. In contrast, telephoto lenses explore the subject in a very close and narrow way, such as in the photo above right. Zoom lenses provide more versatility because they are like a combination of macro and telephoto lenses: they are used to view the subject with both depth and breadth.

For this chapter, the ‘zoom’ view will be taken when I explore the central research issue as it is related to the conceptual framework. I will look at reasons why art is an important part of general education. Later, in chapter three, I will use a ‘telephoto’ view to explore reasons why it may not be important for some stakeholders.

The conceptual ‘scrapbook’

During one of our meetings, my supervisor pushed me to find a conceptual ‘wardrobe’ in which I could ‘hang’ my theories and I chose a scrapbook as it was

something I knew well. A scrapbook is a thematic collection of photographs, text, and memorabilia embellished with, for example, stickers, transfers, and stamps. It is a modern-day version of the commonplace book: a text enhanced with collected drawings, paintings, poetry, and formulae that, according to historians Margaret Katritzky (2006) and Susan Tucker, Katherine Ott, and Patricia Buckler (2006), was first popular in England during the 16th century as a way of compiling information unique to one's interests. Since the invention of the camera, and a renewed interest in preserving family memorabilia, scrapbooking has evolved into a multi-billion-dollar industry.

Snapshot two:

My friend, Sonya, introduced me to scrapbooking shortly after I began teaching photography. She took me to the home of a neighbour who taught scrapbooking and, as I spread out my stack of photos on her dining room table, I felt a bit overwhelmed and uninspired. It had been years since I had done anything artistic, due mainly to a very busy life of full-time teaching and part-time study. As well, I saw scrapbooking as more of a weekend craft than a serious art form: one done by housewives who used them as colourful ways to display photos of Florida trips and childhood events. Since I had neither photos from recent trips nor children, I found it difficult to find a theme in order to create one scrapbook page let alone an entire album. After wading through my photos, I found a few of my garden and chose to do an album about its evolution. Once I started cropping photos and placing them with coloured papers and text stickers, I began to appreciate scrapbooking as an art form. The process was filled with design decisions and creative writing, both of which helped to resurrect my inner artist. Since then, I have made many scrapbooks which document what is important to me with passion, creativity, and insight.

The scrapbooks of today are more than a way of compiling and displaying information. For American designer Jill Rinner (1999),

Scrapbooks are no longer just about pictures pasted onto paper. They are about recording those moments that have been meaningful to you and your family ... Scrapbooks can be a window into your soul. (p. iv)

The conceptual framework for this study is like a scrapbook because it is about what is meaningful to me and it is a window into the soul of my professional practice and life. Like Canadian educationalist Joseph Maxwell's (2005) descriptions of conceptual frameworks, scrapbooks are constructed, organised spaces for important thoughts, supported with text and/or images. They allow the artist, or researcher, to gather all relevant items together, divide them into themes, select strongest from weakest, create a focus, and make something memorable.

Once I had chosen the container, I needed a theoretical framework through which to connect my assumptions about art education from both the literature review and my experiences. Three overall theories and their associated concepts resonated and all could have worked for the framework: Martha Nussbaum's (1997) focus on cultivating humanity through education, Daniel Pink's (2005) theory of how the arts prepare students for the conceptual age, and David Jardine, Sharon Friesen, and Patricia Clifford's (2006) idea of art education being a remedy for the curriculum of scarcity. All theorised what I already recognised and I needed to determine which one fit best with this research.

Nussbaum (1997), an American philosopher who sees liberal education as a means to a humanistic end, lists four 'capacities' (p. 9) which, she argues, are necessary for fostering humanity in order to create citizens of the world: i. critical self-examination, ii. connectedness with the world, iii. narrative imagination, and iv. scientific understanding. Although her focus is on higher education not elementary schools, her ideas are universal in many ways. All four capacities can apply to any level of education depending how they are presented. Children, for example, are capable of self-criticism, they can study other cultures as well as their own, they are able to create visual narratives, and they can learn about new concepts in a logical way. Even though Nussbaum lists four capacities, she focuses her attention on the first three because, as she suggests, they are more common in the humanities, including education. I will return to Nussbaum's capacities later in this chapter.

In *A Whole New Mind* (2005), Pink, an American business and technology writer, states that Western countries have moved from an agricultural society, through an industrial revolution, to an information age, and they are now on the brink of a

conceptual era. His theory for the change from the information to the conceptual age is based on the current abundance of goods in rich countries which, in his view, have led to a lack of personal meaning, the outsourcing of jobs to inexpensive workers in Asia, and computer automation of linear tasks. He warns that the education systems in most Western countries still prepare students for industrial rather than information societies. According to Pink, society needs more creative thinkers in order to balance the abundance of logical/linear ones. He suggests keeping logical and sequential tasks (for example, rote memorisation of facts) in school but advocates balancing these with more holistic and imaginative tasks (for example, project-based learning) to prepare students to be more inventive. Such tasks can, of course, be introduced through art education. In short, Pink states that students need to learn about what is meaningful and how to do tasks that cannot be done through cheap labour or computers.

In *Curriculum in Abundance*, Canadian educationalists Jardine et. al. (2006) argue that education today is too business-oriented and narrow with its primary focus on core subjects. They state that it is depleted of holistic views of the world and is, therefore, impoverished. Jardine et. al. (2006) support, instead, a curriculum of abundance: one rich with ‘... relations and ancestries and real, living questions ... full of histories and conversations and debates and contestations and cultural and linguistic inheritances’ (p. 39). So, instead of a ‘scarce’ curriculum which emphasises the basics, one of abundance focuses on widening education to include all subjects in meaningful and interpretive ways. Jardine et. al. support art education as a means to balance a neo-liberal⁵ focus on core subjects (see ‘History’ and ‘Policy’ filters in chapter three) with hands-on studio activities and opportunities for cultural studies through art history and criticism.

After considering the views of Nussbaum (1997), Pink (2005), and Jardine et. al. (2006), I leaned towards the work of the first because her theory focused on education for a broader purposes. Although the oldest of the three views, it is timeless: Nussbaum (1997) includes historical references that date back to ancient Greece but are still relevant today. In his review of *Cultivating Humanity*, Martin

⁵ The term ‘neo-liberal’ is commonly called ‘neo-conservative’ in North America.

Gunderson (2005) suggests that Nussbaum's concepts are dated and no longer relevant because the 'culture wars' (p. 247) are over. From my experience and reading, however, they are far from over in elementary schools, especially in north-eastern Ontario. The local school board⁶ for which I had worked for 14 years seems to use standardised testing as a goal instead of a tool, providing few opportunities for professional development (PD) for anything other than literacy and numeracy initiatives. This example suggests that there are battles still to be fought.

My desire was to use Nussbaum's (1997) individual and collective capacities to help me assess and refine my research goals by taking the idea of liberal education as a way of cultivating humanity and focusing on how art education may do the same. According to anthropologists Ellen Dissanayake (1988) and Wade Davis (2009), and art educators Dipti Desai and F. Graeme Chalmers (2007), art is found in all cultures and is integral to many aspects of human activity. It can teach people about themselves, about others, and it can provide a way to learn skills and share ideas visually to ultimately help connect a fragmented society.

Looking through the lenses

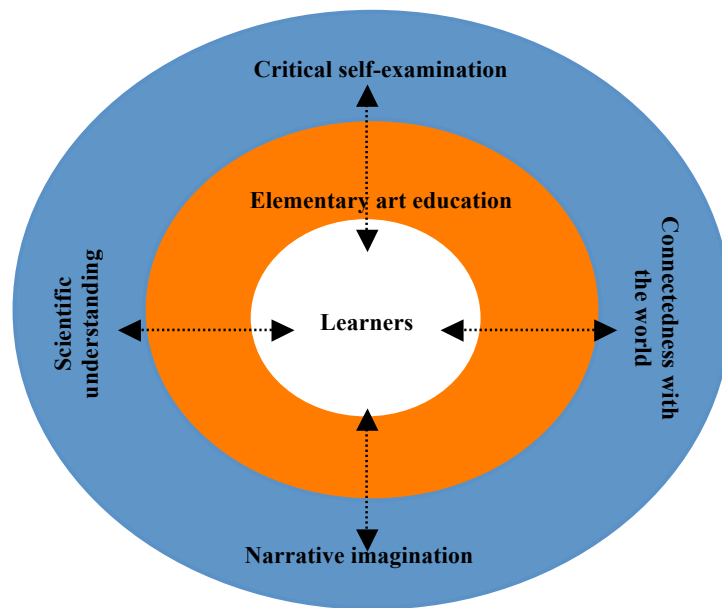
I have always felt that art education has much intrinsic value; that is, it is essential for learning not only the basics of visual arts but also worldly knowledge. To begin my exploration about how art education cultivates humanity, I created a concept map (see figure three), as suggested by Maxwell (2005). The concept map identifies my assumptions about why art education, within and outwith north-eastern Ontario elementary classrooms, is important for all learners with these assumptions located in Nussbaum's (1997) four capacities.

Each capacity is connected to the other capacities and to art education. These connections will be explained with references to supporting theories and my professional experiences. The two-way links between each capacity and elementary learners, through art education, show relationships between them. If, for example, activities that develop each of the capacities are infused into the elementary art

⁶ A school board is a North American equivalent of an Education Authority (EA) in Scotland or a Local Education Authority (LEA) in England and Wales.

curriculum, then they can broaden and enrich students' learning. If these activities are already present within the curriculum, then learners can develop these capacities in order to become what Nussbaum (1997) calls 'citizens of the world' (p. 60). By becoming such citizens, learners can see, and nurture, the relationships between themselves and the rest of humanity. Surely this is a goal not only of art education but education in general. Art's role in education will be discussed in this chapter by looking through the lenses of Nussbaum's capacities.

Figure three: Concept map one



Critical self-examination through elementary art education

Critical self-examination, for Nussbaum (1997), is the capacity to reflect not only on one's life but also what impacts upon it. She recommends that, in order to practise critical self-examination, one must learn how to think logically and to question everything, including traditions. Such practice, to Nussbaum (1997), leads to 'democratic citizenship' (p. 10); that is, thoughtful awareness based on solid reasoning. There are several ways in which critical self-examination activities can be included in elementary art education to develop thoughtful awareness and reasoning. Learners can participate in art criticism sessions where they practise self- and peer-assessment. For Nussbaum (1997), such opportunities for self-examination lead to self-confidence to have the freedom to question society in general.

Former educator and arts activist, Charles Fowler (1996), takes the concept of critical examination beyond the individual learner to show how art education improves the school environment. He argues that art education develops the emotions and adds to the well-being of schools by encouraging both visual and verbal communication: visual through works of art and verbal through critical discussions about them. Similarly, Canadian educationalist Walter Pitman (1998) suggests art education can help foster clear and critical thinking and self-discipline. Although visual arts offers students opportunities to learn in engaging ways, Pitman states that it also challenges them to make decisions regarding what is relevant and what is not. Visual culture studies, for example, is a recent movement within art education that prompts much discussion about what art is relevant to students.

When he discusses how his theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) can be applied in classrooms, developmental psychologist Howard Gardner (2000) suggests art education is both an aesthetic and hands-on 'entry point' (p. 186) for critical self-examination: the study of art is a good motivator that encourages deep understanding through criticism techniques that help students become better at knowing themselves and others. He recommends providing all students with the opportunities not only to create and think about art but also to have access to examples of strong works of art upon which to reflect.

Chris Holland and Peter O'Connor (2004) of the Auckland College of Education undertook a study of characteristics of student learning in the arts. Their research included interviews with 15 teachers, observations of 16 students in four schools within four cities, and reading students' learning journals. Like Pitman (1998), they found that studio environments, such as those in art classes, encourage reflection throughout the art-making process. This reflection provides opportunities for much critical thinking regarding students' own works and those of others. They did, however, find that, in most New Zealand classrooms, teachers followed transmission models of teaching and allowed few opportunities for reflection among their students.

The theorists mentioned above are voices in support of critical self-examination for all learners as part of the art-making process. When I read Nussbaum's (1997)

discussion of critical self-examination and its value in education, questions arose in my mind: Is such critical self-examination happening in elementary schools? Are younger students getting opportunities for this during the planning and creation segments of art implementation and/or after they have made their works of art? Through this study, I hoped to find out if critical self-examination opportunities were available or if elementary students were required to generate art without having to reflect on it.

Connectedness with the world through elementary art education

Nussbaum (1997) echoes Greek philosopher Diogenes in her discussion of educating learners to be citizens of the world. She promotes the value of cosmopolitanism in the form of learning about, and being critical of, other cultures as well as one's own. Her vision of education for connectedness is one that is both local and multicultural, and available to all. Fowler (1996) suggests that art education is a way of bridging cultures, especially in schools with multicultural populations. By studying the works of various artists from the cultures represented within a school, for example, students may gain a better understanding of their peers. On a visit to the art programme at Northview Collegiate in Toronto, Ontario, I was amazed at the demographics represented there: the students were from 63 countries and spoke 40 languages (their link language was English). When students practised art criticism and studied art history, they had opportunities not only to see art from their many cultures but also to practise using tools and techniques from those cultures when creating art-history-inspired works. After that visit, I sought to emulate the practice of incorporating my students' cultures into their art activities, although the demographics in my school were rather different: 90% White, 5% Native, and 5% Black, East Indian, and Oriental.

Pitman (1998) makes a point that art is a way of understanding one's own culture by comparing and contrasting it with others:

It is the arts which not only emerge from a sense of national community, but ironically find meaning from constant association with the [arts] of other countries. (p. 135)

In this way, art does what other subjects may not do: it provides opportunities for a nation, or region within a nation, to declare and demonstrate its uniqueness and

connectedness through its artworks. Canada, for example, is so closely tied to the United States, both geographically and economically, that art is a way to make a cultural distinction between the two countries. The study and creation of Canadian art can, therefore, help our distinct culture survive the strong cultural influence from our southern neighbour. Although this may seem to promote patriotism, the study of art can also foster what Nussbaum (1994) calls a ‘cosmopolitan education’ (online source); that is, making thoughtful connections between and among cultures by students exploring artworks of different countries.

Elementary learners can make connections within and outwith their school worlds through art integration. According to integration advocates Sharon Blecher and Kathy Jaffee (1998), Irene Naested (1998), Merryll Goldberg (2006), and Claudia Cornett (2007), there is a push for elementary teachers to integrate subjects rather than teach them in isolation. Blecher and Jaffee (1998) recommend blending arts instruction rather than teaching art, dance, drama, and music separately, or teaching art through projects in any subject area. Similarly, Goldberg (2006) argues that learning through art integration is the best way for students to learn in multicultural and multilingual settings with art functioning as a link language among learners from various cultures.

Blending art with one or more core subjects is another way of making cross-curricular connections. According to American art educationalist Brenda Engel (2002), effective art education implementation, that includes opportunities for learners to make connections with others and their works, helps students learn to organise, reflect, judge, discriminate, select, and represent. These skills could be transferable to other subject areas. Psychologists Kellah Edens and Ellen Potter (2007) suggest that art education policymakers ask for ways in which art helps students learn cross-curricular skills as a means to prepare students for learning in other subjects: ‘the art room may be a context for developing students’ spatial understanding, an ability associated with artistic as well as mathematical ability’ (p. 294). Researchers Karen DeJarnette (1997), Kristin Burger and Ellen Winner (2000), and Jeffrey Wilhelm (2004) suggest that art education helps students learn to read by strengthening story comprehension and character identification through visual response. Art educationalists Katherina Danko-McGhee and Ruslan Slutsky

(2007) advocate that children should learn visual arts skills in order to develop their reading and writing proficiencies. These concepts of subject transfer, however, seem to contrast with Nussbaum's (1997) focus on nurturing liberal education for humanistic ends. Should the justification of art in schools be only to benefit other subject areas? Should nurturing other subjects be the sole purpose of art education? What happened to 'art for art's sake'? Has the economy-driven education system turned that into 'art for language's sake' or 'art for mathematics' sake'?

To claim that studying art helps students do better in other subjects is controversial. Ellen Winner and Monica Cooper (2000) and Winner and Lois Hetland (2000, 2001) created a firestorm among art educators when they found no evidence that arts education helps to increase student performance in academic subjects. According to art educationalist Jessica Hoffman Davis (2005), they were vilified by art educators because their findings were viewed as damaging to art advocacy efforts. I admit, when I first heard about the Winner/Cooper (2000) and Winner/Hetland (2000, 2001) studies, I felt disconcerted. I wanted to have more in the 'why-art-is-important' arsenal than just intrinsic values. It had been a helpful tactic for me to go to my administrators with the possibility that learning in art helps learning in other subjects.

I support art integration as a way for learners to share a visual language and to think and create in a cross-curricular manner but not if it results in a watered-down implementation of visual arts. University of British Columbia art educationalists Rita Irwin and F. Graeme Chalmers (1996) recommend that, when art is integrated with other subjects, its integrity as its own discipline should not be compromised. Although I have included art history, art criticism, and integration activities within my practice to help my past high school students and present pre-service teachers become connected to the world, I wonder, again, if elementary learners have opportunities to do the same. Learners within the location of this study, for example, may be making regional connections with the French and Native cultures but may not be exposed to a wider, multicultural world.

Narrative imagination through elementary art education

To be connected with the world, Nussbaum (1997) suggests that it is not enough for an educated person to be able to collect facts and regurgitate them; one must take facts and use one's 'sympathetic imagination' (p. 85) to really understand the world and its people. When she introduces her concept of narrative imagination, her emphasis is on literature and music. The idea, however, translates well for visual arts. Like literature and music, art can elicit sympathy, empathy, and compassion through interpretation. When my pre-service teachers view works of art, they learn about the subject matter; that is, what is happening, what the subjects are doing, what setting they are in. Through art criticism, they learn to analyse the subject matter to develop a better understanding of the situation of the subject.

According to Nussbaum (1997), it is also good for a narrative to disturb, to 'challenge conventional wisdom and values' (p. 99). By allowing narratives to be disturbing, freedom of expression may be encouraged. I have included images such as Pablo Picasso's *Guernica* (see figure four) in art critique sessions as a way of challenging learners, to take them outside of their local realities and their 'comfort zones'. *Guernica* is especially powerful because of its raw portrayal of bombing victims, both human and animal.

Figure four: *Guernica*, Pablo Picasso (1937)



Canadian art educationalist David Pariser (2009), however, suggests that art has little power to change the world. He argues that *Guernica* is a profound anti-war image that did nothing to halt the Spanish Civil War. Instead, he recommends that teachers focus on enlightening the public as to art education's real value: providing

children with a visual language and historical and cultural knowledge in order to foster creative growth. For me, *Guernica* may not have ended the war, but it drew and draws attention to it. It also gave viewers an excellent model of a visual story to increase their knowledge and, perhaps, inspire their own works. When I include works like *Guernica* in my art programme, I either give the learners the historical background behind the painting, or ask them to find it online, in order to give them context for the work. They then practise formal critique techniques, including Edmund Feldman's (1987) four-phase method of learning how to see (description, analysis, interpretation, judgement) in order to explore the work and its meanings thoroughly. This activity can be successful in the promotion of narrative imagination because it involves discussions of historical, social, and political issues. Sometimes these discussions lead to connections to more recent events (9/11, the war in Afghanistan, the earthquake in Haiti) and learners can be encouraged to create artworks inspired by these events.

In order to help foster narrative imagination, art education provides opportunities for students to develop visual stories, participate in process discussions, and share their work through presentations and exhibitions. Long before they can read and write, children create images to communicate. According to American art educationalists Jack Hobbs and Jean Rush (1997), children draw at a 'universal level' (p. 22) until about the age of three; that is, they seem to create similar symbols (circles and bottle-people, triangle-roof houses, stick and lollipop trees) to share their visual stories, regardless of their geographic locations or socio-economic backgrounds. In her study of 500 children's pictures from 12 countries, another art educationalist, Jeannine Perez (1993), found that this stage lasted from ages three to six. In figure five, my nephew, Sam (at age four), used basic geometric shapes as symbols for items in his world: a rectangle with a triangular roof for his house and other geometric representations of his family and pets. This drawing was his way of sharing his home in England with my husband and me in Canada.

Figure five: *Our House*, Sam Ashworth (2006)



According to Hobbs and Rush (1997), the universal level is followed by a cultural one when children's artwork can be influenced by their environments. They add cultural-specific designs and objects (such as clothing) to their universal symbols. The cultural level lasts throughout elementary school and corresponds with children's physical and intellectual development. These stages of development have been explored and have been given various names ('scribbling', 'pre-schematic', 'schematic', 'patterns') by art educationalists Viktor Lowenfeld (1947), June King McFee (1961), Rhoda Kellogg (1969), Betty Lark-Horovitz, Hilda Lewis, and Mark Luca (1973), and W. Lambert Brittain (1990). Regardless of the names given to these artistic development stages, children use their symbols as representations to tell narratives. With prolonged exposure to art education, Hobbs and Rush (1997) suggest that learners later reach the discipline-based, idiosyncratic, and unique levels where they fine-tune their artistic skill abilities and achieve mastery of the subject.

In sum, and following Nussbaum (1997), education should surely be much more than just facts and art education can be a way to explore facts in many visual ways. I found it interesting to read in depth about children's art development: something

that I had not done enough of as a classroom teacher. I had some idea of where children were coming from when they reached my high school art classroom, and an even better idea at the university level. I did not, however, know much about pre-school and primary learners' artistic levels and abilities. That admitted, I wondered how much art development knowledge elementary teachers received in their pre-service education and, if they studied art development, did they consider it when planning, implementing, and assessing art in their classrooms? I suspected that the emphasis on narrative imagination in elementary classrooms occurred in literature lessons rather than art. I wondered how often learners had opportunities to develop their art skills in order to move from the universal to the cultural level and beyond. I wanted to know, as well, if learners in the location of this study received challenging art projects that stimulated both artistic development and sympathetic imagination.

Scientific understanding through elementary art education

Although Nussbaum (1997) mentions scientific understanding briefly in her introduction to the four capacities, she does not go into much detail about it because, disappointingly for me, she focuses on the three that, she says, are most closely tied to the humanities and social sciences: critical self-examination, connectedness with the world, and narrative imagination.

Social scientist Donald Schön (1983) suggests that empirical science, as the only source of positive knowledge, explains why practical knowledge subjects, like art, are being kept separate from scientific understanding:

Propositions which were neither analytically nor empirically testable, were held to have no meaning at all. They were dismissed as emotive utterance, poetry, or mere nonsense ... Practical knowledge exists, but it does not fit neatly into the Positivist categories. (p. 33)

With such a narrow view, it is understandable why art education seems to be relegated to the sidelines of education, along with other 'emotive' subjects. Nussbaum (1996, 1997) seems to support Schön not only when she suggests that emotions are often rational judgements but also when she discusses the research of anthropologists Catherine Lutz and Michelle Rosaldo (1980). They found that emotions could be rational and provide information about a culture, and they sought to correct earlier research that suggested otherwise. Following Lutz and

Rosaldo, perhaps the emotive qualities of students' works could be rich sources of information for their individual heritages.

Norwegian artist and researcher Grete Refsum (2002) argues that, for most people, art is a subject with no scientific basis. Despite its past connections to science (for example, the works of Leonardo da Vinci), art since the industrial revolution has been perceived as more of an emotional, expressive way to share one's thoughts and ideas. For me, art education both widens art's emotive reputation and complements general scientific understanding. This can happen through the study and practice of various technical skills, attention to the theories behind the elements and principles of design, and by teachers allowing students to experiment freely with materials and tools when they create works of art. When I taught photography, I spent as much time on the physics and chemistry of the medium as I did on the composition and special effects. These concepts have science as their base, not just expression, and the fact that art is viewed as emotional rather than scientific shows some ignorance of today's society. Although Schön (1983) and Refsum (2002) blame Positivism, I wonder if it is perpetuated in the schools by lack of knowledge among teachers and administrators. Is their concept of art one of emotion, or scientific understanding, or both? Should it not be both; for example, could art education extend the meaning of 'scientific'? And how is this concept impacting its implementation? These were questions that I felt could be answered via interviews with teachers, administrators, and other education stakeholders.

Blended capacities through elementary art education

When Nussbaum (1997) introduces her four capacities, she describes them in isolation but, as part of a liberal education, regards them as linked for the purpose of cultivating humanity in today's world. Along with the researchers mentioned above, there are others whose theories about education seem to blend two or more of her capacities. The late Rudolf Arnheim (1990), for example, was an advocate for art education as a means of nurturing citizenship. His was a psychologist's view of the importance of studying art as a way of teaching children how to express themselves visually and how to develop intuition as a companion to intellect. He placed much value on studying art history and practising art criticism in order for children to make connections with others from their own time or past centuries,

even if such criticism led to discomfort. Although he supported Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE), he also welcomed Visual Culture Art Education (VCAE) as a way for students to study art relevant to them. DBAE incorporates scientific understanding through the study of art skills but blends connectedness with the world and narrative imagination through its focus on art history and criticism. Similarly, VCAE embraces new media by encouraging students to not only learn how to use technology to produce art but also study works by media artists.

DBAE advocates Albert Levi and Ralph Smith (1991) seem to support a blend of all four capacities when they suggest that art should be treated like any other humanity in order to cultivate ‘percipience’ (p. 206). For Levi and Smith, this term means to raise awareness through the study of artistic creation, expression, critical analysis, and art history. They state, however, that ‘attitudes toward art and culture are a function of historical evolution and social context’ (p. 159) and that there is a ‘cultural blindness’ (p. 26) among Western countries. These countries respected art and elevated artists to high social status from the Renaissance to the 19th century. The 20th century focus on business and industry, however, crippled arts education and lowered respect for it.

Gardner (2000) seems to support Nussbaum’s (1997) concept of education for citizenship when he suggests that students study the realms of truth, beauty, and morality, including human achievements in those three realms, in order to have deep understanding. This understanding, for Gardner (2000), is much more important than the broad surface understanding that is learned in contemporary Western schools and he argues against what he calls ‘cultural literacy’ (p. 118); that is, a broad, shallow coverage of bits and pieces of information. He does admit that students need basic background knowledge, like that described by American cultural literacy advocate E.D. Hirsch (1996), but favours an in-depth study of only four disciplines – science, mathematics, the arts, and history – to help nurture his vision of a world citizenry. Although I welcome Gardner’s (2000) inclusion of the arts and students learning basic skills in elementary schools, I question the narrow scope of only four disciplines. If too much emphasis is placed on these four disciplines, even in the upper years of school, then learners may miss out on other areas of study that could have more personal meaning and motivation.

Art educationalists Tom Anderson and Melody Milbrandt (2005) support visual culture studies and take an authentic instruction view of art education. They feel that all art instruction should be relevant to individual students' lives and suggest a thematic approach instead of one based on elements and principles or art history. Anderson and Milbrandt (2005) seem to support critical self-examination, connectedness with the world, and narrative imagination when they argue that art education should be an instrument to improve students' 'social progress' (p. 230) by helping them develop meanings of their world (through the creation and study of art). They criticise the current reductionist state of education in American schools; that is, its focus on developing measurable knowledge through literacy and numeracy initiatives rather than on fostering 'capabilities of mind' (p. 23) through engaging, meaningful activities found in authentic art instruction.

For Davis (2008), the purpose of art education is, simply, to provide art instruction. She seems to support a blend of Nussbaum's (1997) capacities when she states that the only time students have the opportunity to learn how to do traditional fine arts, study visual culture, or view works of art critically is in art class. According to Davis (2008), art education is unique in that it allows students to create a tangible product and, in the process of making that product, focus on emotion, deal with ambiguity, practise inquiry and reflection, and make a connection. It gives them the opportunity to think and work like artists. She also cautions that art education should not be made more academic; that is, one should not focus on talking and writing about art at the expense of doing it. As an art educator, I have always walked a fine line between emphasising art instruction for art's sake or for another purpose. I support Davis' line knowing that the art classroom is usually the place where students learn about art. It can be integrated into any other subject but, in reality, the only place students learn how to draw, or paint, or sculpt, or make a print, is during an art lesson.

Summary

It was encouraging for me to find much literature to support what I had always felt about the intrinsic value of art education. These theories came from areas both within and outwith education including philosophy and developmental psychology. I was, however, disappointed that the voices were of university academics rather

than classroom teachers. That said, I was heartened to read that some education policymakers believe that art should become a core subject; that is, one of the main subjects to be taught alongside language, mathematics, and science. The Saskatchewan Ministry of Education (SME) in western Canada, for example, states that arts education is a required area of study for elementary learners and mandates 200 minutes of arts instruction time per week for grades one to nine (ages six to 14). Through this mandate, the intent of the SME (2009) is ‘... to provide all Saskatchewan students with an education that will serve them well regardless of their choices after leaving school’ (p. 2). I can only hope for the same in the province of Ontario.

Effective art education implementation can nurture humanity between and within children and Nussbaum’s (1997) capacities provided a framework to organise my assumptions about art education in elementary schools alongside theories that both support and criticise these views. I explored how learning through art at the elementary level teaches critical self-examination, connects students with the rest of the world, and nurtures a narrative imagination. Her fourth capacity, scientific understanding, was included when discussing how children learn not only the elements and principles of design but also how they learn through artistic experimentation.

Despite the support for art’s value in education, there are still questions regarding its precarious place in schools. If art education supports Nussbaum’s (1997) capacities so well in nurturing citizenship in students, why is it still sometimes expendable in elementary schools? What is causing problems with its inclusion in the curriculum? Who is making the decisions that affect art’s implementation? These questions will be explored in the next chapter when, like adding a series of filters to a camera lens, I take some of the glare off art education to see it in more detail.

CHAPTER THREE

The Filters



Introduction

Sometimes a photographer will use filters (glass, gelatine or plastic discs that mount onto the lens) to alter the amount of light coming into the camera.

According to Hedgecoe (1998), these are helpful if a photographer is doing a photo shoot outside on a sunny day and/or if the subject is behind glass. They are often used to eliminate glare or reflections and to strengthen colour or tone in an image. Filters can also remove some of the colour coming into the camera; for example, an orange filter is used to warm up a subject that contains too much blue. A filter was used in the photo on the right, for example, to help create more contrast in the image.

In research, there are ‘filters’ that can affect assumptions and perceptions.

According to educationalists Herbert Altrichter and Mary Louise Holly (2005), the researcher may have assumptions that are altered by bias filters of experience and selective reading, and participants may have similar assumptions about the study and/or the researcher. Before this study, I had ‘high school teacher’ assumptions that coloured my thinking about elementary teachers and art education. These assumptions included ideas that elementary teachers did not care about art, that they chose to do crafts instead of fine arts activities, and that they left the real work of art education to high school teachers. My biases came from my history teaching art students in their first year of high school and supervising pre-service teachers in classrooms.

Snapshot three:

When I left classroom teaching to become a full-time university lecturer, one of my duties was to supervise a group of 25 pre-service teachers. I had to evaluate them during their 13 practice-teaching weeks and I did this, on top of my regular teaching schedule, for three years. This supervision involved travelling to many schools in northern Ontario where I sat at the back of elementary and secondary classrooms, evaluating the pre-service teachers' planning, delivery, and assessment practices in all subject areas. Those years of practice-teaching supervision were both exciting and distressing. I had great opportunities to see teaching and learning in a variety of schools but it was eye-opening regarding what was missing: visual arts instruction.

One of the things I checked when evaluating pre-service teachers was their practice-teaching binders – collections of daily lesson plans, classroom management routines, differentiation notes, and the weekly timetable. The latter proved shocking to me as an art educator because, in the elementary grades, art was either allotted a minimal weekly time slot or it was missing entirely from the schedule. I noticed that the most amount of time scheduled for art was 100 minutes per week but, in the majority of the schools I visited, between 15 and 30 minutes was set aside for art instruction.

I began to ask questions of both the pre-service teachers and their hosts regarding this phenomenon and their answers troubled me. One host teacher explained that, although he had originally set aside 40 minutes each week for art, he often replaced it with either literacy or numeracy activities. When I asked him why he did this, he replied, *'I just don't feel comfortable teaching art'* ('John', personal communication, April 2004). On another occasion, a pre-service teacher with extensive post-secondary art background told me that she was asked to teach only art for her three-week placement because her host admitted to her that he would not likely teach it for the rest of the school year ('Terry', personal communication, November 2005). I later spoke with a friend who is a local Principal⁷ about these practices and he told me that there seems to be no accountability for teaching art in

⁷ A Principal in North America is equivalent to a Headteacher in Britain.

either teacher performance appraisals or school improvement evaluations in Ontario ('Mark', personal communication, December 30, 2007).

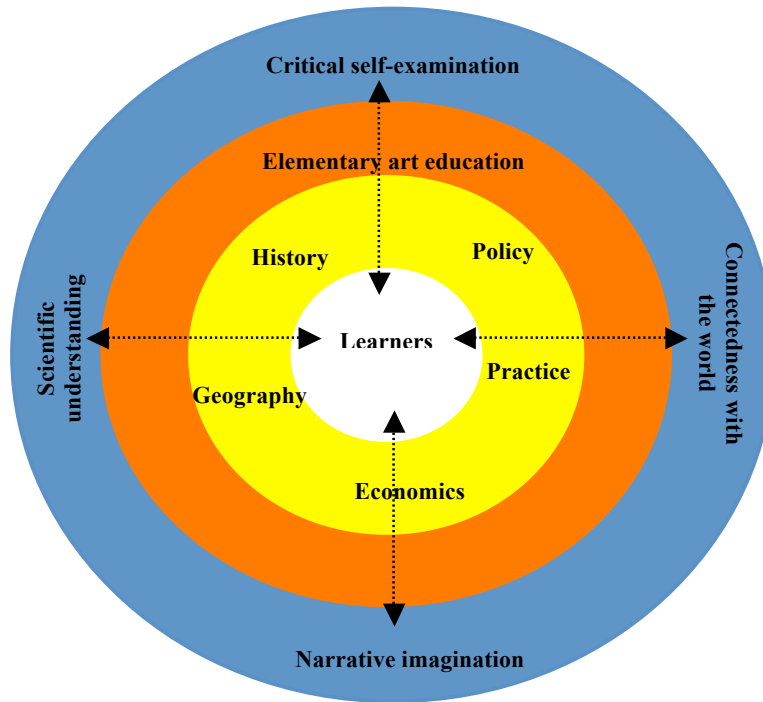
These experiences led me to think about what art education is for. Is it for the entertainment of others or oneself, or is it for global understanding of cultures? Is it for preparing students for the world of work or is it for individual expression? Why is it important, or not, for education in general? This chapter is part of the conceptual framework introduced in chapter two and it explores debates about art education's purpose(s) to help guide my research for this study. These debates are organised as context filters; that is, issues within and outwith art education that can affect its effective planning, implementation, and assessment.

Context filters

According to Maxwell (2005), concept maps are a way of 'thinking on paper' (p. 47) as part of the intuitive process of developing theory or understanding. After looking at how art can be important in education (see chapter two), I turned my attention to possible barriers to effective art implementation. Based on the literature and my experiences, I chose five barriers, or what I saw as 'context filters': history, policy, practice, economics, and geography. Figure six illustrates how I altered the first concept map (see figure three in chapter two) to show how these 'filters' could affect art education's ability to connect elementary learners with Nussbaum's (1997) four capacities (critical self-examination, connectedness with the world, narrative imagination, scientific understanding).

I placed the filters between the learners and elementary art education in order to indicate how the relationships between and among them can be altered. These filters, for example, could improve or deter the ability of art education to help students become citizens of the world. Art education efforts to help learners embrace some or all of the capacities may be impeded by these filters and, similarly, stakeholders who want to bring the capacities to learners via art education may face challenges because of these same filters.

Figure six: Concept map two



History and elementary art education in Ontario

Art education, in a formal sense, has been in Ontario schools (including those in north-eastern Ontario) for over a hundred years and its history is similar to those of other provinces in Canada and other Western countries. According to Clark (1994, 2006), it began as simple ornamental and geometric drawing lessons in 19th century Ontario elementary schools and was re-named ‘art’ in 1904.

In the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s, there were some rays of light for art education in the form of teacher-friendly handbooks created by Charles Gaitskell (1949, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954), the first Director of Art in the Ontario Department of Education (ODE), what is now the Ontario Ministry of Education (OME). These books focused on technical skills, creativity, and relevant content. Ontario art educationalist Elizabeth Harrison’s (1951) *Self-expression Through Art* was also helpful because it included art education theory alongside ideas for projects and monthly art themes. Based on the availability of these resources for teachers, art education in Ontario schools of the 1950s looked promising. The promise was, however, short-lived. After Gaitskell retired, there was not another provincial support document created specifically for elementary art education until the ODE published *Art: Intermediate* (1968), a resource which included fine arts instruction in drawing, painting, printmaking, photography, and sculpture, and craft activities

such as puppetry, ceramics, and weaving. The next Ontario elementary art curriculum document was the OME's (1985) *Curriculum Ideas for Teachers: Visual Arts – Primary and Junior Divisions*.

Ontario art education history mirrors what was happening elsewhere and in other subject areas. In the United States, for example, the focus of education moved from a balance of the humanities and sciences to more emphasis on mathematics and science. According to education historians Jane Buchbinder (1999) and R.D. Gidney (1999), this perceptual shift was due to the space race, and fear of American educational inferiority, started by the launching of *Sputnik* in 1957. Arnheim (1990) argues that the denigration of art education in Western countries started much earlier, just after the Renaissance, when art was demoted from a spiritual endeavour to one of 'diversion and decoration' (p. 47). Regardless of when art became marginalised, the rise of the importance of numerical skills in schools led to art education being reconceived in a scientific way, as seen in cognitive-based art education programmes such as Harvard's 'Project Zero' and the Getty Center's Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE), both of which still influence art education today (application balanced with understanding, inquiry, communication). These programmes emphasised the cognitive potential of art education students and paid less attention to building emotional qualities (see chapter two) through art.

Clark (2006) suggests that the demise of the importance of Ontario art education since the 1950s was not the fault of *Sputnik* but rather '... a systemic disdain for subject specialization and an absence of scholarly activity' (p. 219). He blames the two major influences on provincial public education, the OME and the University of Toronto, for art's low priority. With regard to the OME, its subject specialists disappeared due to budget cutbacks in the 1970s and 1980s. The removal of these specialists at the provincial level led to school boards hiring fewer curriculum consultants, often with no art education backgrounds. Regarding higher education opportunities specifically for art education, the University of Toronto changed its education graduate programmes' foci from subject specialisations to generic curriculum studies. For the past two decades, graduate students who wanted to specialise in art education had to study outside Ontario (Concordia University in Montreal, Quebec or Purdue University in Indiana, USA). It has only been in the

last year that one provincial university, the University of Western Ontario, has started a doctoral programme in art education.

Art education advocate George Geahigan (1992) adds other reasons for the perception of art being of less value than core subjects:

Ever inclined toward the practical, American educators have tended to regard the arts as more enjoyable than necessary, as something to be attended to after the serious business of schools had been finished. The arts were to be regarded as ornaments, something useful to be sure, but only as a means of occupying one's leisure time. (p. 2)

Pitman (1998) seems to support Geahigan when he suggests that art is less important than mathematics or science, in the eyes of stakeholders, because art is regarded as a feminising influence whereas mathematics and science are seen as having more rigour. The findings of Geahigan (1992) and Pitman (1998) may explain why, when I was a classroom teacher, I sometimes had difficulty convincing male students to take art classes in their senior years of high school. When asked why they were not pursuing art education, many students replied that it was more for girls. It was not until I brought in media arts, with its emphasis on digital projects, that more male students signed up for art classes. For some, art education is merely for play, entertainment, or therapy. Pitman (1998) states that elementary visual arts education in Ontario is often relegated to Friday afternoons as fun time at the end of the week, a reward after more 'rigorous' work has been completed. I, too, found this in practice when I visited elementary schools during my evaluation trips. Pitman blames this attitude on competitiveness and other workplace values that serve the needs of the global economy (see 'Policy and elementary art education in Ontario' later in this chapter).

There is a saying that if the United States sneezes, the rest of the world gets a cold. The same can be said for the American influence on Canada's provincial and regional art education programmes. This is likely due to geographic proximity and similar school structures. When the curricular focus shifted in the United States from the humanities to the sciences, the same shift happened in Ontario, including the north-eastern region of the province. Another influential impact 26 years after the launch of *Sputnik* was seen in the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE) publication of *A Nation At Risk* (1983). According to its author, former U.S. assistant secretary of education Diane Ravitch, the report grew out of

low Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores from the 1970s. The SAT is the largest college-admission exam in the United States and the decline in students' average scores raised questions in the minds of the public and policymakers regarding school quality. Ravitch (1983), in another publication, recommended more textbook instruction in language, mathematics, and science to raise standards in what she called the 'new basics' (p. 18) and her report influenced former member of the U.S. Department of Education Chester Finn's (1990) 'excellence movement' (p. 10) as a way of improving skills needed for a competitive workforce.

American education policy critic Thomas Toch (1991) states that the NCEE (1983) report spawned the era of standardised testing and curricula for both elementary and secondary students. He notes that the testing and curricula were designed by business leaders and lawmakers and not by classroom teachers, further stressing the lack of public confidence in the education system. Toch also found that the tests, in many states, became the focus of attention in classrooms, especially if the scores were published publically and led to either financial bonuses or firings. Teachers, therefore, felt obliged to spend more time preparing their students for the tests and less on optional subjects, such as art. I noticed this trend when I was evaluating pre-service teachers and often saw art lessons crossed out in timetables, replaced with literacy and numeracy training. This seemed to be common in the Ontario standardised testing years: grade three (age eight), grade six (age 11), grade nine (age 14) for mathematics and grade ten (age 15) for literacy. The Getty Center's response to the NCEE (1983) report was its DBAE movement: a way of making art education fit with the new rigorous curriculum. The OME (1985) primary and junior division visual arts document was influenced by DBAE in its focus and structure; for example, art creation was integrated with the study of art history, art criticism, and aesthetics. This document was produced for use in schools across the province and influenced art education in Ontario until 1998.

The move to business-driven back-to-basics education policies came to Ontario in 1995 when, according to education critics Ruth Cohen and Bill Greaves (2004), Minister of Education John Snobelen was caught on video tape telling his staff, in reference to the education system, 'If you don't bankrupt it, if you don't create a great crisis, you'll improve it to death' (p. 130). This well-advertised clip is reminiscent of what Canadian education historian Alan Sears (2003) states is a

1980s Thatcher-era slogan, ‘Education isn’t working’ (p. 4). Snobelen’s comment was part of Premier Mike Harris’ goal of bringing American-style standardised testing and a focus on politics over pedagogy to Ontario schools. This goal, part of Harris’ ‘Commonsense Revolution’, caused the public to doubt the quality of education in the province. Policy theorist Wayne Parsons (1995) states:

[Curriculum] termination is not a frequent occurrence ... when it does happen it is more likely to be the result of ideology and “reformers” than of evaluation and rational economizers. (p. 576)

The Harris Conservative government was business-friendly and had replaced a socialist New Democrat government with a majority. It, therefore, had the power to reform everything, including education. The educational changes in Ontario were enacted in a rapid and antagonistic manner that alienated teachers and, according to Sears (2003), reflected similar 1988 reforms in Britain. The provincial government changed the curriculum dramatically in all subject area documents: socialist values of citizenship and egalitarianism were replaced by those of managerialism and performativity. A passage from the OME (1998) arts document, written during the Harris years, includes the language of neo-liberalism:

Students in schools across Ontario ... require knowledge and skills that will help them compete in a global economy ... The [visual arts curriculum] ... has been developed to provide a rigorous and challenging curriculum in the arts for each grade ... The required knowledge and skills ... set high standards and identify what parents and the public can expect students to learn. (p. 2)

This example echoes business-oriented principles in phrases such as ‘compete in a global economy’, ‘rigorous and challenging curriculum’, and ‘high standards’. It echoes what British academic Roger Dale (1989) calls ‘Thatcherism’ (p. 77) and what American critical educational theorist Michael Apple (1989) calls ‘the growing pressure to make the needs of business and industry into the primary goals of the education system’ (p. 5). It seems that, by the mid-1990s, neo-liberalism had migrated to the province of Ontario (see ‘Policy and elementary art education in Ontario’ later in this chapter).

Another change was the Ontario government’s creation of the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) in 1996 to oversee literacy and numeracy testing, conduct research in ‘effective’ education, and inform provincial government policy. This office is reminiscent of the education segment of England’s Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted). Ofsted (2009) is in charge of school inspections to ‘regulate and inspect

to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages' (online source). Like Ontario's EQAO standardised testing results, Ofsted publishes inspection findings for public scrutiny. Whilst the EQAO (2008) describes itself as an 'arm's-length agency' (online source) of the provincial government and the OME, according to the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) (2009), the EQAO has been the major influence in both elementary and secondary education in recent years because of its political power.

The provincial EQAO is similar to the United States Department of Education (2002) No Child Left Behind (NCLB) policy. Art educationalists Laura Chapman (2005) and F. Robert Sobol (2010) conducted national surveys on the impact of the NCLB policy on art education. They surveyed thousands of elementary Principals, visual arts specialists, and classroom teachers to explore the effects of that policy, which mandates strategies for improving reading, mathematics, and science scores by 2014, on state elementary art education practices. Chapman (2005) found '... the majority of classroom teachers are not ... receiving professional development activities that inform them ... of expectations for learning in art' (p. 133) and noted the strong possibility for art education to become entirely extracurricular or eliminated from schools. Sobol's (2010) study was undertaken a few years later and little positive change appeared to have occurred for art education. Although their findings support art advocates' efforts to raise awareness of threats to visual arts in the schools, they are based on massive national surveys that provide general statistics with few details of what impacts elementary art education specifically.

Political theorists Mark Olssen, John Codd, and Anne-Marie O'Neill (2004) suggest that policy can be a form of political action. The provincial government's 'top-down' approach to implementation was offensive to Ontario teachers because it denigrated their professionalism. It did, however, cause lobby groups to form, or regroup, in order to force the government to pay attention to specific issues. I am a member of Ontario Teacher Educators of the Arts (OnTEA), a lobby group of arts education professors/lecturers who formed in 2002 as a voice not only of support for elementary and secondary arts teachers but also as an advisory group for the OME. I also belong to the Ontario Society for Education Through Art (OSEA) and its parent organisation, the Canadian Society for Education Through Art (CSEA),

both of which have existed for decades but became more vocal in Ontario during the late 1990s. They provide similar support to OnTEA and advise both the provincial and federal governments on visual arts education issues. OnTEA, OSEA, and CSEA are what Parsons (1995) calls ‘advocacy coalitions’ (p. 197) that educate the OME, other Ministries of Education in Canada, and the general public to see art educators as having an important educational identity.

According to British academics David Farnham, Annie Hondeghem, and Sylvia Horton (2005), ‘public knowledge about [education] reforms is low and they are usually not at the top of citizens’ lists of priorities’ (p. 48). In order to address the need to move the arts up that list, People for Education (PFE), an Ontario lobby group, surveyed educators and parents and published reports on how the OME funding formula was affecting optional subjects such as music and visual arts. These reports were shared via various media and contained recommendations on what the OME should do to ensure a balance of core and optional subjects in all schools. PFE (2004, 2008) suggests that the emphasis on literacy and numeracy means students are denied opportunities for a well-rounded education that includes the development of visual literacy and cultural awareness. When PFE was formed in 1996, it was as a response to the beating the education system in Ontario was getting from the Harris government. Arts teachers, including myself, welcomed their support; however, I was disappointed that PFE’s focus for arts education was mainly music. Much of their research on the arts listed statistics about music programmes and promoted the hiring of music specialists in elementary schools. Little was said about visual arts education.

A common thread in the history of art education is the need for its justification within general education and its advocates have repackaged it in many forms to suit educational trends. According to Davis (2005), during the social efficiency movement of the early 20th century, art education was seen as a way for students to learn how to make good use of leisure time. After the launch of *Sputnik*, art educators tried unsuccessfully to market art as an avenue for nurturing creativity for scientific exploration. Later, during the back-to-basics movement, DBAE was brought in to create a more rigorous art curriculum. More recently, VCAE has emerged to address the rise of visual media and the influence of popular culture on art. Despite art educators’ efforts to justify their subject in general education, it is

still, at times, considered marginal. The major success for art, however, is that it is still a mandated subject with its own curriculum in most Western countries and regions within them, including north-eastern Ontario.

This history raised questions in my mind regarding elementary art education on a local level. How much impact did provincial education changes have locally? What influences teachers' approaches to art education? What value is placed on art education in north-eastern Ontario? I hoped to find answers to these questions during the data collection and analysis segments of this study.

Policy and elementary art education in Ontario

Educational policy is largely influenced by government; for example, all three Ontario political parties (Conservative, Liberal, New Democrat) each put their own 'spin' on education when they were in power. Parsons (1995) states:

Policy is the strategy by which goals are reached. Whether a policy is right or wrong does not [matter], what matters in the end is that which the policy is designed to achieve. (p. 42)

To arguably support its neo-liberal policy goals of marketisation, globalisation, and performativity, the OME, under the Conservative government, included imperative managerialist language in its 1998 curriculum documents. The expectations in the OME (1998) elementary arts document, for example, begin with the phrase, 'By the end of Grade 1, students will ...' (p. 30) as opposed to an earlier OME (1985) document which begins its objectives with 'Students may ...' or 'Students should be given opportunities to ...' (p. 32). This shift in language suggests a move to mandated, standardised curriculum expectations away from the earlier guidelines that may have seemed optional to school stakeholders. Clark (1994) suggests that successive Ontario governments provided curriculum policy documents which elementary and secondary teachers chose to either follow or ignore. As a result, some students received much art education while others received very little. I first noticed this when I was evaluating pre-service teachers and had the opportunity to visit several elementary schools each year. Some schools had hallway and classroom bulletin boards filled with displays of curriculum-related artwork whereas others had posted a few holiday crafts or were entirely devoid of students' art.

According to education sociologist Peter Woods (1986), teachers often see policy as irrelevant to their daily classroom practice because, they feel, policy is informed by research that is not done for teachers. Canadian academic Michael Fullan (1993, 1999, 2003) adds to this view when he suggests that research rarely creates long-term change in teachers' practice, even if a study takes place within the classroom setting. These points may explain much of the practice of elementary art education. When I was a classroom teacher, I rarely thought about the research behind the policies I had to follow. My teaching 'plate' was so full of lesson plans, preparation, conferencing, marking, staff meetings, committee work, and various other duties that I barely had time to read OME documents in any detail.

The decisions about art curriculum and implementation in Ontario are made by the OME. The Ontario College of Teachers (OCT), however, sets and enforces guidelines for standards of teaching practice and ethics. These standards provide what the OCT (2006) calls 'guiding images' (p. 17) of what teachers should strive to be. They do not, however, dictate specifically how individual subject areas, like art, are taught. That responsibility is left to classroom teachers and their employers through the Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA) programme, an evaluation system supported by the OME. Within the TPA (OME 2007a), there are no expectations regarding art education implementation specifically, other than 'demonstrates mastery of subject knowledge and related skills' (p. 63). The phrase 'mastery of subject' could be frightening for teachers who feel they are barely competent in art. As someone who had difficulty understanding, let alone teaching, mathematics, I know I would feel similar anxieties if I had to 'master' that subject.

The Ontario curriculum of the past decade is 'busy' when compared to its predecessor, *The Common Curriculum* (OME 1995), which was in place in provincial schools between 1995 and 1998 and focused on only four areas of study for elementary education: i. the arts, ii. language, iii. mathematics, science, and technology, and iv. personal and social studies. These subjects were expected to be taught in integrated units, with 157 expectations to be met by students over every three year period (by the end of grade three/age eight, grade six/age 11, and grade nine/age 14). All other curricula and initiatives were considered optional. What was exciting for arts education advocates was that the directives within the OME (1995) curriculum allowed for one quarter of elementary instructional time devoted

to the arts. The OME (1995) seemed in favour of art as an essential part of education:

Dance, drama, music and visual arts are expressions of the ideas, values, and concerns of individuals and societies. It is therefore important for learners to become literate in the arts – to develop an understanding and appreciation of the creative process and of the principles and techniques that serve the creative purpose in individual disciplines. (p. 12)

Despite these supportive words, there was, however, little impact in the classroom. According to Pitman (1998), budget cuts and lack of PD opportunities followed the implementation of the OME (1995) curriculum. An opportunity to raise the importance of arts education was lost due to financial problems: many school boards downsized and sent their subject consultants back into the classrooms.

When the OME introduced *The Ontario Curriculum* (1998) to replace the 1995 policy, the school day (approximately six hours) and the school year (194 mandatory days) were not lengthened but the writers added hundreds of expectations to be met by students within the same period of time. According to the OME (1998), Ontario elementary students, by law, must meet approximately 400 curriculum expectations each year, between grades one (age six) and eight (age 13), among the following subjects: the arts, French as a second language, health and physical education, language, mathematics, science and technology, and social studies. Learners in grade three (age eight), for example, must meet 395 expectations within these subject areas. Environmental education expectations are mixed into all subjects and students must participate in provincial standardised testing. School boards may add extras such as religion/family life programmes, aboriginal perspectives, and anti-discrimination and character education initiatives. According to educationalists Ted Aoki (2005) and William Pinar (2006), so many expectations can leave little room for curricular flexibility. Although there is nothing wrong with broadening students' experiences, the result can be watered-down instruction where teachers can barely touch on non-core subjects like art, music, dance, drama, and physical education. It can lead to what educationalist Ivan Illich (quoted in Cayley 1992) calls 'regimes of scarcity' (p. 118). Ontario elementary teachers are supposed to follow these curriculum guidelines for implementing provincial education policies and these guidelines include the aforementioned mandated expectations for art education that, according to Irwin and Chalmers (1996), are similar to those for elementary students in other

provinces (Alberta, British Columbia). The art guidelines also reflect most of the items within the Canadian Society for Education Through Art's (CSEA) 'National Policy for Art Education' (Irwin 1997). It is a list of best practices suggested for art education at elementary and secondary levels across Canada.

The OME (1998) arts document provides some consistency for Ontario students on a global scale. The Ontario expectations reflect both the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (1997) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (1999) curricular standards for the past decade because they contain a continuum of knowledge and skills from grades one to 12 (ages six to 17), not only in traditional fine arts but also in emergent technologies and architecture. Despite their national and global consistencies and their multimedia focus, there can be interpretation problems among teachers because of the terminology of some expectations; for example, an OME (1998) expectation:

By the end of Grade 6 [age 11], students will identify the elements of design (colour, line, shape, form, space, texture) and the principles of design (emphasis, balance, rhythm, unity, variety, proportion), and use them in ways appropriate for this grade [age] when producing and responding to works of art. (p. 40)

Although this is an expectation for an eleven-year-old student to meet, the understanding of principles such as 'rhythm' and 'unity', for example, could be very difficult for the average elementary teacher, who has little or no background in art, to interpret successfully. According to sociologists Richard Bowe, Stephen Ball, and Anne Gold (1992),

Texts are not necessarily internally coherent or clear. The expression of policy is fraught with the possibility of misunderstanding, texts are generalized, written in relation to idealizations of the "real world", and can never ... cover all eventualities. (p. 21)

Perhaps the vagueness of the language had the purpose of standardisation in order to have all students meet the same expectations effectively but it carries the potential for a wide variety of interpretations among classroom teachers.

After reviewing the OME policies and reading the related documents for visual arts, I had questions regarding the impact of policy on art education in north-eastern Ontario. How much influence did curriculum documents and/or research have on local teachers? Has the formation of the OCT and the TPA improved practice in art education? How has the increased number of expectations impacted art education?

These were questions that, if not answered by the interviewees, could, I anticipated, be answered by other local stakeholders.

Practice and elementary art education in Ontario

Policy can have a huge impact on practice, depending on how it is received and interpreted by educators. According to Ernest Boyer (1995), president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (CFAT), curricular emphasis on art is low in the minds of most Western educators. CFAT, as discussed in Boyer (1995), conducted a poll of elementary teachers regarding how much emphasis should be placed on basic language skills, mathematics, and the arts. The study found that, in all participant countries, language and mathematics were considered by elementary teachers as more important than the arts. Although the percentages for arts emphasis in Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and the United States were 25% or less, the percentages were much higher in Chile (66%), Mexico (49%), Russia (51%), Turkey (48%), and Zimbabwe (63%). This support could be related to the importance of art in different cultures. Boyer did not include reasons why elementary teachers placed fairly low emphasis on art in Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and the United States, nor did he include why teachers in the other countries rated art much higher in importance.

American art educationalists Cynthia Colbert (1984) and Brent Wilson (1997b) suggest that art lecturers/professors should become more aware of reasons for teachers' attitudes regarding art education practice so they can better prepare their students for implementing it effectively. When I conducted the trial study for this dissertation, I looked at several attitude studies and discovered that the impact of art experiences on attitudes towards art education is a global issue. Art educationalist Barry Oreck's (2001, 2006) studies look at factors influencing teaching of the arts in American schools. His findings indicate that although teachers believe the arts are important for students, they rarely implement them due to confidence issues. Australian art educationalists Peter and Suzanne Hudson (2001, 2007) carried out studies of pre-service elementary teachers' potential for teaching art. Their findings suggest that subject confidence, or lack thereof, has more to do with ineffective art education implementation than the multitude of subjects and initiatives to teach. These studies support the idea that comfort with doing art is a big part of feeling prepared for teaching art. Although my trial study was small in

comparison with those of Oreck (2001, 2006) and Hudson and Hudson (2001, 2007), I found similar attitudes among the teachers I interviewed. I was also surprised at some of the results; for example, all four participants were excited about the prospect of teaching art even if they did not feel comfortable with the subject. They even planned on taking art courses in order to inform their art education practice. These findings, among others, led me not only to see the impact of attitudes towards teaching art as more complex than I originally thought but also to explore it further in this study.

Time could be a factor regarding how much art is taught, or if it is taught at all. Oreck (2001, 2006) found that, along with lack of confidence, time constraints had a negative impact on effective art education. In Ontario schools, time allotments for all subjects are tight; for example, elementary students spend the following mandatory minutes learning each subject per week: language - 450 minutes, mathematics - 300 minutes, and physical education (in the form of daily physical activity) - 100 minutes. Out of approximately 1,350 minutes of class time per week, 850 minutes are set-aside for these three subjects. The rest of the OME-mandated curricula (dance, drama, French, music, science, social studies, visual arts) must be taught within the remaining 500 minutes. When I was in schools evaluating pre-service teachers, I noted the amount of time spent on art education in various elementary classrooms. The average was around 40 minutes per week: not much time for teachers to introduce a topic, provide a demonstration, give learners time to plan, create, and reflect on a work of art, and supervise clean-up.

Some theorists suggest that the variance in art education practice is due to the fact that most elementary teachers are generalists; that is, they are prepared to teach many subjects as opposed to specialising in one. The research of British academic David Holt (1997), Americans Wilson (1997a) and Eisner (1999), and Australians Paul Duncum (1999) and Linda Ashton (1999) suggest that this is a global issue. They found that there are many reasons why generalist teachers do not feel comfortable teaching art. Holt (1997), for example, found that the problem came from poor teacher training. He suggests that it leads to low arts education performance and poor-quality activities that teachers expect the learners to do. Wilson (1997a) identifies major belief problems among generalist elementary teachers that impact art education practice negatively. These include not only the

idea that art is for developing skills in other subjects but also that adults should not interfere with children's artistic expression. Eisner (1999) suggests that generalists cannot be expected to teach what they do not know and love; he favours a specialist system where those with strong art backgrounds should be the ones teaching art at all levels. Duncum (1999) adds that another problem with generalists teaching art is that they do holiday crafts instead of traditional fine arts or contemporary visual culture activities. Ashton (1999) suggests that the issue can be more personal: generalist teachers who are not art specialists worry about potential classroom management problems and mess during studio activities.

British art educationalist Anne Bamford (2006) undertook a study for UNESCO analysing the global impact of arts-rich programmes on children around the world. She sent a survey to 151 arts educationalists in 75 countries. Through the results of that survey, she found the following: i. global standards focused on mathematics, science, and literacy, ii. there is a disconnect between what is said to be done and what is actually done in classroom practice, iii. there is a need for more training for art education providers, iv. although there is strong promotion of art education among advocates, there is little quality implementation in classrooms, v. 85% of teachers who teach art are generalists with little formal training, and vi. generalists usually receive less than three months of art education training. Her findings suggest that not much had changed in art education practice in the years after the aforementioned studies of the late 1990s.

Whilst acknowledging that practice was and is affected by these issues, either individually or in combination, I would also argue that politics affects practice.

Olssen et. al. (2004) state:

The specification of objectives, performance reviews and other management techniques may encourage teachers to behave in ways antithetical to certain educational values such as altruism, intellectual independence and imagination. (p. 197)

The timing for curricular change during the Harris regime of the late 1990s was detrimental to the implementation process. Ontario teachers, like myself, felt that they were working in a neo-liberal state and reacted to drastic curricular and other changes by resisting the new policies, practising work-to-rule, and participating in a two-week strike in October 1997 that shut down all publicly-funded elementary and secondary schools in the province. Kohn (2004) suggests such struggles can be

detrimental to change: ‘ ... people don’t resist change – they resist being changed’ (p. 83). Unfortunately, the OME (1998) arts document was introduced when the government-teacher power struggles were at their peak. Although I usually welcome positive change, I did not feel like reading, let alone implementing, arts guidelines set by a government with which I disagreed so strongly.

According to Gidney (1999) and Sears (2003), Ontario teachers from all grade levels and subject areas fought the implementation process by continuing to teach what and how they had always taught. This non-compliance led the government to not only bring in the Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA) programme, which tied curricular expectations and assessment directly to teacher evaluation criteria, but also form the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) as a professional governing body for those teachers who disobeyed OME directives. Perhaps this explains why I saw and heard about so much variety in elementary art practice. My evaluation visits, plus post-practicum stories from pre-service teachers, suggested to me that art was far from being considered as a core subject: it was usually marginalised or missing entirely.

Arts educationalists Judith Burton, Robert Horowitz, and Hal Abeles (1999) surveyed 2000 American elementary students (ages nine to 13) from several states. They found, from them, that there was a wide variety of arts education implementation (sporadic, unfocused) within their classroom experiences. Although the study authors recommended that specialists be the ones to teach the arts, they stressed that elementary teachers must have strong administrative support. If there is little or no support for pre-service or in-service professional development (PD), then surely implementation will be unsuccessful, even if art is taught by specialists. I have often wondered how much influence administrators have on practice within their schools. My experiences have been varied with the 23 administrators for whom I have worked at the elementary, secondary, and university levels. Some were very supportive of my art programmes whereas others wanted to destroy them. I felt that the latter group did not see how art education could benefit all students, regardless of the learners’ future career aspirations, and my feelings sometimes led to open battles with these decision-makers.

Snapshot four:

During my 14-year career as a high school teacher, I taught visual arts for 12 years and was head of an arts department for nine. I enjoyed creating and implementing art curricula and stayed current by taking courses each summer to augment my content knowledge and to learn proper techniques to pass along to my students. My biggest hurdle, however, was not my minimal knowledge of certain art media but rather my administrators' lack of understanding about visual arts education.

As both an art teacher and department head, I defended my subject area and programme constantly in staff and heads' meetings and one particular incident both baffled and infuriated me. My Principal approached me to say that, in the spirit of fiscal restraint, he was considering removing the arts programme entirely in order to use my \$12,000 (£6,000) annual budget to buy more computers for the school. When I asked him what would happen to the nearly 600 students who took arts courses annually, he told me that they could go to other schools or find private tutors. My response was to challenge him in front of the entire staff and recite all of the reasons why the needs of students should be placed before computers that would be obsolete within a few years. Although he did not back down from my barrage, the issue resolved itself a few weeks later when he announced that he was moving to another country to run a school there. After he left, I made sure that I spent time with each new administrator in order to enlighten him or her about the value of arts education.

American art educationalist Mick Luehrman (2002) carried out a study that focused on Missouri Principals' art experiences and the effects of them on attitudes towards art education. He found that negative, or absence of, past art experiences led to lack of administrative support for art education. He did, however, find that those Principals who participated in the study changed their attitudes about art education for the better. They became more supportive of it in their schools as a result of answering a questionnaire and follow-up interview questions which made them think about their impact on the subject.

According to Bamford (2006), administrators not only need to reflect but also need to learn about what is effective implementation and what is not:

While advocacy to include arts as part of education policy has largely been successful ... this has not led to wide scale implementation of quality arts programmes at the school level. The current situation sees global monitoring and reporting on educational standards within literacy, mathematics, science and ICT but does not include the impact of arts and cultural experiences within a child's total education. It appears that this is due to an insufficient understanding of the implementation process. (p. 86)

I know that most of my administrators had 'insufficient understanding' of what I did as an art educator, due mainly to their backgrounds and expertise in other subject areas. I assume that they had faith in my professionalism and left me alone to teach. Not one, for example, ever asked about how my practice reflected any of the OME guidelines.

Perhaps lack of understanding led to the results of an Australian study and its consequences. The Australian Primary Principals' Association (APPA) (2007) funded a study and later drafted a charter proposing that the elementary curriculum in Australian states be trimmed down to only four subject areas: English, mathematics, science, and social education. The APPA recommends that optional subjects, such as the arts, be learned within the four core subject areas. In contrast, Hal Nelson (2009), a Florida Assistant Superintendent, urges Principals to place art education high in elementary schools' priority lists in order to 'educate the whole child' (p. 17). Nelson argues that, despite years of research supporting the value of art education for children, students are too often denied access to it. He suggests the inclusion of art as a way of adding diversity to the curriculum. In my career, I have worked for only one administrator (out of 23) who seemed to feel the same way as Nelson. Perhaps there is a need to encourage more reflection among them and for teachers to have the courage to challenge the status quo and board/provincial decisions that do not place students first.

Because I had taught only at the high school and university levels in North Bay, I knew little of local elementary art education practice. I wanted to know how much emphasis elementary teachers and Principals in north-eastern Ontario placed on art education. What were their attitudes towards planning and implementing art lessons, and assessing artwork? What comfort or discomfort did they feel with the subject? What time allotments were set aside for art education? What global art education practice issues were reflected locally? I had some idea of the answers to

these questions, based on informal conversations and my trial study, but I wanted to learn about these in detail from those who had been teaching for a few years.

Economics and elementary art education in Ontario

The economy could be a problem for art education. According to Clark (1994), art was exalted in Ontario's booming years (1950s, 1970s) but it became threatened during tight economic times (since the early 1990s). Despite a change in provincial government, not much changed with regard to economic support for art education. In 2003, the provincial Liberal party, led by Premier Dalton McGuinty, was elected to replace the Conservatives. During the Conservative years in Ontario, the OME provided textbook funding for core subject areas only and option subjects, such as art, did not receive any. The Liberal government continued the same practice, which seems to support Sears' (2003) view that 'subjects and disciplines that the government sees as having market value ... are being rewarded as opposed to those that are not' (p. 21). This practice of curricular exclusion could be part of the neo-liberal shift to a 'stratified' system, such as in the United States, where, according to Chapman (2005), arts programmes are being downsized or moved into elite schools that depend on philanthropy to survive.

Canadian music educator Jim Palmer (2008) suggests

The link between sound education policy and economic prosperity is universally recognized ... However, the demonstrable link between the arts ... to both sound education policy and economic prosperity has largely been overlooked or ignored by successive provincial and federal governments. (p. 7)

Although he speaks from a music education perspective, Palmer's words are applicable to art education. Governments seem able to overlook the fact that those with a formal art background contribute greatly to economic prosperity. Statistics Canada (2005), for example, states:

An arts education ... challenges people to think critically and to solve problems creatively – skills that are now in high demand. During the 1990s, the culture sector labour force grew by 31 per cent, compared to 20 per cent for Canada's labour force as a whole. (online source)

According to the Conference Board of Canada (2008), Canada's cultural sector, including the visual arts, generated over \$80 billion (£40 billion) to its gross domestic product and provided jobs for over one million workers. In order to showcase cultural careers to children, there are provincial organizations such as the Ontario Arts Council (OAC), which select actors, artists, dancers, and musicians to

run school workshops. Their ‘Artists in Education’ programme (OAC 2009) has a list of artists with experience in a variety of media who are available for these workshops. Although the OAC pays for 85% of the workshop, plus travel expenses, the schools must pay \$150 (approx. £75), plus provide tools and supplies. Unfortunately, most elementary schools in north-eastern Ontario would not be able to afford the minimum 25-hour workshop from one of these chosen artists because their budgets are so tight; for example, approximately \$10 (£5) per student per school year for all art supplies.

Parental views regarding economics could also impact art education negatively when they help their children make subject-choice decisions. Goodson (1993) suggests art education, among other optional subjects, is marginalised in favour of preparing students, even as early as elementary school, for university-based careers. He argues that optional subjects are the first to face cuts to funding and resources because they are not considered as directly helpful to prepare students for the world of work. In her study of art education in rural Queensland, Australia, art and design lecturer Tara Page (2007) found that parents of high school students saw art more as a ‘frill’ than as a viable subject for preparing their children for work. When I taught at both the elementary and high school levels, parents and colleagues approached me with concerns regarding their children’s interests in pursuing visual arts as a career, as if it was a problem to be rectified.

These economic issues raised more questions. How are local elementary art programmes funded? Are the education stakeholders in north-eastern Ontario aware of the arts’ economic impact? Are parents supportive of the arts at the elementary level? I hoped to find answers to these questions through interviews with practitioners and conversations with other stakeholders.

Geography and elementary art education in Ontario

One of my questions in chapter one focused on the impact of geography on the quality of art education and this question came from thoughts about both the human and physical geography of Ontario. The province has had a centralised curriculum for nearly 100 years. Although Gardner (2000) recommends such a curriculum because it develops ‘a sense of common culture’ (p. 214), it does not necessarily meet the needs of students in diverse cultures, like those found within Ontario. The

needs of my former students in the small mining community of Red Lake, for example, were very different than those of learners in Toronto. Despite being within the same province, these two communities are over 1000 miles apart; the majority in the former were Native and the majority in the latter were from many different countries. For Nussbaum (1997), 'knowledge is frequently enhanced by an awareness of difference' (p. 82), so the geographical and cultural diversity represented within Ontario provides a great opportunity for students to become aware of difference.

Ontario is the second largest province in Canada, with an area of over 400,000 square miles (see figure one in chapter one) and a population of approximately 12 million. According to Statistics Canada (2006), 94% of the provincial population lives in southern Ontario. It is also in the south, specifically at the OME headquarters in Toronto, where major education decisions, both pedagogical and financial, are made. North-eastern Ontario is a rural region, with several small school boards spread over large geographic areas. The North Bay region (see figure two in chapter one), where this study takes place, is not as remote as some areas of northern Ontario but it is rural in comparison with those in southern Ontario. These distances and demographics are similar to those in Page (2007); for example, Queensland is the second largest Australian state with 95% of its population living in southern coastal areas. Her focus is on conceptions of art education among stakeholders in a remote region of the state and she suggests that an isolated location has a mixed impact on the value of art education in the minds of students, teachers, and parents. She found that art education was considered to have low value for employment but provided opportunity for students to study in urban communities. Her findings parallel similar issues in north-eastern Ontario. With so much emphasis on employment after graduation, art education does not seem to be a priority for residents of small towns, and students with art aspirations often have to find formal art instruction and employment in urban areas.

Considering Page (2007), allied with my own experiences teaching in both rural and remote schools in northern Ontario and Manitoba, led me to wonder how much a school's location in relation to its school board office and/or major art centres affects art education. Do teachers in the rural schools of north-eastern Ontario have less access to art resources? Are these schools compensated for field trips to art

centres (North Bay, Toronto, Ottawa) in order for their learners to see real works of art? Does the OME consider the ‘differentness’ of learning art in the north in comparison to learning it in an urban centre? I hoped to find answers to these questions during the interviews.

Voices against art education

I doubt that many of the theorists and experiences discussed in the context filters (history, policy, practice, economics, geography) intended to make art education marginalised, let alone expendable. It is more likely that art is an innocent victim when ideologies and budgets clash. As described in chapters one and two, arguments in support of art education have been heard for decades. There are, however, some influential voices who suggest that art education should be abandoned altogether.

Finn (1990) is one of the more vocal supporters of the back-to-basics movement. This movement is, according to education critics Kathy Emery and Susan Ohanian (2004) and Jardine et. al. (2008), a business-led driver motivating school stakeholders to marginalise art education (among other optional subjects) in favour of a focus on the core subjects. *We Must Take Charge* is Finn’s (1990) battle-cry for parents, business-people, and community leaders to rise up against ‘smug, self-interested, and allergic to change’ (p. 90) educators. Although he admired British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher’s education reforms of the 1980s, he questioned the inclusion of 10 subjects (art, English, geography, history, mathematics, modern languages, music, physical education, science, technology) in the National Curriculum. Instead, he supports a more streamlined, core-focused version for American schools (English, geography, history, mathematics, science). Despite this narrow view of curriculum, Finn (1990) states that he is in favour of a ‘liberal education’ (p. 251), one that includes freedom, empowerment, citizenship, critical thinking, originality, imagination, discipline, and rigour. To me, the inclusion of these aspects of ‘liberal education’ promotes art as a way of nurturing Nussbaum’s (1997) capacities but whether Finn would agree remains to be seen.

American educator Donald Lazere (1992) calls optional subjects, like art, ‘Mickey Mouse vocational and recreational courses’ (p. 13). Although Lazere’s comment is supposed to be derogatory, it makes me smile because one of my former high

school students earned over \$100,000 (£50,000) in his first year as an animator with Disney. Eric Hanushek (1994) takes a conservative economist's view of education in his suggestions to improve America's global competitiveness. He suggests that educational reform must include the elimination of anything that is not cost-effective and does not contribute to student performance in measurable testing. Since art is based mostly on consumables and is not part of standardised tests, it would be one of the first subjects to go if his views were fully implemented. British academic Paul Standish (1999) reminds us that if a subject is not traditional in a business sense, for example, not 'conducive to the strengthening of industrial competitiveness' (p. 36), it is not valued in Western society. An irony is that art is a way to strengthen qualities that are valued in business and beyond. Business leaders make statements in education proposals that include how they want to improve worker preparation and, therefore focus on core subjects and ignore what effective art education teaches – creativity, innovation, critical thinking – all of which are essential for businesses to compete and thrive.

In order to clarify general opposition to arts education, Davis (2008) lists common objections made by school stakeholders:

1. Value: The arts are nice but not necessary.
2. Talent: Arts learning ... is only useful to students who have the gifts to make a career in the arts.
3. Time: There isn't time within the school day for including the arts. We barely have time to teach the subjects that matter more.
4. Measurement: Achievement in the arts cannot be measured. In this age of rampant standardized testing, we need to be able to rate student progress with objective measures.
5. Expertise: To be taught well, the arts require specialists – individuals who are artists themselves or have experience and skill in art disciplines.
6. Money: The arts require special supplies, specialist and visiting artist salaries, and administrative time for field trips, performances, and shows. The arts are expensive.
7. Autonomy: The arts will survive in the community even if schools eliminate them. (p. 24)

Although Davis' focus is on arts education in general rather than visual arts specifically, her list is relevant to how opinions among education stakeholders can lead to the marginalisation, if not expendability, of art education. Items one, three, four, six, and seven, especially, are threatening to visual arts in schools. It is not difficult to see why art is one of the things being sacrificed to make room for such a strong focus on competition, standardised testing, and core subjects.

Testing the assumptions

Before this study, I had not given much thought to what education would be like without art instruction because I took for granted that art has been, and always will be, part of schooling. That idea, however, has been challenged because of personal experiences and reading. My literature review did not help to dispel my art-expendability suspicions. I felt particularly dismayed after reading the Getty Center (1985) report, *Beyond Creating: The Place for Art in America's Schools*. This was a study conducted by art education leaders of the 1970s and 1980s, including Chapman and Eisner, who are still influential today. It explored several art programmes around the United States and was the impetus behind the Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE) movement (see chapter one). Although I support its findings, and even taught my high school art courses following its suggestions, what upset me the most was that, in the 25 years since that report was released by such a strong art education advocacy organisation, not much has changed regarding art's place in the curriculum in Western countries. Sadly, just three years after the Getty Center released its report, the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) shared its findings from a similar study (NEA 1988) which found arts education did not exist in the United States. In order to help raise the status of arts in education, the NEA suggested that art provides a sense of civilisation, fosters creativity, and teaches communication and critical thinking. Although both the Getty Center and the NEA had hoped to elevate art to a more respected level within schools, the status of art and arts education in the United States, and other Western countries, remains much the same as before their reports.

According to UNESCO (2006), Western education policy changes have led to a crowded curriculum in schools worldwide that leaves little room for subjects like art. These changes include an increased focus on the core, or basic subjects such as language, mathematics, and science, and led to international arts education organisations to create a declaration as one strategy in calling attention to the problem of marginalisation. Included in the UNESCO (2006) declaration is the following:

We believe that today's knowledge-based, post-industrial societies require citizens with confident flexible intelligences, creative verbal and non-verbal communication skills, abilities to think critically and imaginatively, intercultural understandings and an empathic commitment to cultural diversity ... Together, we will advocate new and appropriate paradigms of education which both transmit and transform culture

through the humanizing languages of the arts that are founded on the principles of cooperation, not competition ... (online source)

The declaration is strong because it includes all of the arts. Its purpose is proactive and it challenges stakeholders to improve education through the arts. The statement was needed in a political way but my question is, 'Will it do any good?'. Those who are likely to read it are already members of the arts organisations that are part of UNESCO. Basically, it is like preaching to the converted.

Although I did much reading and reflection as to why art is or is not respected as a subject, I needed to find out more to inform my practice as an art education lecturer. After looking at art education through the lenses of Nussbaum's (1997) capacities in chapter two and considering how the 'filters' of history, policy, practice, economics, and geography impact it, I still wondered why art is potentially expendable, especially in north-eastern Ontario. Much of what I read was tangential to what I wanted to know: the research was carried out in other countries and/or focused on secondary education. There was very little literature about the state of art education in rural areas, especially in the northern parts of Canada. Because I prepare future elementary teachers to teach art there, and elsewhere, I needed to know, and my pre-service teachers needed to know, what forces contribute to its potential expendability and how that threatens the cultivation of elementary student-citizens of the world.

It is one thing to recall professional experiences, read various theories, and explore trial study data. It is another to make a strong case from it. In order to do that, I needed to find out, first, if history, policy, practice, economics, and geography really did and do impact art education in north-eastern Ontario and, if so, how much? What other impact issues might be at work and be revealed through the data collection and analysis processes? From both personal experience and reading, I had some assumptions about what impacts art education that can make it expendable but, like looking through a viewfinder, or lenses, or filters, I knew I might have been missing or overlooking something: the theories presented and my assumptions might not have presented the whole picture. It could be like taking a photograph and then discovering something new, either good or bad, when looking at the enlarged print. In the next three chapters, I will describe the research design, the data collection process, and the results of the study. I hope to determine if what

I have read and what I had assumed leads to art education expendability and, if not, what does? My goal was to obtain a deeper understanding of art education from the study participants and information collected from other sources so that my views, and professional practice, could be better informed.

CHAPTER FOUR

Planning and Field Work



Introduction

When photographers work, they often spend more time planning the shoot than actually taking the photographs. They choose a subject to investigate, they organise their equipment, they study their subjects from various angles, and they carry different lenses and filters to focus on the subject in many ways. As part of their field work, they bring a notebook to document everything from aperture settings to shutter speeds to times of day. They also take a variety of shots of the same subject in order to have a wide range of images from which to later choose a print or series of prints.

Snapshot five:

The most exciting time for me as a photographer is taking photographs in the bush. I like the outdoors and that is why most of my photographs are landscapes. I am blessed to live in a part of the world that still has some of its wildness: the forest is thick, not groomed; the lakes are clean, not spoiled; the wildlife is free, not caged. I prefer field work; that is, taking photographs outdoors where I can enjoy the full impact of the scene, not only its sights but also its sounds, smells, occasional tastes, and how it feels. When I choose a subject to photograph, I make notes of location, time, shutter speed, and aperture setting, and my sensory impressions of the place. The entire experience is important to me and I try to take the time to appreciate it.

During the summer of 2008, I took a nature photography course at the local college. It was a five-day escape from my academic life, especially since it was on the heels of handing in the trial study for this dissertation. Although I was tired going into

the experience, I quickly felt rejuvenated when I laced on my hiking boots, spread on a thick layer of sunscreen, covered myself with bug spray, and marched into the bush for hours of taking photographs. One of the more memorable course activities was when the instructor gave each student a 10-foot length of string. We were instructed to each find a tree, tie one end of the string to it and the other to our waists. At first I thought it was some kind of lame way to feed us to the bears but, after we followed his directions, our instructor told us to each shoot an entire roll of film of that tree from only that length of string. It forced us to spend time on one subject and take a variety of images from various perspectives. Using different lenses and filters, I shot close-ups of the bark, worm's-eye-views of the trunk and branches, bird's-eye-views of the base of the tree and I even placed the camera on my head and spun in a circle while pressing the shutter release in order to get a blurred effect. Basically, that exercise taught me to see a subject in a wide range of ways.

The research plan for this study was a similar process to preparing a photo shoot and it, too, took much more time than the data collection process. I chose a subject to investigate: the expendability of art education in north-eastern Ontario elementary schools. I organised my research 'equipment'; that is, I did a literature review based on my assumptions about the subject and, from that, determined an approach, chose a paradigm, found volunteers to interview, created a list of interview questions, learned how to use recording and transcription software, and made many notes about the process in my research journal. Although these steps might seem straightforward, it was, instead, an indirect journey during which I often revisited and refined the process.

According to John Sykes (1983), the 'field' is an 'area or sphere of operation, observation, intellectual activities ...' (p. 361). As the bush was my field for photography, my research field was art education in general and local elementary classrooms specifically. I used several 'lenses' and 'filters' in order to study the central research issue; for example, information from the literature review, a variety of volunteers from different schools, interview questions and observation notes that would help me glean a wide range of information. This would help me get a

clearer picture of the state of art education in elementary schools, at least in the north-eastern Ontario location of this study.

In this chapter, I discuss how each stage in the research design process was conceived and evolved, including how messy it was at times. It describes the good, the bad, and the ugly of determining the research approach, paradigm, methodology, methods, participants, and interview questions. As well, I describe the data collection process, including interview and observation issues. The data analysis will be discussed in chapter five.

The research approach

When I first looked at the central research issue and wondered how to address it, I had the choice of taking either a purely conceptual approach or of blending that approach with an empirical one. The former was interesting to me because I like to write essays but, despite my reading on the topic, I felt that I lacked enough practical background to make sound arguments that were linked to professional practice. I had not taught in a regular classroom for over six years and I had not taught at the elementary level since 1989. I needed to spend time listening to elementary teachers in order to learn more about the current state of art education in their schools and this need led to my decision to take an empirical approach. I wanted to confirm or alter the assumptions (mine and others') discussed in chapters one, two, and three by exploring practitioners' perceptions of the research issue. To me, these were the best people to answer my questions and, ultimately, to inform my practice, and that of others, about what impacts art education in elementary schools.

The research paradigm

Choosing a paradigm for the study was difficult. I had some experience with Positivist and Post-positivist studies and I felt somewhat comfortable with those approaches. My previous education research experience was psychology-based and quantitative but being exposed to education philosophy and more qualitative research through my doctoral studies at the University of Glasgow helped to broaden my research options. That recent experience helped me to explore the

central research issue for this study epistemologically, ontologically, ideologically, and axiologically until the choice of paradigm was clearer: Interpretivism.

According to Jardine et. al. (2006), the term ‘epistemology’ comes from the Greek *episteme* which means to know something. In chapters one, two, and three, I discussed what I and others knew about the research issue based on my personal and professional experience, informal discussions with others, and from readings on the subject. I knew, for example, that art in Ontario elementary schools is an optional subject at best and unnecessary at worst. I also knew that my knowledge was limited because the bulk of my teaching experience had been at the high school and university levels. What I wanted to know, therefore, was more about what is discernable about art education from practitioners inside elementary schools. Was my ‘knowing’ personal only to me or was it shared? Could I understand it better and, indeed, did I really ‘know’ what was happening?

‘Ontology’, for Jardine et. al. (2006), comes from another Greek word, *ontos*. It refers to what it means to be something (a teacher, an artist, a lecturer). Qualitative research advocates Egon Guba and Yvonna Lincoln (1994) see ontology as what one can know; that is, what is there to learn? What is the reality if there is a reality? My reality is as both artist and art educator so anything that I see as threatening to art education is of concern to me. Its potential expendability is why I am doing this study. Although my research experience from my Master of Education thesis (Duncan 2005) was Positivist, I found that it did not suit what I wanted to find out for this study. I wanted to focus on quality not quantity and I wanted to get information on, and to understand lived experiences from, teachers. I, therefore, wanted to learn from teachers what they saw as reality regarding what impacts art education in their classrooms so that they could inform my reality when I prepare future elementary teachers for different realities and truths of their future classrooms.

Ideology and axiology involve values that affect research, whether they are present before, during, and/or after a study. My own experience with art expendability has, of course, shaped this study but that is also why I am conducting it: I want to find out if I am correct in my suspicions or if I am way out in left field. According to

American educationalist Valerie Janesick (2000), ‘qualitative researchers accept the fact that research is ideologically-driven: there is no value-free or bias-free design’ (p. 385). Researchers are human which makes it impossible to set aside ideologies entirely. I shared my biases about art education in chapters one, two, and three and will explain in both this and later chapters how I tried to deal with them during the data collection and analysis.

Interpretivism was a major departure from my Positivist research background and working environment. Although I had some experience creating surveys and reading statistics, Interpretivist techniques seemed more appropriate for what I wanted to find out through this study. I wanted to hear the perspectives of the practitioners through interviews and see their worlds through what Woods (1986) calls ‘non-participant observation’ (p. 36); that is, by being in their teaching environments and noting all that I could about art education within and outwith their classrooms. According to educationalist Thomas Schwandt (2000), ‘Interpretivists argue that it is possible to understand the subjective meaning of action ... yet do so in an objective manner’ (p. 193) and he offers three ways of defining interpretive understanding: empathic identification, phenomenological sociology, and language games. ‘Empathic identification [is] acquiring an “inside” understanding – the actors’ definitions of the situation’ (p. 192). For this study, the ‘actors’ were elementary teachers in north-eastern Ontario. ‘Phenomenological sociology [focuses on the] understanding of the everyday, intersubjective world ... to grasp how we come to interpret our own and others’ actions as meaningful’ (p. 192). My interest was in finding out what issues impact elementary art education. By situating my central research issue within the Interpretivist paradigm, I hoped to understand what these meaningful issues were as perceived by elementary art educators. ‘Language games’ involves analysing human communication (speech, action) in order to understand ‘systems of meanings (institutional and cultural norms, action-constituting rules ...)’ (pp. 192-193). By interviewing elementary teachers and analysing the transcripts of their interviews, I could, hopefully, understand their ‘systems of meanings’ better in order to inform my practice when preparing future practitioners. I also added observation to the research process to find out more about the classroom environment as it pertains to the central research issue and to gather further information than from interviews alone.

Methodology

Once I had chosen the research approach and paradigm, I was faced with the messy task of finding an appropriate methodology that would best help me find out why art education in elementary schools is, or is not, expendable. The process was hardly linear and, at times, I wondered if I would ever find the ‘right’ one. I looked at two methodological approaches in my search, ethnography and case study, because they focus on people. Woods (1986) sees ethnography as ‘helping to close the gulf between researcher and teacher, educational research and educational practice’ (p. 4). I wanted to bridge that gulf through this study not only to help local teachers implement art education effectively but also to prepare pre-service teachers for their future classrooms.

Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson (1995) see ethnography as a method where the researcher, who is part of the social world being studied, collects data about the subjects’ daily lives by watching, listening, and asking in order to illuminate the research issue. Although I am a university lecturer, I come from the world of classroom teachers and spent most of my career there. I wanted to gain insight into the current state of art education in local classrooms, through data collection, to update and inform my knowledge and practice. Ethnography, according to Paul Atkinson, Amanda Coffey, Sara Delamont, John Lofland, and Lyn Lofland (2001), is not limited to the exploration of data gathered via observation; it can also include information from conversations, interviews, and visual and textual materials. My primary sources for this study were interview transcripts but I wanted to support, or question, them with other materials, such as student artwork, textbooks, and other resources. Juliet Goldbart and David Hustler (2005) suggest that ethnography is about how people understand their worlds and the researcher’s role is as a ‘human instrument’ (p. 6); that is, he or she gathers information from participants and interprets their meanings in order to obtain understanding. As the ‘human instrument’ for this study, I hoped to gain insights into how local generalist teachers understood art education in their worlds. I wanted to add to my understanding as to what impacts art education in their classrooms so that the information could inform my practice as a university lecturer.

Another approach I considered was the case study. According to Sheila Stark and Harry Torrance (2005), it is an in-depth study of 'social reality' (p. 33) focused on one case (a specific participant or location) rather than the coverage of many, although I am aware that not all would take this line. Like ethnography, the case study could help to illuminate an issue.

Both approaches appealed but I chose ethnography because I wanted to find out information from a wide range of teachers from a variety of locations. Although my focus was a specific region of Ontario, I hoped that my findings could be generalised for a wider area (the rest of Ontario and perhaps beyond). After I looked into ethnography further, I chose what Richardson (1997) and Goldbart and Hustler (2005) call critical ethnography because it might help me to see a bigger picture from the results of this local study. For Goldbart and Hustler, critical ethnography works from the micro to the macro; that is, information gained from study participants could inform larger groups and stakeholders. Teachers' perspectives, for example, could inform education policymakers at local, provincial, national, and international levels. Ethnographers Joe Kincheloe and Peter McLaren (2000) state that the time is right for critical ethnographical studies because of the global capitalistic influence on education. They suggest that researchers look at how neo-liberalism affects education in an effort to

locate their work in a transformative praxis that leads to the alleviation of suffering and the overcoming of oppression ... [to create] ... hope in an age of cynical reason. (p. 303)

I hoped to place my study 'in a transformative praxis' to enlighten some of the anti-art-education voices discussed in chapter three. Sociologist Norman Denzin (2000) adds that the practice of critical ethnography develops moral compassion, raises awareness, promotes meaningful judgement, strengthens communities, and encourages democratic action. By taking a critical ethnographic approach in this study, I could make the voices of the participants accessible to a wide audience in an effort to find ways to combat art's expendability, both locally and beyond.

My supervisor once asked me if it was action research that I wanted to do. Action research, based on the definition Susan Noffke and Bridget Somekh (2005) provide, was interesting to me:

Instead of being research *on* a social setting and the people within it, it is research *from inside* that setting carried out either by the participants themselves or researchers working in collaboration with them. It has an immediate impact since it is an integral part of day-to-day work. (p. 89)

I would have enjoyed the opportunity to work beside elementary teachers, or have the participants carry out the research on a daily basis, over a long period of time. My understanding of this kind of action research, however, did not seem to fit with this study. I saw action research, like Noffke and Somekh, as a way of working on a study from within the world of the participants. My role as a university lecturer inhibited my access to the teachers somewhat; for example, if I were still teaching in an elementary classroom, action research would probably have been my choice. I would have conducted a similar study within my own school environment. As a lecturer, there is some distance from elementary school teachers. This is not necessarily a negative but I thought that this distance would not lend itself well to an action research study. As well, I did not want to place the research entirely in the hands of the participants because I wanted more control of the study, not least because it was a necessary requirement of the doctoral programme. As such, it had to meet certain criteria beyond my control.

Methods

After choosing both a paradigm and methodology, I looked at how I would gather the information. I already had a research journal which I had been using to both collect literature review information and write reflections about the dissertation experience (see detailed discussion of research journal later in this chapter).

I had used phenomenography for my trial study and considered it for the dissertation study. It appealed to me because, according to Ference Marton (2000),

the main strength and promise of phenomenography lies in its rigorous, empirical exploration of the qualitatively different ways in which people experience and conceptualize various phenomena in, and aspects of, the world around us ... (p. 103).

I wanted to look for common and individual meanings and patterns among elementary teachers in order to better understand the overall impact of various issues on art education, rather than exploring and comparing participants' individual experiences exclusively. What I wanted from this study was reminiscent of Richardson's (1997) description of the 'collective story' (p. 32): a collection of

individual voices that tell a similar story, especially those voices (including mine) that are marginalised from the status quo.

Initially, I chose phenomenography, based on the definition provided by Marton (1994):

The empirical study of the limited number of qualitatively different ways in which we experience, conceptualize, understand, apprehend ... various phenomena in and aspects of the world around us. These differing experiences, understandings ... are characterized in terms of categories of description, logically related to each other, and forming hierarchies in relation to given criteria. Such an ordered set of categories of description is called the outcome space of the phenomenon ... in question. (online source)

I liked the concept of finding a 'limited number of qualitatively different ways', or issues, that impact art to make it potentially expendable. I wanted to know not only what these were but also if, and/or how, they were related to each other. I suspected, for example, that effective elementary art education could be affected by curriculum expectations, low funding, and mediocre practice. I did not know, however, the possible hierarchy of relationships among these topics.

American researcher MaryKay Orgill (2002) cautions that phenomenographic results do not claim to represent the truth but that they are useful. The 'truth' in any qualitative study depends on what the participants understand to be true, as Jardine et. al. (2006) suggest in their definition of epistemology (see earlier in this chapter). What the participants know as truth is valid for that reason. I wanted to know the 'truths' about art education in north-eastern Ontario elementary schools and doing a phenomenographical study could give me useful information from the different, unexpected, comparable, and possibly future views of the central research issue based on the understandings of the participants. I wanted the interview responses to inform my practice to, as New Zealand educationalist Jane Robertson (2003) states, 'challenge the familiar and taken-for-granted and...draw attention to other ways of thinking and being' (p. 8). I expected my assumptions to be challenged and wanted to learn more about my field of art education through the participants.

After reading both John Bowden and Eleanor Walsh (2000) and Bowden and Pam Green (2005), I found it easier to understand phenomenographic methods in order to make a choice for this study. Developmental phenomenography suited the study better than Marton's (1994) version because I wanted this study to inform not only my practice but also that of others. Change was my goal rather than just collecting information, finding impact categories, and determining an outcome space. I wanted to help the participants recognise possible barriers to art education implementation and help pre-service teachers do the same in their future practice. As well, I wanted to share their perspectives regarding art's place in education with other educators, administrators, and policymakers.

Trial study lessons

In order to understand developmental phenomenography better, I carried out a trial study to practise data collection and analysis methods. Its focus was novice generalist elementary teachers' past and present experiences with art education and how these experiences may affect future planning and implementation of art lessons. The process of undertaking the trial study was helpful to me as a novice interpretive researcher. I found that, although I had some difficulty shedding my past quantitative baggage, the freedom of asking open-ended questions and letting the participants talk me through their experiences was inspiring. The process of finding commonalities among the participants' experiences as well as focusing on individual stories was interesting and illuminating. Although their stories were informative, the point of the trial study, for me, was its application to a larger group (future pre-service teachers). That is why the added element of informing practice that is part of developmental phenomenography was attractive.

I did, however, find that developmental phenomenography was not enough on its own to help me find out what I wanted from the trial study; for example, I only had information from the interviews (body language), audio tapes (emphasis, inflections), and the transcripts (verbatim text). I did not have the opportunity to see and interview the participants in their classrooms. It was this last concern that led me to choose classroom observation as part of the dissertation study. According to British researchers Liz Jones and Bridget Somekh (2005), '... [observation] entails being present in a situation and making a record of one's

impressions of what takes place' (p. 138). My plan for the dissertation study interviews was to conduct them in the teachers' classrooms in order to make notations regarding art samples, resources, displays, and any other relevant information. I did not plan to see art lessons in action because I did not want to see 'canned lessons'; that is, those prepared especially for my visit rather than more natural ones. As well, I did not want participants to feel they were being 'assessed'.

The participants

The central research issue, the expendability of art education in north-eastern Ontario elementary schools, could have involved a wide range of stakeholders (learners, teachers, administrators, support staff, parents). My focus, however, was the teachers because they are the ones who implement art education. Although I had access to art policy documents and literature related to the topic of art education expendability, interviewing practitioners was more meaningful to me because I could learn much about their beliefs, values, interests, and needs related to teaching visual arts to their students. According to Patricia Clifford and Sharon Friesen (1993),

Often excluded in the past, the voices of teachers and children are being welcomed as ones that can inform both theory and practice in unique ways. For it is teachers who spend their daily lives in the presence of children; teachers who are better placed than anyone to see what can happen when they begin to think differently about their work with children; teachers who can make change happen. (pp. 356-357)

For me, the best way to understand the central research issue was to interview those who were in the classroom and who faced elementary art education issues on a regular basis. From understanding their explicit meanings of art education and what makes it potentially expendable, I could make better judgements of what impacts art education and, perhaps, how to encourage positive change in its implementation. I also hoped that the interviewees would learn something from the interview content so that they could reflect on their practice to make positive art education changes in their classrooms.

The dissertation study involved 19 elementary teachers from two north-eastern Ontario school boards: the Near North District School Board (see figure seven) and

the Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board (see figure eight). They are both English-speaking publicly-funded school boards; however, the latter is also supported by the Catholic church and its learners must meet additional religious education expectations.

Figure seven: Map of Near North District School Board (OME 2008b, online source)

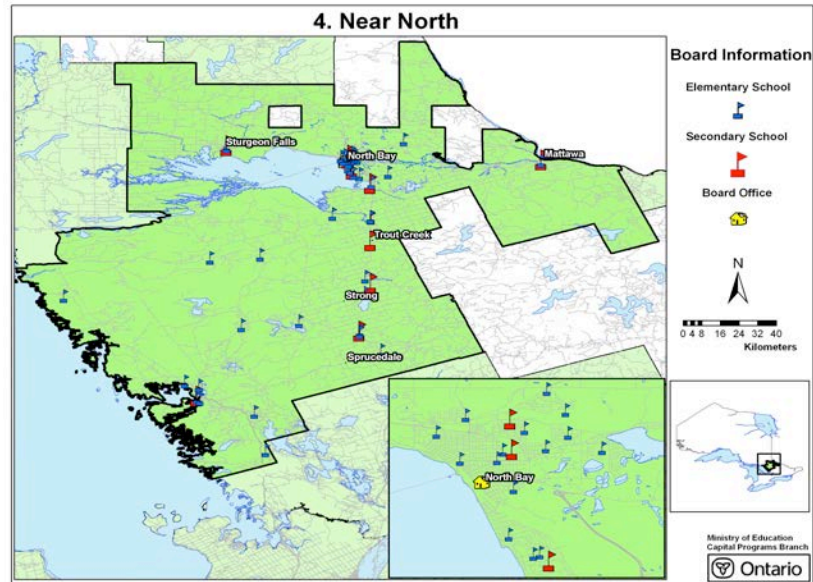
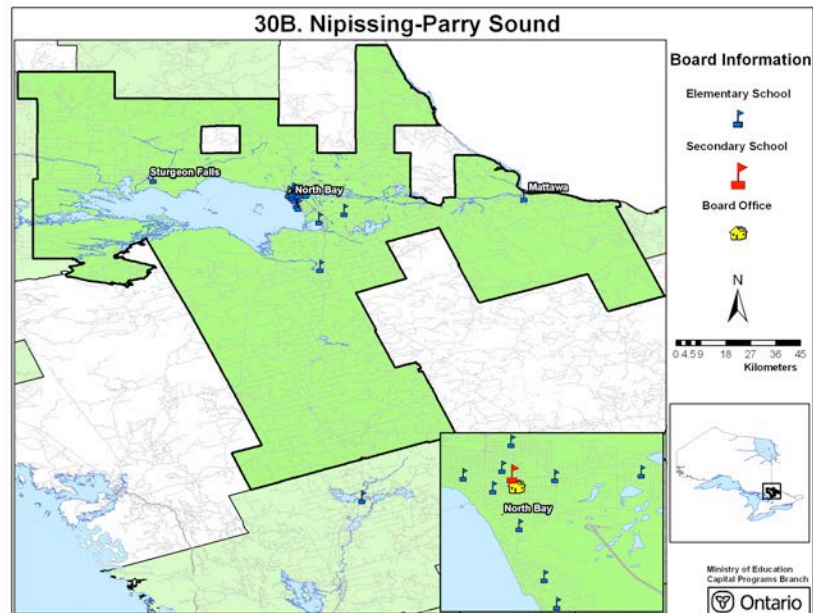


Figure eight: Map of Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board (OME 2008c, online source)



Although I had contacts all over Ontario, I chose to focus this study in one part of north-eastern Ontario, the Near North Region, which encompasses the two aforementioned school boards. This section of Ontario is familiar to me because I have lived and taught in the region for nearly 22 years. Not only was the location convenient for travel to and from interviews but also the local art education needs are different from those in more urban areas. The location of a school, whether it is in an urban or rural setting, could have some impact on art implementation (see ‘Geography and elementary art education in Ontario’ in chapter three). In order to find out what and how much impact that would have, I wanted to interview teachers who taught in urban and rural schools. Both school boards are situated within a region which, according to the Muskoka, Nipissing, Parry Sound Local Training and Adjustment Board (2007) is approximately 23,000 square miles. The region includes the city of North Bay (population 55,000) and several towns and villages (Britt, Burk’s Falls, Callander, Corbeil, Emsdale, MacTier, Magnetawan, Mattawa, Nobel, Parry Sound, Port Loring, Powassan, Redbridge, South River, Sturgeon Falls, Sundridge). Although North Bay is not what would be considered a metropolitan city like Toronto or Ottawa, it is urban in comparison with its satellite communities. Callander, for example, has a population of about 3,200 and Mattawa has approximately 1,500 residents. Both school boards have several elementary schools in North Bay, and at least one in each of its satellite communities. The low number of schools in such a large geographic area, however, means that the schools in the towns and villages are in rural and remote locations. I knew from my teaching experience in the north that access to art galleries and museums, for example, could be problematic for teachers and students in the Near North Region, especially since the two major Canadian art centres, Toronto and Ottawa, are both about 225 miles away. I thought that this distance issue, among others, may have some impact on the quality of art education offered in local schools.

There were four local school boards⁸ from which to choose for this study but I selected the two aforementioned ones because their language of correspondence

⁸ The four local school boards are Conseil Scolaire Catholique Franco-Nord (French/Catholic), Conseil Scolaire Public de Nord-est de l’Ontario (French/Public), Near North District School Board (English/Public), Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board (English/Catholic).

and instruction was English and they had the largest populations of teachers. I felt that I could have more variety among teachers and their representative schools if I asked for volunteers from the two larger boards. The Near North District School Board, for example, has 36 elementary schools with over 8,000 students and employs nearly 350 full- and part-time teachers (OME 2008b). The Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board has 13 elementary schools, with over 2,300 students and nearly 150 full- and part-time teachers (OME 2008c). I knew that from such a large group of schools and teachers there might be a strong likelihood of wide variation in ideas regarding the central research issue.

Snapshot six:

'Now, Liz. You know what they are going to say. Besides, art has always been on the margins. It has always been that way'.

This was the answer to my question, 'Can I have permission to interview teachers in your board regarding the state of art education in elementary schools?'. The response was made by a senior administrator with one of the school boards involved in this study and it troubled me greatly. It affirmed my suspicions about how tones can be set not only in individual schools but also at higher levels of administration. In fact, when I heard it, my first thought was to change my dissertation topic entirely and give up the idea of finding out why art education is expendable. In retrospect, I am happy that I pursued my topic and heard the stories of classroom teachers rather than being turned away by a patronising remark from a supervisory officer.

Ethical approval was sought from the University of Glasgow and the Superintendents of both school boards (see Appendices A, B, C) and, on gaining this, I contacted 43 elementary Principals and acting administrators by mail (see Appendix D): 30 from the Near North District School Board and 13 from the Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board. In the letters, I introduced myself, described the study briefly, and asked them to contact me with suggestions as to how best to invite volunteers from among their teachers, especially those with at least a few years' teaching experience and who were not art specialists. I wanted to interview practitioners who had been teaching at least five years in order to get

an idea if, and how, recent provincial and local initiatives had impacted art education since the last OME arts curriculum change in 1998. I also wanted to interview those who were not art specialists because I wanted to find out from generalist teachers what impacts art education when art is not their specialty. A purpose of this study was to inform my practice and, because the majority of my pre-service teachers were generalists and had little or no formal art training, I wanted the interviewees to have similar backgrounds.

I did not contact the Principals of the senior elementary schools⁹ because their art teachers were specialists and had much formal art training. This decision could be a form of what British educationalist Kelvyn Jones (2005) calls ‘selection bias’ (p. 242) and I debated making it. That kind of bias is a positivist, quantitative term and refers to a threat to internal validity. According to educationalist Nahid Golafshani (2003), such terms need new definitions for qualitative studies and she suggests research quality depends on the generalisability of the results. One reason for this study was to inform my practice when I prepare generalist teachers so the focus of the volunteer search should be among generalists with the exclusion of specialists. The generalist participants’ views could be generalisable for that reason (see details later in this chapter and in chapters five and six regarding reliability).

Within a week of sending the letters, four Principals contacted me and asked me to send a sign-up sheet (see Appendix E) that they would circulate among their teachers. The sign-up sheet included some information about the study; however, I was careful in its wording regarding what I was looking for in the interviews. It stated only that the interviews would be about art education; there was no mention about what impacts it in the classroom or about its potential expendability.

Although life history researcher Jacquie Aston (2001) recommends disclosure as an essential way to create a ‘sense of trust and mutuality’ (p. 147), I chose not to disclose too much about the details of the study for two reasons: I did not want the volunteers to get any preliminary ideas as to what they would be asked because I wanted only gut reactions and not preconceived answers; I felt that their responses to my questions would be more open as a result. As well, I did not want to scare

⁹ Senior elementary schools in Ontario are for grades seven and eight (ages 12 and 13) only.

away volunteers, especially if they knew I would be asking questions about challenges they face; for example, influence of Principals, school boards, and the OME.

Although the initial response to my letters to the Principals was quick, the teachers were slow to respond. By December 2008, I had only four volunteers and had to make follow-up phone calls to Principals to ask permission to send sign-up sheets to the schools from which I had not heard. American academics Herbert and Irene Rubin (2005) suggest that interviewers use social networks in order to find interviewees. I had taught in one of the school boards (Near North District School Board) and knew several Principals with whom I had taught and/or had taken Master of Education courses. My follow-up phone calls went to them first and, as a result, six more teachers contacted me to be interviewed. The rest of the participants' names came from suggestions by other interviewees; for example, after their interviews, they recommended other teachers who would be worth interviewing. According to Rubin and Rubin (2005), volunteers agree to be part of a study because they see themselves as being helpful, especially if they know the interviewer comes from a similar background. They are also more willing to participate if they know their involvement is voluntary. When I contacted these recommended teachers individually, I did so avoiding coercion. I mentioned that I had been a local teacher, that I needed their help to do a study about art education in their schools, and that the interviews would be confidential. As a result of that contact and explanation, all agreed to be part of the study. They read the plain language statement (see Appendix F) and signed the consent form (see Appendix G) before each interview.

In total, there were 17 female and two male volunteers from 14 schools: 11 from the public board and eight from the Catholic board (see table one). 16 of the volunteers were full-time teachers and three taught part-time (ranging from .6 to .8 contracts). They taught at both urban and rural schools in the region; for example, seven taught within the city of North Bay and the rest were spread out in satellite communities. In table one, I also included what grades/ages they taught. Australian researcher Lyn Richards (2005) recommends this 'descriptive coding' (p. 88) and I felt it could be helpful during the data analysis and interpretation

phases of the study. The ages of the students taught, for example, could affect teachers' attitudes towards art education in general. Teachers may not take elementary art seriously so younger students may not be as challenged in art as older ones. The schools' urban or rural locations could impact access to art resources and/or opportunities to travel to galleries and museums. The combined grades may also make a difference with regard to available time for optional subjects. I also included the school boards for which each volunteer worked in case I wanted to compare the board findings later. Both school boards, for example, requested executive summaries of the study so comparative information could be helpful to them.

Table one: Descriptive coding one (pre-interview)

Pseudonym	Current Grades (ages of students)	School Board (Contract)	Location
Meme	Gr. 4 (age 9)	Catholic (full-time)	Rural
Ace	K-Gr. 1 (ages 5-6)	Catholic (full-time)	Urban
Lee	Gr. 3-4 (ages 8-9)	Public (full-time)	Rural
Trinity	Gr. 7 (age 12)	Public (part-time)	Rural
Dreamer	Gr. 3-4 (ages 8-9)	Public (full-time)	Urban
Sophie	Gr. 3-6 (ages 8-11)	Catholic (full-time)	Rural
Joe	Gr. 3 (age 8)	Catholic (full-time)	Urban
Mary	JK-Gr. 6 (ages 4-11)	Public (full-time)	Rural
Sharon	Gr. 2 (age 7)	Public (full-time)	Rural
Kelly	Gr. 3 (age 8)	Public (full-time)	Rural
Melanie	Gr. 8 (age 13)	Catholic (full-time)	Rural
Alice	Gr. 4 (age 9)	Public (full-time)	Rural
Caley	Gr. 7-8 (ages 12-13)	Public (full-time)	Rural
Doreen	Gr. 4-5 (ages 9-10)	Public (part-time)	Urban
Renée	Gr. 5-6 (ages 10-11)	Catholic (full-time)	Rural
Red	Gr. 4-5 (ages 9-10)	Catholic (full-time)	Urban
Lori	Gr. 3 (age 8)	Public (full-time)	Urban
Laura	Gr. 2 (age 7)	Catholic (part-time)	Urban
Andie	JK-SK (ages 4-5)	Public (full-time)	Rural

The names in table one are all pseudonyms. When I met with each interviewee, I asked him or her to provide a pseudonym of choice for me to use instead of his or her real name. I did this to protect their identities not only from my supervisor and examiners but also, and more importantly, from the volunteers' administrators. The participants chose pseudonyms that were very different from their real names; however, the two male volunteers were unique in their boards (one with 30 years'

elementary teaching experience and one who taught in a specialised programme) and could be identifiable. That said, both have since retired from their school boards. I had hoped to have more volunteers for the study, especially given the number of elementary teachers (approximately 500 full- and part-time teachers) within the two participating school boards. According to phenomenographers Janice Morse (1994), Keith Trigwell (1994, 2000), and John Bowden (2005), between six and 50 participants is appropriate when conducting interview studies. For phenomenography, Trigwell (2000) suggests that less than 10 participants could mean a narrow range of variation among their responses and more than 20 could be problematic due to the high volume of information from transcripts, the primary source of phenomenographic research. He also states that the optimal number of participants occurs when there is information saturation; that is, when the interviewees start saying the same things and no new information is presented.

As part of my research into methods options and numbers of participants, I read several studies (Franz et. al. 1997, Patrick 1998, Rovio-Johansson 1999, Yan 1999, Wong 2001, McKenzie 2003, Åkerlind 2005, Bowden et. al. 2005, Page 2007). I noted that the number of participants within these studies ranged from 14 to 45. I read again Marton's (1994) definition of phenomenography where he states it is 'the empirical study of the limited number of qualitatively different ways in which various phenomena ... are experienced' (online source). I thought that the numbers of participants in a couple of the studies I had read were hardly limited (40 and 45) so I decided to start my study with the 19 volunteers. I felt that 19 would be a good number for local generalisability and, if I needed more, I could find other participants. I maintained, too, that it was what I did with the data that would matter rather than how many participants I could number.

There was some apprehension among the participants regarding answering questions about art education and this could have been why so few signed up for the study. I also suspect that the busy nature of being a teacher contributed to this problem. When I made follow-up phone calls to Principals, a few apologised to me and said that they had lost the letter I had sent to them. This last point confirmed my suspicions that many teachers were not aware of the study. Despite these hurdles, I managed to find a variety of participants, with a variety of teaching

experiences, from a variety of schools. As the sign-up sheets and e-mails arrived, I looked at the names to make sure that the volunteers were strangers to me; that is, those with whom I had never worked or had taught. Educational psychologist Steinar Kvale (1996) suggests that interviewers consider their role as researcher in order to maintain professional distance. Whilst I was not seeking objectivity, this distance was important to me because I wanted the participants' responses to be as open as possible. I did not want them to feel obliged to volunteer for the study, either from some previous connection to me or from pressure from their Principals. During the volunteer process, I had a concern regarding variety of participants. Until several weeks into the sign-up process, no male teachers had volunteered to be interviewed. In retrospect, the absence of male volunteers should not have surprised me because, according to Brian Jamieson (2007) of the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT), less than 20% of elementary teachers in Ontario are male. I wanted to have a variety of voices for the dissertation study data for local generalisability and the two male volunteers, Joe and Caley, who eventually contacted me were, therefore, welcome additions.

When I first made contact with the participants, and explained that I was doing a study on art education in north-eastern Ontario elementary schools, I was surprised that there was universal apprehension. I thought the problem was my occupation and what Rubin and Rubin (2005) identify as the role of the professor/lecturer: 'professors evaluate people and judge what they do not know, and that way they are seen as threatening' (p. 85). After I asked the participants about that apprehension, it seemed that it did not stem from my position at the university. Most said that they would feel awkward talking about art because they were uncomfortable teaching it. They all apologised to me about their lack of art knowledge and questioned my desire to interview them. In fact, many of them suggested that I interview art specialists that they knew in their school boards. I replied that I wanted to interview 'the average elementary teacher'; that is, someone who is a generalist and not an art specialist. I explained that I teach pre-service generalists so I wanted to interview in-service generalists in order to inform my practice. Joe told me that he was somewhat comfortable talking about teaching art but his apprehension was based more on fear of sharing his thoughts within earshot of his Principal. I was surprised by this because he had the most teaching experience of

all the volunteers and was close to retirement. I wondered if his request was a result of the current culture of accountability in education and, when I asked him about this possibility, he refused to discuss it. He was adamant that his interview be conducted away from his school so I accommodated his request by interviewing him at my office.

According to Hammersley and Atkinson (1995), access to data can be a problem for researchers. Entry to settings, relationships, and impression management, for example, can be hurdles for researchers and negative experiences may cause problems for future research projects. Fortunately, the few difficulties I had gaining access to teachers were overcome easily. Throughout the data collection process, I built and nurtured positive professional relationships with the participants through e-mail messages and telephone conversations. They seemed to need to talk and I answered their questions about not only the study but also art education ideas and internet links to help them with planning, implementation, and assessment. Through this contact, they seemed to have a good impression of me and many indicated that they would like to keep in touch for future studies and workshops.

Scheduling the interviews

Marton (1994) suggests that the best way to collect data in any phenomenographic study is the unstructured individual interview. When I conducted the trial study interviews, I did them individually because I wanted each participant to have their time to 'shine'. It was easy to do individual interviews because there were only four participants in that study. I had thought of doing group interviews with the dissertation study participants but chose instead to interview them individually. There were only 19 participants so it was still a good number to organise individual meetings. Another reason for choosing individual interviews over group ones was based on British researchers Rosaline Barbour and John Schostak's (2005) comments regarding potential problems with group interviews. These include power issues among group members that can lead to some voices not being heard. It would also raise confidentiality issues, especially if the elementary teachers were from the same school or school board. I also wanted free-range data without the influence of others within the interview setting. I, therefore, opted for individual meetings for the dissertation study because I wanted each participant to feel

comfortable saying what they wanted in response to my questions and to know that their identities were safe. Only one participant seemed to be suspicious of me. During her interview, Sharon was about to tell me her thoughts on the OME (1998) arts document when she asked, *'Do you work for the Ministry of Education?'*. When I replied that I did not, she continued with her comments and seemed more relaxed when doing so. Her question seemed to reflect Kvale's (1996) discussion of the ethics of interview consequences; for example, Sharon seemed suspicious as to the reasons behind the questions and the uses of her answers. When I assured her of my personal research motives and confidentiality, she then seemed willing to share much about her experiences with art education.

I knew that it would be more time-consuming to meet with the participants individually instead of in groups and it meant that I needed significant time in order to coordinate interviews around the teachers' varied schedules and locations within the region. I wanted to make the interview process as comfortable as possible so I was willing to travel to meet with the interviewees, either in their schools or in alternate locations of their choice. I had hoped to meet with each participant for at least two interviews and, when I asked them about scheduling, I was disappointed to hear their unanimous response: they would have time for only one interview. Between report cards, parent-teacher interviews, coaching, holiday concerts, and everything else they do outside of class time, the response was understandable. The logistics of conducting the interviews meant that each interview required at least an hour; for example, time for introductions, setting up the recording equipment, training the software for voice recognition, asking the questions, listening to and recording the responses, and putting away the equipment.

Another hurdle was distance. Although most of the teachers who volunteered for the study both lived and worked within the city of North Bay and could stay after school to participate in the interviews, some were in schools in satellite communities several miles away. All of the volunteers in the latter group carpooled to and from work so they could not stay after school. The interviews, therefore, had to take place during their short preparation periods (30 to 40 minutes) during the school day. As well, the round-trip driving time for me at that time of year (winter) made traveling difficult to conduct one interview per teacher, let alone two

or three. Rubin and Rubin (2005) discuss the pros and cons of telephone interviews and their consensus is to use them only if face-to-face meetings are impossible or only after at least one in-person interview has been done. I could have done the first interview in person and the others by telephone but I wanted to use the transcripts for my primary data source and did not have the software to record them properly by telephone. As well, I would have missed out on observation opportunities during follow-up interviews.

The interview questions

Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) and Rubin and Rubin (2005) recommend having different questions for each interviewee but I felt that, if I wanted to find out what impacts art education among a group of 19 interviewees, then I would need to ask them all the same broad questions. Beyond those few core items, each interview question could be tailored to each participant's responses. According to Marton (1994), '[m]ost questions follow from what the subject says. The point is to establish the phenomenon as experienced and to explore its different aspects ... as fully as possible' (online source). The initial questions for the interviews were the same for each participant and they were open-ended; that is, they were general questions that allowed the interviewees to expand on multiple tangents related to the central research issue. As suggested by Kvale (1996) and Maxwell (2005), when I created the main interview questions, I kept the guiding questions from chapter one in mind: Why is art education important, or not, for students, educators, parents, and other stakeholders? Is art jettisoned in favour of implementing other policies and curricular subjects? Do teachers use other programmes and initiatives as an excuse not to teach art? How do teachers feel about teaching art? Is art expendable?. I did this in order to make a strong link between my central research issue and the interview process; both the main and probing questions could help me explore different aspects of elementary art education and its potential expendability.

Each interview began with a question regarding the participant's teaching background, followed by ones related directly to the research issue, and ended with one to encourage extra thoughts on the topic:

1. First, by way of context, please tell me about your current job and a little about your history as a teacher.
2. Based on your experiences so far, what does art education mean to you?
3. Can you give me a concrete example of what you do that you feel exemplifies what art education means to you?
4. How would you compare your experiences teaching art now with teaching it earlier in your career?
5. What do you feel you need as a classroom teacher regarding support for art education?
6. Before we finish, is there anything you would like to add that you haven't already mentioned?

These questions were like zoom lenses on the central research issue because they could provide wide and narrow views. I designed them so that the interviewees could draw upon their own experiences and how they understood them, rather than from what others, like me, had to say about art education. The purpose of question one was to find out basic facts about the teacher; for example, what grade(s)/age(s) he or she was teaching and how many years of teaching experience he or she had. This information could be important to interpret possible contexts for each participant's art-education-oriented responses later. Question two was designed to help establish each interviewee's basic concepts of what art is, or is not; for example, the interviewee could respond that it is fine arts, or crafts, or both, or something else entirely. He or she could also combine all of the arts (dance, drama, music, visual arts) into his or her perceptions of art education. The third question was a way of getting more details about question two, with emphasis on specific visual arts projects that the participants currently do, or have done, with their students. The purpose of question four was to have the participants look beyond recent practice and compare it with their art education practices related to OME art curriculum changes over time; for example, if there had been any changes to how they planned, implemented, and/or assessed art. Question five addressed perceptions of support from various sources; for example, how the interviewees perceived support from their administrators, school boards, and provincial policy makers. The last question gave each volunteer an opportunity to reflect on his or her responses to earlier questions and expand on any part of the interview.

During the trial study, I asked too many surface questions when I should have asked more probing ones in order to encourage the interviewees to dig deeper into their feelings about their experiences. For the dissertation study, I focused on better ways of asking probing questions, which can act like telephoto lenses to get a narrow view of the topic. I had a list of these questions (see Appendix H) from which to draw, if needed, in order to encourage each participant to expand his or her answers. For question two, for example, the probes were, ‘What sort of things do you do when you teach art?’, ‘What are you trying to achieve when you teach art?’, and ‘How do you feel about teaching art?’. According to Rubin and Rubin (2005), these probes function as a way to get the participant to go into more detail about the question. The first probe required the interviewee to provide a list of art activities, the second referred to goals when teaching art, and the third delved into comfort issues. These probes helped my understanding of the participants’ meanings of what art education is, or is not, and addressed potential comfort issues with teaching the subject. I found that I needed to ask most of these probing questions during the interviews in order to help each participant dig deeper into their memories and feelings about art education.

Bias issues

During the early stages of the study, when I was narrowing the research issue, I wrote possible related topics in my research journal. They included ‘expectation overload’, ‘subject comfort issues’, ‘budget reductions’, ‘time constraints’, ‘perceived hierarchy of subjects’, ‘lack of accountability for art in performance appraisals’, ‘literacy/numeracy/ character initiatives’, ‘standardised testing’, and ‘physical environment problems’. Like those for my trial study, these topics were based on my art education experiences and reading. Although these preconceived topics were in my mind during the interviews, I tried to avoid mentioning them during the interviews because I did not want to steer the interviewees towards any of those topics. I did not, for example, mention literacy, numeracy, or any other initiatives that could interfere with art lessons, unless the participant introduced those topics. As recommended by Rubin and Rubin (2005), I asked them to expand on those topics by asking probing questions such as, ‘Could you please tell me more about [that topic]?’ By doing this, I attempted to keep my professional

distance but also, following Richards' (2005) suggestions, I wanted the participants to generate the topics for the study.

In order to accomplish this, I resolved to try to keep my biases, as Eleanor Walsh (2000) recommends, 'bracketed' (p. 30); that is, out of the interview questions and data analysis. British researchers Peter Ashworth and Ursula Lucas (2000) state that a way to achieve bracketing is to employ empathy to avoid presuppositions during both data collection and analysis: 'empathy requires a detachment from the researcher's lifeworld and an opening up to the lifeworld of the [participant]' (p. 299). In a perfect world that would be easy. In an attempt to be empathetic and deter bias, I decided to practise their guidelines for conducting a bracketed study:

- i. understand that the meaning of art education would be very different between and among the participants,
- ii. try to have no preconceptions about the participants,
- iii. give them much freedom when responding to my questions,
- iv. review and change my interview techniques when needed,
- v. make sure the transcriptions are accurate,
- vi. be empathetic when conducting the data analysis, and
- vii. be clear about my data collection and analysis processes.

Throughout the interview process, I tried to follow their suggestions; for example, I gave the interviewees a broad idea of the study and added details about the central research issue only if they asked for more information. I did this because I did not want them to tell me what they thought I wanted to hear; I wanted their honest thoughts and opinions. Later, I looked at Ashworth and Lucas' (2000) analysis suggestions for guidance during that segment of the study (see chapter five).

Kvale (1996) states, 'the interview ... is neither an objective nor a subjective method – its essence is intersubjective interaction' (p. 66). Dutch researcher Ilja Maso (2001) supports this idea by stating that bracketing is a myth because of the impossibility of separating the researcher's experience and interpretations. I wanted to conduct comfortable conversational interviews and I wanted to be professional. I knew that detachment would be difficult because the central research issue was important to me both professionally and personally. As well, I had taught in one of the school boards chosen for this study. I tried to keep my opinions buried not only about art education in general but also about current school board practices during both the data collection process and in all

correspondence with administrators and participants. I have been told that I have a 'glass face' so this was difficult for me, especially when I met with the participants, Principals, and other stakeholders.

Data collection

The data collection segment of this study was similar to a photo shoot. When I left my office at the university and drove to the schools to meet and interview the participants, I felt the same excitement as when I head out to take pictures. Similar to my photography routines, my equipment was ready, my subjects were chosen, and my notebook was in hand. I recorded the interviews using my two laptops, which was much like recording images on film. As well, I observed details of my surroundings and made notes in my research journal.

Conducting and recording the interviews

I visited the interviewees, during or after the school day, for a maximum of 60 minutes each. The interviews ranged in time from 25 minutes to one hour, depending on each volunteer's availability for the interview. Despite the limited time for each interview, I felt that I had enough time to ask the main and probing questions and for individuals to answer those questions fully. After each interview, when I asked the participants if I could contact them later regarding more questions, all were agreeable.

All of the interviews were audio-recorded, with the permission of the participants, using a laptop computer loaded with *Audacity 1.2.6* (Sourceforge 2006) and most were automatically transcribed using a headset microphone linked to another laptop loaded with *Dragon Naturally Speaking 8.1* (DNS) (Nuance 2007). The former is audio-recording and editing software that records sound bites in 12-second intervals and the latter is a speech-to-text tool which transcribes language spoken into a microphone and displays it on a computer screen using Microsoft Word. Both were chosen because of their accessibility and user-friendliness. As well, *Audacity* was a good back-up for DNS in case there were transcription problems. Before I conducted the interviews, I loaded DNS with education- and art-education-specific words and phrases such as 'curriculum', 'Discipline-Based Art Education', and 'visual culture studies' in order to expand its vocabulary and improve its

transcription accuracy. Even though I had pre-loaded several words and phrases to customise its vocabulary, DNS did not recognise several words and phrases during the interviews and invented some of its own to replace them. I checked the transcripts against the audio-recording software and edited them so that they matched what the interviewees actually said. By doing this, I was also able to indicate pauses, sounds, and word emphasis using proper punctuation. Once I checked the transcripts for accuracy, I sent each participant a copy of the edited transcript, by e-mail, as recommended by Woods (1986), for verification. I highlighted any words that were unclear from the recording and asked them to verify what was said. The only changes suggested by some interviewees were clarification areas when both the audio- and speech-to-text software did not record subtle comments.

I did not like the tedious nature of the transcription process but I did enjoy listening to the interview recordings. I felt like I was with the participants again, enjoying their company, sharing their laughter, and sympathising with their challenges. I think the interviewees liked the fact that someone was listening to those concerns. They reminded me of that same feeling of frustration when I was a classroom teacher when I felt that no one was listening to my concerns: not my colleagues, not my administrators, not my students' parents. For the first few minutes of each interview, I sensed some tension, perhaps due to some nervousness to share their feelings about art with a stranger but most of them relaxed as each interview went on. Overall, they seemed to feel comfortable sharing their thoughts about external and internal forces that impact art education and were open about the challenges of teaching art. I also liked the satisfaction of finishing the transcripts, sending them to the participants by e-mail, and later reading their thoughts about the interview and transcription processes via their responses to those e-mails.

Making observations

Of the 19 participants, 12 agreed to be interviewed in their classrooms. I, therefore, had the opportunity to see most of them in their teaching environments, plus view resources available to them and examples of art projects done by their students. A few interviewees suggested that I photograph their students' artwork for use not only as visuals for this study but also as exemplars for pre-service teachers.

Although I intended this to be a phenomenographic study where interview transcripts are, according to Marton (1994) and Bowden (2000), supposed to be the primary sources of data, I found that these classroom observation opportunities were helpful to support, and even contrast, what was said in the interviews. To me, they were just as important as the transcript data to illuminate the central research issue.

Throughout the study, I kept a journal, as recommended by Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) and Altrichter and Holly (2005), to help me organise my thoughts. I also used it to take field notes before, during, and after the interviews. These notes included contextual information about the location, participants' body language, and art-related displays and resources: what Altrichter and Holly (2005) call 'descriptive sequences' (p. 25). These contained rich details about the teaching and learning environments related to the study.

As suggested by Jones and Somekh (2005), and with the permission of the participants, I did some 'unstructured observation' (p. 140) by making notes in my research journal regarding my impressions of each classroom. I used my 'lenses' and 'filters' of personal and professional experience when scanning the room for evidence of art activities and resources. I wrote details about the physical space, the people, the objects, and my feelings while in the classrooms and took some photos of classroom displays that included static items such as artwork, bulletin boards, and books. I thought that the photos could be helpful to remind me of the details of each classroom during the data analysis phase.

American sociologists Robert Emerson, Rachel Fretz, and Linda Shaw (2001) caution that field notes are more representative than fully accurate because of their selective and interpretive nature. I was selective when writing notes in my research journal and taking photographs; for example, I paid particular attention to what may impact art education in these classrooms, based on my assumptions and readings, rather than writing descriptions of every classroom detail or taking photos of all items in each room. I felt that my selectiveness was justified as my focus for the central research issue was on art education specifically and not on education in general.

Reading related documents

For this study, the interview transcripts and classroom observations were my main sources of information. Woods (1986) and Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) also recommend that ethnographers look at both official and personal documents as a way of supporting both interview and observation data. The secondary and tertiary sources for this study, therefore, included OME support documents, local and provincial policies, and classroom resources. All of these sources were helpful to prepare me for the data analysis segment of the study because, as Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) state, they were treated as ‘social products’ (p. 168). They all reflect the society that created them (see ‘Policy and elementary art education in Ontario’ in chapter three).

Although the OME (1998, 2004)¹⁰ arts curriculum documents were my main publications of interest for this study, I wanted to know what other resources local elementary teachers had available, and were using, in their art programmes. A few classrooms had art books on hand as resources for the participants. There was a wide range of books, with no consistency from school to school; for example, mainly craft books for primary level learners, a few older (pre-2000) textbooks, and one specifically about art history (see ‘Resources’ section in chapter five).

When I visited the participants’ schools, I often found free information booklets placed near or in the main office. One school had a basket with OME booklets for parents to take home: *Helping Your Child Do Mathematics: Kindergarten to Grade 6* (OME 2007a) and *Helping Your Child With Reading and Writing: Kindergarten to Grade 6* (OME 2007b). I took them with me to read later and found that they were both excellent handbooks on practical ways to fold literacy and numeracy activities into one’s day. I was happy to find that the latter (OME 2007b) included a section titled, ‘Bring literacy to life through the arts’ (p. 19). It listed several ways in which visual arts could be used to augment literacy such as drawing an idea before writing about it, illustrating stories, and visiting art exhibits. After I read these two booklets, I searched the OME web site (OME 2009b) for other

¹⁰ The OME (1998) arts document includes the grades one to eight (ages six to 13) art curriculum expectations and achievement chart, and the OME (2004) document contains elementary art assessment exemplars.

publications that might help support art education. Of the dozens available for parents, students, teachers, and administrators, there were no documents with any art education focus. The majority were about French language instruction, English as a second language, funding formulae, the provincial report card, school parent councils, daily physical activity minutes, and ideas for ‘greening’ Ontario schools. The only art-related part of the web site was the ‘Student Art Centre’ (OME 2009c), a link devoted to an annual art exhibition by kindergarten to grade 12 (ages four to 17) students in Ontario’s French language schools. I also found it interesting that in the list of approved textbooks for Ontario classrooms (OME 2009d), the message under the ‘arts’ link for both elementary and secondary schools was the same: ‘There are currently no textbooks approved’ (online source). There were several textbooks listed for other subjects but, despite the fact that there are many comprehensive art textbooks currently in print that are appropriate for teaching the Ontario art curriculum, none were listed.

Other data

Although I focused on interview transcripts, classroom observations, and related documents as data sources, I attended to other minor sources that could inform both the study and my practice. At the entrances to the participants’ schools, for example, I noticed bulletin boards for community members to see. Most contained posters about literacy and numeracy initiatives. There were only two schools that had art-related posters hanging in their halls. These posters advertised summer art camps for elementary students offered by the city of North Bay, the YMCA, and two local public galleries.

During my school visits, I had the opportunity to have informal conversations with a few Principals regarding policies and procedures; for example, I asked about budgets for art supplies, who ordered these supplies, and where they were stored. I also asked about budgets for art education professional development (PD) opportunities. They were happy to provide information and I found out from these Principals that there was an elementary coordinator for each school board. I made appointments with these coordinators to collect more data and hoped to find, from them, school board perspectives on local art education.

When I met with the elementary coordinators for both school boards, I found their perspectives were similar. I appreciated their openness when they admitted that there had been few PD activities for visual arts and that the focus was usually on literacy, numeracy, and special education. Their explanation was that school boards receive no money from the OME for PD in visual arts. Both coordinators told me, however, that their boards created resource binders full of ways elementary teachers could integrate visual arts into literacy initiatives. When I looked at the binders, all activities integrated art with other subjects, especially language. There were no activities for teaching visual arts skills specifically.

There were some differences between the school boards' support for art education. Within the Near North District School Board, for example, each elementary school has an arts liaison person assigned by the Principal. I then asked what duties they performed and the coordinator said, *'They are supposed to attend meetings with me, share the information with their colleagues, and organise arts-related field trips'*. When I asked about specific events, she told me that most field trips were to plays performed within North Bay and musicals in Toronto. No gallery or museum visits, to her knowledge, had been made. The coordinator for the Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board said that her Director chose two schools each year to be part of a 'Learning Through the Arts' programme, and that there was one half-day art education workshop each January in which one representative from each school could participate. When I asked how the PD information was sent to schools, she told me that all communication goes through the Principals and then teachers could choose if and how they would participate.

I also asked the coordinators about the locations and operation of the school boards' resource centres and I took the opportunity to visit each one. My observations of the art resources in both centres were similar: one shelf of art textbooks from the 1980s and 1990s, storage bins of various workbooks and post cards, smaller kits for French-language art instruction and Native art, a few VHS tapes and DVDs focusing on the elements and principles of design and art history, and about 20 large posters of famous works of art. When I asked the resource centre secretaries about the circulation of the art resources, I was told that teachers could have resources for up to three weeks, for free, sent via courier to their schools. Teachers

also had the option of picking up the resources at the centres. The secretaries also expressed disappointment that the art resources were used by few elementary teachers each year. I then asked where teachers could get a list of the resources and was told, for both centres, the catalogues were online.

After gathering data from the participants, their Principals, coordinators, and other school personnel, I decided to ask local art gallery education officers about school use of their spaces. I wanted to know if teachers were not only aware of these local facilities but also how often they used them. I spoke with two of these officers and learned that, in the 2008-2009 school year, only five teachers booked tours at the W.K.P. Kennedy Gallery and none had booked tours at the White Water Gallery. When I asked if the teachers brought in elementary or secondary level students, the education officer from the Kennedy Gallery said that two groups were from elementary schools.

Summary

Once the planning and field work were finished, I looked forward to the next phase of the study: data analysis. Although I began the data collection using transcripts as my primary sources, I chose to expand my research to include observation, related documents, and informal conversations with tangential sources. I did this in order to practise critical ethnography by looking at a wider range of sources that could help illuminate the central research issue better through interpretation. American sociologist Jim Thomas (1993) calls data interpretation the ‘defamiliarization process’ (p. 43); that is, when a researcher takes the information and interprets it into something new. Like photography as a re-presentation of reality, so, too, is data analysis. According to Thomas,

Defamiliarization is a way of distancing ourselves from the taken-for-granted aspect of what we see and allowing us to view what we have seen more critically. (p. 43)

In chapters five and six, I discuss the analysis details and move towards a critical view of the data through its interpretation.

CHAPTER FIVE

Into The Darkroom



Introduction

Snapshot seven:

During my five years in the University of Glasgow Doctor of Education programme, I took many flights to and from Britain. As I made my connections, I noticed several versions of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC 2005) 'different points of view' (online source) advertising campaign in the air bridges. The advertisements were similar to the group I fabricated above: two sets of identical images with different headings/viewpoints for each item. They made me think of how people can see the same object (or concept, or theory, or subject area) in different ways. No viewpoint is right or wrong. Each has value in its own way.

To me, doing data analysis is like working in a darkroom. Film is processed into negatives that are exposed, developed, and displayed together in a contact sheet. Individual images are chosen from that sheet to be enlarged in order to see their details. Research data, too, are processed into an organised montage from which the researcher chooses topics on which to focus. These topics are then explored and arranged into specific groups that, hopefully, lead to a better understanding of the research issue.

The central research issue for this dissertation is the expendability of elementary art education and that issue, in itself, is an assumption. I needed evidence to find out if that assumption was correct. I wanted to learn what impacted art education in

north-eastern Ontario elementary schools to make it expendable or if indeed it was expendable. I found, however, that the equivalent of choosing images to enlarge was much easier than doing data analysis.

To help me conduct the analysis segment of the study, I looked at several recommended ways of organising and interpreting data. Because I had some limited experience with data analysis from the trial study, I looked first at phenomenographic analysis methods as described by Marton (1994, 2000) and Bowden (2000). They were helpful for making some sense of the interview transcript data but had little to offer to help me interpret the observation notes and related documents.

Woods (1986) offers clear steps for stages of data analysis: i. speculative analysis, ii. classifying and categorising, iii. concept formation, and iv. models and typologies. I used his steps as part of my analysis process by writing my initial reflections of interviews, observations, and related documents in my research journal. I then organised the data into categories and later grouped common data and created diagrams to see relationships among them. Matthew Miles and A. Michael Huberman (1994) provide a sourcebook for qualitative analysis that breaks it into three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Their explanations for each step are clear and I appreciated the many graphic organisers to help me understand the nuances of each step. I later used similar graphic organisers to illustrate data relationships. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) see data analysis in a similar way where, like a funnel, the research issue becomes re-focused and transformed until it can look very different than originally thought. They suggest that researchers start with unstructured data (field notes, transcripts, notations from documents, photographs) then move on to generating concepts via careful reading and scanning of data to make a list of common patterns. They add that researchers should look again at data and categories to refine them into groups and sub-groups to eventually develop maps to show relationships among the categories. They suggest using triangulation to check the findings against other data. For them, the goal is not only to generate theory but also to generate descriptions and explanations because they, too, have value. I liked

their ideas and checked the data often with the interviewees, and others, as a form of triangulation.

As an expansion of triangulation, Richardson (2000) talks about ‘crystallization’ (p. 934) to consider and check the data from many different angles:

The crystal ... combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multidimensionalities, and angles of approach. Crystals grow, change, alter, but are not amorphous. Crystals are prisms that reflect externalities *and* refract within themselves, creating different colors, patterns, and arrays, casting off in different directions. What we see depends on our angle of repose. (p. 934)

I liked her image of a crystal as a way of expanding the concept of triangulation and it sits well with my interpretivist approach in this study. Instead of using only the transcripts as my data, I chose to balance them, first, with data from observations and related documents. Later, I added information from informal conversations with others within and outwith the elementary education arena (Principals, coordinators, classroom support personnel, gallery education officers). By expanding the data from the narrow view of transcripts, I felt that I had a better picture of what impacts art education in local elementary classrooms.

As mentioned in chapter four, I used guidance from Ashworth and Lucas (2000) by trying to be as empathetic as possible both during the interviews and when reading the transcripts and observation notes. I tried, for example, to put myself in the place of generalist teachers, who have little or no background in art education, when I found myself making judgements about their planning, implementation, and assessment practices. I also strove to be as clear as possible when describing the data collection and analysis segments of this study.

In this chapter, I describe the processes by which I conducted the data analysis. I discuss how I blended several data analysis methods in order to, as Richards (2005) suggests, encourage topics from the data sources. I included descriptive coding additions and topic selection processes. With the permission of the participants, I used anonymised quotations from their interviews in order to illustrate points. I also include relationship diagrams of what, and how much, external and internal issues impact elementary art education in the location of this study.

Descriptive coding additions

I began the analysis process long before the first interview took place when I created what Miles and Huberman (1994) call a ‘start list’ (p. 58). This was a list of things that I felt impacted elementary art education negatively and was based on my past art education experiences and readings (see ‘Bias issues’ in chapter four). Some of the list items were discussed earlier in chapter three as a way of introducing potential issues that impact art education negatively.

Table two: Descriptive coding two (post-interview)

Pseudonym	Current Grades (ages of students)	School Board (contract)	Location	Teaching Experience	Art/Week	Own funds spent /year
Meme	Gr. 4 (age 9)	Catholic (FT)	Rural	14 years	100 min.	0
Ace	K-Gr. 1 (ages 5-6)	Catholic (FT)	Urban	20 years	110 min.	\$300 (£150)
Lee	Gr. 3-4 (ages 8-9)	Public (FT)	Rural	22 years	80 min.	\$200 (£100)
Trinity	Gr. 7 (age 12)	Public (PT)	Rural	7 years	40 min.	0
Dreamer	Gr. 3-4 (ages 8-9)	Public (FT)	Urban	9 years	90 min.	\$200 (£100)
Sophie	Gr. 3-6 (ages 8-11)	Catholic (FT)	Rural	5 months	30 min.	\$60 (£30)
Joe	Gr. 3 (age 9)	Catholic (FT)	Urban	30 years	60 min.	\$50 (£25)
Mary	JK-Gr. 6 (ages 4-11)	Public (FT)	Rural	20 years	60 min.	\$50 (£25)
Sharon	Gr. 2 (age 7)	Public (FT)	Rural	5 years	70 min.	\$200 (£100)
Kelly	Gr. 3 (age 8)	Public (FT)	Rural	4 years	75 min.	\$100 (£50)
Melanie	Gr. 8 (age 13)	Catholic (FT)	Rural	15 years	100 min.	\$200 (£100)
Alice	Gr. 4 (age 9)	Public (FT)	Rural	18 years	60 min.	0
Caley	Gr. 7-8 (ages 12-13)	Public (FT)	Rural	24 years	120 min.	0
Doreen	Gr. 4-5 (ages 9-10)	Public (PT)	Urban	12 years	75 min.	\$100 (£50)
Renée	Gr. 5-6 (ages 10-11)	Catholic (FT)	Rural	10 years	120 min.	0
Red	Gr. 4-5 (ages 9-10)	Catholic (FT)	Urban	6 years	60 min.	0
Lori	Gr. 3 (age 8)	Public (FT)	Urban	28 years	40 min.	0
Laura	Gr. 2 (age 7)	Catholic (PT)	Urban	11 years	60 min.	\$100 (£50)
Andie	JK-SK (ages 4-5)	Public (FT)	Rural	4 years	60 min.	0

Following Richards' (2005) suggestions, I looked again at my original descriptive coding chart (see table one in chapter four) and, after I had finished each interview, added more information to it (see table two). This data-enriched table included details about each participant's teaching experience, time devoted to weekly art instruction, and the amount of money spent out-of-pocket on art resources and supplies. I thought that this information might be helpful later when exploring further the various factors that impact art education; for example, the time available for teaching art could affect not only what art activities were taught but also how they were taught.

There was a wide range of years of teaching experience represented among the participants (five months to 30 years) and although I was not seeking broad generalisability from this interpretive, relatively small-scale study, this provided varied experience among the participants. I had an initial concern about the minimal teaching experience of one volunteer (Sophie) based on my preconceptions as a researcher. According to Rubin and Rubin (2005), optimal interviewees are experienced and knowledgeable. After interviewing Sophie, however, I realised that she had interesting perceptions about art education despite her lack of formal teaching experience, and many parts of her transcript were valuable for this study. I learned, from her, that any interviewee, regardless of experience, can have valuable knowledge to share in a study such as this which sought to explore teachers' current views rather than, say, changes in those views over years.

The average time devoted to art instruction each week was more than I had expected. From my observations during my years evaluating pre-service teachers, and from their practicum stories, I had assumed that art classes in elementary schools averaged around 40 minutes per week. Based on information from the 19 interviewees, the average time allotted for visual arts in their schools was about 75 minutes per week. Despite both school boards dictating weekly mandatory language and mathematics minutes (450 minutes for language, 300 minutes for mathematics), plus the teachers making time for other subjects and initiatives, the participants were able to find anywhere from 30 to 120 minutes per week for visual arts. This variation in time allotments for art could be due to the flexibility

elementary teachers have regarding their weekly timetables, although I do not suggest definitive patterns or relationships.

More than half of the participants spent their own money on art supplies and, for some, a significant amount. Ace, for example, said she spent about \$300 (£150) per year and explained why she did this:

We have a supply room and there's basically construction paper, paint, and glue. That's it. We're lucky to have tissue paper ... Anything else we provide with our own money ... I do a lot of it at Christmas time ...

I thought this seemed too much money to spend but comments from other participants suggested it was not atypical. Lee, who works in a different school board, spends around \$200 (£100) each year on extra supplies, for similar reasons as Ace, but added that she had spent much more in the past, especially on non-consumable resources: *'One year was \$1200 [£600] for books and videos. I don't do that anymore'*. Similar stories came from Dreamer, Sharon, and Melanie.

Topic coding and purposive reading

After the participants verified the transcripts, I read them to see if and/or how they illuminated the central research issue. Contrary to the advice of Marton (1994) and Bowden (2000), I did not wait until all the transcripts were complete before I began to analyse them. I wanted to make sure that the interview questions were helping me to find the data I needed. I, therefore, started skim-reading the transcripts for general topics while I was checking each one against its audio version.

According to Richards (2005), topic coding is labelling words, phrases, and paragraphs with headings related to the research topic. I read through the transcripts numerous times, highlighting anything that was related directly or could even be tangentially related to the central research issue. I then gave the highlighted parts topic labels to organise them in categories that were recorded in my research journal. This list of topics is what Marton (1981) calls 'categories of description ... conceptions of reality ... to be used in facilitating the grasp of concrete cases of human functioning' (p. 177). For him, there are two perspectives that can be used to discover 'concrete cases': 'first order', which is from each participant, and 'second order', which is the researcher's interpretation of the

participant's words. The first order perspectives were the participants' statements in the transcripts and I determined the second order list of relevant topics from my interpretations of them, accepting that the two categories are not quite as clear-cut as Marton suggests.

The interview transcripts

The topics identified from the transcripts were 'art curriculum', 'budget', 'comfort', 'concept of art', 'gender', 'location', 'mess', 'professional development', 'resources/supplies', 'student interests', 'subject hierarchy', 'support', and 'time', with details here for clarification:

1. **Art curriculum** (influence of the OME documents, including assessment guidelines and integration practices).
2. **Budget** (funding, including board and own money, for art supplies and resources).
3. **Comfort** (level of confidence with teaching art).
4. **Concept of art** (what the term 'art education' means to each participant).
5. **Gender** (concerns regarding art education opportunities for boys and/or girls).
6. **Location** (geographic location and/or school environment).
7. **Mess** (messy nature of some art media such as painting and/or printmaking).
8. **Professional development (PD)** (accessibility for teachers to learn about teaching art).
9. **Resources/Supplies** (books, videos, the internet, and other aids to help participants teach art, plus consumable materials and equipment).
10. **Student interests** (what media students like to do/learn, plus topics of interest).
11. **Subject hierarchy** (place of importance of subject areas; core versus optional subjects).
12. **Support** (perceptions of provincial, administrative, parental, and/or community support for art education).
13. **Time** (available time for art preparation and implementation).

These topics were relatively identifiable from the transcripts using my art education background, however, they were my interpretation. If other art educators read the

transcripts, I am sure they would find other topics. According to Michael Uljens (1996), 'a researcher must always be acquainted with knowledge (theory) in the field that he or she is investigating in order to do a good interpretive job' (p. 113). As noted earlier, I have been an artist, in a variety of media, for most of my life and I have been an art educator at elementary, secondary, and university levels for many years. Both my art-making experience and my professional background in art education prepared me well for my position as a university lecturer. Whilst this background was helpful for the identification of relevant topics generated from the research data, my experience also muddled the analysis in some ways. Although I tried to 'bracket' my opinions (see 'Bias issues' in chapter four), they slid into various stages of the analysis, from determining initial topics to combining them in groups. At times, I felt that my objectivity was threatened when I was reading the sections about concept of art in the transcripts; for example, I felt angry with some of the participants who said that they only do crafts with their students. I had to remind myself that I wanted openness from the interviewees and that all opinions were important for this study. So, too, I questioned my concern for 'objectivity': whose 'objectivity' was important and was I not asking the participants to provide me with 'subjective' views, perceptions, and beliefs?

I sought, then, to be open to new ideas in the data and identified topics I had not considered in my start list; for example, 'concept of art', 'gender', 'mess', 'PD', and 'student interests'. Whilst it was revealing to find issues I had not previously considered, I was slightly overwhelmed by the number of topics (13) identified and so grouped them for a more manageable analysis. I grouped 'budget', 'PD', 'resources/supplies', and 'support' under the common heading 'support'. I later grouped 'support' with 'art curriculum', 'location', 'student interests', 'subject hierarchy', and 'time' under the new heading 'external issues'. These issues were 'external' because they were usually out of each teacher's control. I then grouped 'comfort', 'concept of art', and 'mess' under the heading 'internal issues' because these were issues found within the participants. Although I grouped these topics, I tried not to lose sight of each one's individual importance for later analysis. I then set aside 'gender' as an outlier. According to American researchers Jack Fraenkel and Norman Wallen (2003), 'outliers are [topics] that differ by such large amounts from those of other individuals in a group that they must be given careful

consideration as special cases’ (p. 213). Caley was the only participant who mentioned anything related to gender and art education. Although it was not an issue that I thought was related directly to art education expendability, gender could be tied to others’ ideas of art as a ‘girlie’ subject. So, instead of omitting ‘gender’ from the study because it did not fit ‘neatly’ with specific discussions on art expendability issues, I set it aside, as suggested by David Silverman (2000), to address later in this chapter and to consider for further research.

Next, I placed the topics into two charts (see tables three and four). Following Richards’ (2005) advice, I indicated, with a check mark, those participants whose transcripts contained any mention of each identified topic. As well, I placed the grouped topics at the top of the chart. If a participant mentioned something about art education related to that topic, I included a check mark beside his or her pseudonym to note that connection. The charts were helpful to see how the topics were distributed among the interviewees; for example, individual as well as group patterns. I am not, however, suggesting that because a participant did not mention a topic that it was not relevant to them. The charts simply indicate what came up in the interviews and I do not know if the unchecked topics were unimportant to them.

Table three: Topic coding – External issues that participants noted impact art education in north-eastern Ontario elementary schools

Pseudonym	Art Curriculum	Location	Student Interests	Subject Hierarchy	Support	Time
Meme	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Ace	✓			✓	✓	
Lee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Trinity	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Dreamer	✓			✓	✓	✓
Sophie	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Joe	✓			✓	✓	
Mary	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Sharon	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Kelly	✓			✓	✓	✓
Melanie	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Alice	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Caley	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Doreen	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Renée	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Red	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Lori	✓			✓	✓	✓
Laura	✓			✓	✓	
Andie	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

This data forced me to reconsider assumptions; for example, I found it interesting that Sophie, the participant with the least amount of teaching experience (five months), was the only one with connections to all of the identified topics in both charts. I was also intrigued to find the topics of unanimous collective discussion were ‘art curriculum’, ‘subject hierarchy’, and ‘support’ for external issues, and ‘concept of art’ for internal issues.

Table four: Topic coding – Internal issues that participants noted impact art education in north-eastern Ontario elementary schools

Pseudonym	Comfort	Concept of art	Mess
Meme	✓	✓	
Ace	✓	✓	
Lee	✓	✓	
Trinity	✓	✓	
Dreamer	✓	✓	
Sophie	✓	✓	✓
Joe		✓	
Mary	✓	✓	✓
Sharon	✓	✓	✓
Kelly	✓	✓	✓
Melanie	✓	✓	
Alice		✓	
Caley	✓	✓	
Doreen	✓	✓	
Renée	✓	✓	
Red	✓	✓	
Lori	✓	✓	
Laura		✓	✓
Andie	✓	✓	

For Marton (1994), the main focus of phenomenographic analysis is to determine categories but this seemed limited when I considered the topics and what I wanted to learn from this study. I did not want to know just what research issue topics were relevant to the participants; I wanted to know *how* they were meaningful and what connections they had to art education’s expendability. If I wanted to inform my practice, and that of others, I needed more information than that offered by categories. I, therefore, began what Richards (2005) calls the ‘purposive reading’ (p. 69) of the transcripts. During this phase of the data analysis, I spent much time trying to understand interviewee perceptions of each topic by asking questions of the transcripts’ highlighted parts. I asked, for example, ‘Why is this quotation interesting regarding the central research issue?’ and ‘How is this similar to, or

different from, other participants' comments about the same topic?'. These questions helped me not only to link the data to both the central research issue (see chapter one) and the conceptual framework (see chapter two) but also to delve more deeply into the range of participants' views in the data.

Initially, I wanted to identify only collective patterns among the participants' meanings as a way of strengthening my understanding of elementary art education but I found that as I read and re-read the transcripts, I did not want to lose sight of individual comments that were poignant. Ashworth and Lucas (2000) suggest, 'Generalisations across individuals are of value, but it is important that the individual's unique experience is not lost' (p. 304). In light of this and because I was not seeking wide generalisability and not suggesting, for example, that my sample was representative, I focused on similarities and differences between how the participants perceived each topic in order to explore both their collective and individual understandings of elementary art education. The data analysis process not only confirmed some of my assumptions about local elementary art education but also provided some surprises.

a) External issues

i. Art curriculum

Reading each transcript for perceptions of the Ontario elementary art curriculum, I was not surprised that the participants included opinions about the mandated expectations, lack of sources for their curriculum ideas, and unclear language within the OME (1998, 2004) arts documents. I was, however, surprised to find that few of the participants said they actually used the arts documents. When asked where they got their ideas for teaching art, only four participants (Meme, Renée, Red, Laura) stated that they used the prescribed documents to plan and/or assess their art lessons. The rest indicated that their ideas came from sources such as colleagues, books, and the internet. All but Joe, Laura, and Caley said that they got their ideas from other teachers. Ace, for example, said:

I see ... things in other classrooms. I talk to other teachers. I have a ... group of girls ... [who] meet once a month ... and we share ... I ask, "I have to teach this. Have you got any ideas?"

When asked how they chose ‘art mentors’, the participants said one or two teachers on each staff were considered good artists so they would go to them for ideas.

Reasons for the lack of use of provincially-mandated arts curriculum documents may be revealed in other participants’ comments:

(Lee) There are some ... things in the curriculum that, to me, don’t ... seem suitable for grade four [age 9] students and how they are supposed to compare artists and their styles ... I think ... some of the expectations are a little extreme.

(Sharon) The curriculum document for art is embarrassing, detached ... I don’t like the arts document at all. I find it really hard to follow what we are to do.

Lee and Sharon were the most vocal about their concerns regarding the arts documents and admitted that they chose not to use them. Others shared similar opinions: Alice was concerned about the high volume of art expectations and Doreen stated that the language in the OME (1998, 2004) arts documents was difficult and not conducive to user-friendliness. Another reason why the participants seemed disconnected from the prescribed curriculum could be poor teacher-training. When I interviewed Sophie and asked about her art education background, she said:

I was never really taught to teach art. I went to teachers’ college and they taught me one [arts] class but the teacher was into drama so I didn’t have a chance to learn visual arts.

Sophie seemed to have had minimal preparation for the wide range of media included in the elementary art expectations and, with such a narrow background, it is understandable why she would turn to colleagues and other sources for ideas.

It is interesting to note that not one of the 19 participants said that he or she liked the OME (1998, 2004) arts documents as classroom resources. Ace, however, provided a possible solution to art curriculum issues that impact effective implementation. When I asked her what the OME could do to help, she said:

We need something that says, “This is how you can teach it”. Give us some ideas about how to teach the things that we’re supposed to teach and then give us the resources to do it.

Ace’s request suggests that the OME should provide not only art curriculum expectations but also support materials in the form of teaching strategies and

additional resources teachers could use to help their students meet those expectations.

I included 'assessment' as part of the art curriculum topic to refer to anything related to marking art. It came from those participants who commented on its practical necessity and others who admitted not doing it. Meme and Laura were the only interviewees who mentioned they followed the elementary art achievement chart (see Appendix I) in the OME (1998) arts document for assessing student works because of the necessity to place a mark for visual arts on each student's report card. Laura said, '*I don't really like the achievement chart but I have to use it in order to make rubrics for their art assignments*'. Her comment suggests that she may use it as a tool to help her organise marking schemes. The following comment by Red about art assessment reflected similar ones from Lee, Sophie, Caley, and Doreen:

How do you evaluate art? You can't evaluate it. I'd be biased if I evaluated it so they all get good grades and, as time goes on, they will ... decide if [art's] for them and I haven't stifled them ... I think that's my role in elementary.

Red's statement suggests that some elementary teachers see art as a subject that should not be evaluated until high school. Of the 19 participants, only six mentioned marking art and, of those six, only two (Meme, Laura) seemed to practise it as mandated by the government; that is, using the OME achievement chart. Not one participant mentioned using the OME (2004) art assessment guide (full of exemplars and rubrics) to help mark students' artwork.

ii. Location

'Location' meant different things to different interviewees. For some, it referred to geographic distance between the school board offices/resource centres, located in North Bay, and the schools, often situated many miles away. This distance was a concern or a blessing. Sharon, for example, suggested that she felt isolated in her current school because she had used the classroom support centre for her board when she had previously taught in North Bay but had not used it since she had moved to another school several miles outside the city. In contrast, Caley suggested that the distance gave him freedom: '*[The administrators] are leaving me totally alone ... I can go a whole year without seeing the Principal and I love it*'.

It should be noted that Caley taught in a program for at-risk youths, not in a traditional elementary school. He taught in a gated compound where his students were in his care after they had been released from jail and before they were placed into the regular school system.

Others who mentioned location focused on the accessibility of the wilderness:

(Trinity) *The school I taught at last year was out in the country ... If you're going to be creative then you need to find a peaceful environment to be inspired ... The school is surrounded by forest ... so I took them outside and we drew and that was really successful.*

(Mary) *I remember ... combining art with outdoor education so we'd go out in the bush ... across the road and out into the trail system.*

Both Trinity and Mary suggest that the rural locations of their schools were positive for art implementation; that is, they provided a close connection to the wilderness not available to students and teachers in urban schools.

Location was one of the topics on my 'start list' because I thought that there would be more issues regarding not only distance between schools and board offices but also from Ontario's major art centres (Toronto, Ottawa). Instead, all but one of the participants who mentioned location seemed to embrace the distance from the school board offices rather than seeing it as a concern. As well, not one participant mentioned any concerns about being at least four hours of driving time from either Toronto or Ottawa. The absence of comments regarding distance to these gallery and museum centres suggested to me that the participants did not take their students on field trips to these cities, at least not for art excursions.

iii. Student interests

The heading, 'student interests', came from a number of responses to the probing question, 'What influences art education in your classroom?'. Doreen said, '*I think the kids do. If I see kids who really like drawing cartoons ... then I might do [cartooning]*'. Renée suggested a similar practice in her classroom: '*It depends on [the students'] interests. I find if they're really interested in something then I find it's easy to work with*'. Both teachers' responses suggest that the content in their art programmes was often student-driven.

iv. Subject hierarchy

The term, 'subject hierarchy', refers to the idea that some subjects in schools are valued more than others. As noted in chapters one, two, and three, core subjects, like language, mathematics, and science, are often considered more important than optional subjects, like art. Some participants expressed concerns regarding the impact of core-subject emphasis:

(Sharon) There's been a big push in language and math and I think that has worked ... What I see is we're mandated to teach art every year, the same as language, same as math, but it has not been covered as seriously as those two.

(Kelly) The focus in the board is literacy and numeracy, mainly literacy ... art has fallen by the wayside. Physical education is a focus because the government has started Daily Physical Activity [DPA] ... Where's the focus for those lesser academic subjects?

Both Sharon and Kelly suggested that their school board placed much emphasis on core subjects and physical education because they were stressed by the provincial government and that this attention was at the expense of optional subjects.

Of all the participants, Mary was the most vocal about the influence of literacy and numeracy initiatives, especially regarding how standardised testing, run by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), impacted artistic students:

There's too much focus on EQAO. It's all EQAO driven. The province needs to demonstrate that if differentiated learning is what they want us to do, they need to differentiate and realise there are students out there who are gifted in the arts. They need to provide for them.

Her comments reflect one of my 'start list' topics, 'standardised testing', because EQAO is the office in charge of literacy and numeracy testing programmes in Ontario elementary and secondary schools (see EQAO discussion in chapter three).

Some participants offered ideas on how they manage to include art education through an integrated delivery with core subjects. When asked how she compared teaching art now with earlier in her career, Meme, for example, said, '*I do a lot of integrating of art with math ... geometry and using polygons to create different figures*'. When asked the same question, Doreen's response was:

When I first started teaching art ... it was very much a stand-alone subject ... Now I am definitely integrating it ... and it's more a part of the big picture now rather than being independent.

Doreen's comment reflected those of other participants who said they were encouraged to integrate rather than teach subjects in isolation. Dreamer added some caution regarding the concept of integrating subjects: *'With integration we're missing out on the skills. We're taking that preciseness out of all the specialty areas.'* Her statement suggests that students may lose opportunities to learn skills taught only in a visual arts lesson and reflects similar concerns raised by others (see chapters two and three).

v. Support

'Support' came from interviewees' comments about colleagues, administrators, the OME, and parents. It encompasses 'budget', 'professional development (PD)', 'resources/supplies', and relationships among school stakeholders. Some of the participants' support-related comments were positive but many were negative.

'Budget' refers to any mention of funding for elementary art education, positive or negative. Most of the interviewees mentioned concerns regarding how little money was available for art education. Meme, however, indicated that she had no budget worries: *'If there was a special project that we wanted to do, we would submit the receipt [for the art supplies] to our Principal and he would cover it'*. Caley seemed to have the best financial support of all of the participants: *'Money is not a problem. We have way more money [for art] than we can possibly use'*. Although Caley's response was encouraging, it was far from what the majority of the participants felt. Most echoed Sharon's comment: *'Art is not a priority at any of the schools that I taught at as far as getting money for art [is concerned]'*. The responses suggest that art funding seemed to be distributed unevenly across both school boards represented in this study. Its distribution seemed dependent on each school's administration, not the school board or the OME, with special programmes, such as Caley's, faring the best.

Professional development (PD) seemed to be a significant issue for the participants. Most of the interviewees expressed some concerns about lack of art workshops for teachers in both school boards but they also made suggestions to address that concern:

(Ace) *I'd like to have ... some kind of instruction in teaching the fine arts as opposed to just the crafts and the use of materials and the use of the tools ... other than what I dredge up. There should be something from the board saying, "This is what you need to teach". We have it for everything else.*

(Lee) *We took an arts initiative a few years ago. It was an art day ... It's been a while since we had [a PD day] for art.*

(Trinity) *I went to so many meetings for literacy, for math, how to teach everything wonderfully and ... the extent of my art education was when I did my BEd.*

(Dreamer) *I would like more opportunity to be involved in art workshops. I find that ... it isn't being offered up here. We don't have the extra-curricular opportunities to go to for art. There's math and literacy but the other subjects don't get the time.*

(Alice) *We have more PD days but they are focused on school improvement plans, language, math – all the tested subjects. The focus is still very limited.*

Their responses imply that, although there may have been PD opportunities for art education, the more recent ones were for core subject support.

Along with more workshops for art, some participants suggested that their school boards hire specialists to come into elementary classrooms to provide art lessons to students, much like the present system in Ontario for French language instruction. They would relieve generalist classroom teachers of that responsibility and Trinity seemed to support this: *'I really believe in specialisation ... That may fly against some developmental philosophy but I think for middle school [ages 11 to 13] we could do it'*. I later learned from Dreamer that the Near North District School Board had art specialist consultants who came into elementary classrooms until 2005 when their positions disappeared and they returned to classrooms as generalist teachers.

Another concern for the interviewees was accessibility to art resources, including instructional supplies and textbooks. When asked about the challenges they faced, many participants mentioned supplies before anything else:

(Kelly) *Always going to the store and spending your own money because there aren't the materials. You don't even have the right colour of paper or type of paper ... It's frustrating.*

(Melanie) *Often lack of resources ... We do so much drawing ... and I didn't even have cartridge paper last year.*

Despite the lack of basic supplies, such as the paper problems mentioned above, many participants praised their Principals for allowing them to use petty cash systems to reimburse art expenses whilst expressing a desire that those administrators make sure that supply rooms were adequately stocked. According to the participants, the general ordering practice in their schools was for teachers to let their Principals know what they wanted for their art programmes. The Principals would then order the supplies from the school board bulk order and these supplies would be housed in a central location within each school for all teachers to access. Although this was a common practice for managing consumable supplies such as paper, paint, and glue, the interviewees often found it frustrating:

(Sharon) There's a storage room and it basically holds construction paper ... Sometimes teachers throw leftovers of something that they've purchased in there like egg cartons. I will at least check out what is there but sometimes there's not enough for a class so then you have to go out and buy your own.

(Alice) If I need two packs of red construction paper, the bulk order comes in September and if it was used at Christmas, it might not be there for Valentine's Day. It might take two weeks to come in, so in March I have red paper when I need green for St. Patrick's Day.

Other interviewees (Ace, Joe, Laura, Andie) suggested that they should have individual supply budgets because, they said, they are professionals and felt that they should be trusted to spend their art allotments appropriately.

Regarding relationships among stakeholders, Meme, like many of the participants, spoke highly of her colleagues and Principal for providing a positive environment in which to teach art. She provided examples of how she and her colleagues worked together to plan art lessons and units and how her Principal arranged for artists from the community to come into the school to teach workshops to both students and teachers. Although Sophie shared similar thoughts about her co-workers, she was not so positive about her community:

I feel bad asking for [art] supplies ... I go out and buy the things that I need and a lot of the parents ... will just throw it away and it's disappointing for me since ... I spent the money and the time.

It was worrying to hear a teacher sound disheartened about lack of parental support after only five months of teaching.

It surprised me that only one participant from each board mentioned the classroom support centres. Sharon was concerned about the distance to her board's centre (see 'Location' section in this chapter) and Sophie seemed to be the only participant who used her school board's instructional resource centre:

We have a centre ... It's like a library but for our board so you can rent out resources. So I just send an e-mail to the ladies there telling them, "I'm teaching art, grade five and six, I want to teach them warm and cool colours", and they'll send me a book.

I found it interesting, again, that the teacher with the least amount of experience was the only one who mentioned using the resource centre. It could be that she felt she needed it more as a resource than someone who had been teaching for several years or changes in teacher education could have reinforced the utility of such centres.

vi. Time

'Time' refers to the amount of preparation and instructional time for art education. Although not mentioned in the transcripts as often as the other five topics, it was still an area of concern. For Trinity, when asked what influences art education in her classroom, it was her main area of concern:

Time ... is the ultimate crunch ... It would be nice to have the luxury of teaching art for an afternoon ... but I don't know that there's any Principal that's going to tell you that we're going to bump all those other required courses that have those set time limits. I don't see that happening and I have never encountered a Principal who is that passionate about the arts. If anything, it's the opposite.

When asked about the number of local schools in which she had worked, she replied, 'Lots ... 15.' I found her response a concern considering there was a total of 45 schools in her board (elementary and secondary) with 41 Principals. It suggested to me that many Principals in her school board did not have an appreciation of the importance of art education.

Other participants who made time-related comments stated similar concerns and included statements regarding the significant amount of preparation time needed to implement art effectively. Renée, for example, said that art was a challenge because it required more planning than 'textbook' courses like language and mathematics. Similarly, Sharon compared preparation for art with other subjects:

'It's going to take a long time to prepare for because it's not like going to the book room and getting the materials'. According to their negotiated contracts, teachers in both school boards were supposed to have at least 40 minutes of preparation time per school day but that time would have been shared with other subjects and for assessment tasks.

b) Internal issues

For the participants, art education was influenced not only by external issues but also by internal ones; that is, issues that affected their practice from within. I had some assumptions regarding internal issues based on what pre-service teachers had told me about their own fears about teaching art and I wanted to find out if there were similar feelings among the participants through asking the questions, 'What does art education mean to you?' and 'How do you feel about teaching art?'. The first question led to responses about each participant's concept of art and the second led to thoughts about how confident they felt. Transcript responses were grouped under three headings ('comfort', 'concept of art', 'mess') and I then added 'gender', as mentioned by Caley in his interview, because this seemed to be an internal issue for him.

i. Comfort

'Comfort' refers to how confident the participants felt about planning, implementing, and assessing art. Participants seemed open to answering the probing question, 'How do you feel about teaching art?', and most told me that they did not feel comfortable with art, regardless of how long they had been in the classroom, their training in Faculties of Education, or accessibility to resources. Melanie, for example, had been teaching elementary students for nearly 15 years, had received some pre-service art education preparation, and had many support documents for art. She said, however: *'Art is my weakness ... I feel intimidated by it'*. Others used similar language, including words and phrases such as *'scared'*, *'nervous'*, *'I don't like it'*, *'hesitant'*, and *'overwhelmed'*.

Ace's comfort with art education depended on what she was teaching in an art lesson:

I don't mind doing crafts ... but when it comes to teaching the formal stuff like ... lines and space, I'm not comfortable.

Her comment suggests why she chose to teach mainly crafts, with some minor fine arts lessons, as part of her art programme. Trinity suggested that her anxiety about teaching art was separate from her interaction with art in her personal life:

I really love art ... I go to museums. I love to look at art ... I think that everybody brings gifts to education and I think naturally we gravitate to one area or another. So, for me, teaching art is something that I need to reinforce. If I know I have to teach art, that's almost more of a meltdown than if it's science.

Although Trinity appreciated art in her personal life, she felt much discomfort with teaching it, as suggested by the word 'meltdown'. Lori shared her discomfort with teaching art but also offered a way to deal with this:

I'm not artistic at all ... It would take me a long time to make an example for the kids. It never went over very well so I would start keeping their examples of what we did. When you're not good at something and you don't like it, it's always something you dread.

Lori's comment suggests that generalist teachers feel pressure to create adequate examples of artwork to help guide their students and this stress can cause negative associations.

Regarding assessment, it was not surprising to me that the majority of the participants seemed to find marking art difficult. I assumed it was linked to their narrow backgrounds in the subject but for those who had some post-secondary art background there were negative feelings about the ideology of assessment. Joe, for example, said: '*Marking their art hurts their self-esteem ... I don't believe in having things imposed on them*'. Similarly, Caley suggested that assessment would take away from the comfortable atmosphere he creates in his classroom:

The bane of my existence was I had to give them tests every once in a while, even in art, and that seemed to spoil all the fun ...

Joe and Caley's comments about art assessment and evaluation suggest discomfort with 'top-down' expectations for marking art.

Although the majority of the interviewees seemed uncomfortable with the thought of preparing, implementing, and assessing art lessons, it was encouraging that two participants (Joe, Laura) said they loved art and looked forward to teaching it each week.

ii. Concept of art

The topic, 'concept of art', refers to how each participant defined art education; for example, fine art, crafts, visual culture studies, or any combination of the three foci. When asked about what art education meant to them and activities they did with their students, all 19 interviewees provided statements related to their understandings of art which included a wide range of perspectives.

Those who were in the fine arts 'camp' (Trinity, Dreamer, Sophie, Alice, Doreen, Renée, Red, Laura) focused mainly on traditional art media such as drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, and the study of design and art history. Laura, for example, described how she taught colour theory:

I was teaching [my students] how you can get secondary colours from the primary colours. I ... stumbled upon a web site on ... how a lot of the artists used pointillism to create secondary colours, not by mixing them, but putting the primary colours very close together. I took the concept along with a couple of large pieces of artwork that I put on to my SMART board and I built a lesson around that where my kids actually used the SMART board to create an artwork that used pointillism.

In her anecdote, Laura shared how she blended design, art history, and technology as a way of helping her students meet OME (1998) art expectations. In contrast, Lori and Andie did only crafts in their art lessons:

(Lori) I do a lot of crafts as opposed to formal art. When I think of artists, I think of a craftsperson ... At Christmas time, I do a lot of...ornaments. For Mother's Day, we do tissue paper hyacinths.

(Andie) We've done crafts, like we put together pipe cleaners and pine cones ... We built skiers ... We made ... some nice doves that were 3D with tissue paper for Remembrance Day. They were very nice and the kids wrote ... sayings of peace to go with them.

When I asked both Lori and Andie if they had ever taught fine arts media, both replied that they only do crafts with their students because they are more comfortable doing that. Lori said: '*I struggle with art in January because there are no holidays that month to do crafts*'. With all of the resources available to teachers in books and on the internet, I thought it was noteworthy that she was so focused on holiday crafts as her guiding concept for art.

Those participants who taught art as a blend of fine arts and crafts were Meme, Ace, Lee, Joe, Mary, Sharon, Kelly, and Melanie. Joe, for example, said that his art programme of 30 years had not changed much and consisted of puppet-making,

landscape painting, and theme posters. Similarly, the rest said they did holiday crafts for Christmas and Valentine's Day, along with drawings and paintings at other times of the school year.

Caley's focus in his art education programme was neither traditional fine arts nor crafts but visual culture studies:

One of the things that I found over time is how powerful a medium film is ... Any assignment can be adapted to making a movie. We got a video camera ... we're on our second or third one now.

When asked if there were more traditional forms of art in his programme, he replied: '*My degree is art in university ... and I studied all the slides ... but I try not to inflict that on my students*'. It was interesting that someone with such an extensive background in art was not sharing that background with his students. Caley was the only participant who mentioned anything related to visual culture studies and it would be interesting to follow-up on his reasoning in a future study.

iii. Mess

'Mess' originated from comments offered by five participants who said that it was why they, or others, did not feel inclined to teach art. Although it did not seem to be a major cause for concern among the participants in this study, it can clearly impact not only on time for art implementation but also on what media are taught.

During her interview, Sharon admitted, '*I like to be neat and tidy. I don't want the big clean up when I'm finished*'. Mary and Kelly echoed Sharon's comment:

(Mary) I just can't face the clean up after we do art, like painting. So I usually do clean things like drawing. It's less for me to do.

(Kelly) There's a lot of clean up after [art] so that either cuts into [my students'] time or I need to put more time into it after and it's so tiring.

Sharon, Mary, and Kelly suggested that the idea of mess had enough impact to help determine what media were, and were not, taught in their classrooms and how much time was devoted to teaching art.

When she mentioned the idea of mess, Sophie discussed it both in relation to herself and to other teachers:

When I went to teachers' college, a lot of the professors were very upset with the fact that ... teachers just gave kids drawings and when I came

here to teach, I realised why they did that ... It is time-consuming to cut out the papers and then have all of the clippings on the floor. I only have half an hour [for art] and I can't just leave the mess on the floor.

Sophie taught art in a rotary system, in various classrooms, so any mess from her lessons would have to be cleaned up before she left for another classroom. Her comments '*clippings on the floor*' and '*can't just leave the mess*' also revealed possible reasons why some teachers focus on 'clean' rather than messy media. During her interview, Laura commented on the classroom environment in relation to mess: '*The classrooms don't have sinks so it makes it really challenging to do anything messy like painting or papier mâché*'. Her comment added to possible reasons why elementary teachers might be hesitant to do messy media with their students.

iv. Gender

Although the issue of gender could have and might apply to any of the participants involved in this study, Caley was the only one who made explicit reference to it.

He was concerned about how art can help boys succeed in school:

School is ... not so great for boys ... a lot of education seems to be lecture format ... There's a lot of sitting at the desk, reading a book, answer the questions. It should be more the norm that, "Get your boots on. We're going to go outside ... We're going to start building a shed". The tie-ins with the boys would be huge ... just the notion of success and the self-esteem that would go along with it. I think we would have far fewer dropouts if education was tailored to more hands-on things.

Caley suggests that the inclusion of more hands-on activities could encourage boys to be more engaged with learning which could help them stay in school. For him, it was not necessarily something that impacted art exclusively but rather an issue related to how art can be beneficial for boys because of its hands-on nature.

Transcript summary

It was helpful to read the interview transcripts and analyse the external and internal issue charts in order to see the emphasis on each topic as mentioned by participants. Topics related to external issues, for example, were the most prevalent. It was interesting to consider how participants perceived these issues and see the range of how they perceived each issue; for example, four interviewees worked from the OME (1998) arts document to plan, implement, and assess whereas most found

their ideas from colleagues, books, and the internet. Two said they loved teaching art whereas the majority felt some fear with the prospect. Although the transcripts were rich with relevant information for this study, they were not enough to give me a more detailed picture of what impacts art education in elementary classrooms, especially what might render it potentially expendable. So, I moved on to other sources of data, including observations and related documents.

The observation notes

After creating the topic list from the interviews and reading the transcripts in depth, I turned my attention to the observation notes I had written in my research journal for the next stage of the data analysis. This component of the study was revealing for my observations did not always align with what the interviewees had said. According to Jones and Somekh (2005), it is common for observation data not to match participants' 'constructions' (p. 141). In the classrooms of some participants who had said they did mainly fine arts activities I saw only holiday crafts (see 'Student artwork' section later in this chapter). They may well have done fine arts activities in their programmes and, although there were few exemplars of such activities on display during my visits, I am very conscious that because I did not happen to see something on one particular day, this does not necessarily mean it was not occurring. Such must always be a limitation of the methods I used and interpretations can only be tentative.

When I conducted the trial study, I did only an analysis of the transcripts and did not do an observation component. For the dissertation study, I had the opportunity to interview over half of the participants in their classrooms (see Appendix J) and, therefore, was able to observe their surroundings, their resources, and their students' artwork with all classroom environment observations taking place outside of teaching time (during lunch, prep time, after school). I met 12 of the 19 participants in their classrooms. The rest were interviewed in alternative locations. These locations were not optimal for doing observations but they were chosen by the participants. I found that their location choices were, at times, telling; that is, chosen from fear of being overheard by administrators (as in Joe's case) or maybe for the comfort of sharing honest comments.

Observations were recorded as point-form notes in my research journal before and after each classroom interview and included details about bulletin board displays of art techniques or posters, resources such as art textbooks, and visible student artworks. I had a concern before each classroom interview that the room would be prepared for my arrival; that is, art resources and samples displayed for my visit when they may not be present during the rest of the school year. I did not, however, get the sense that this happened because most classrooms had minimal examples on display.

1. Bulletin board displays

Of the 12 classrooms, only two had instructional materials posted to help students understand art concepts. Renée, for example, had a poster of Vincent van Gogh's *Starry Night* posted in her classroom as, perhaps, an example of art history as described in the grade six (age 11) OME (1998) art expectations and Laura had a colour wheel poster pinned to a bulletin board. The only other art-related bulletin boards contained student artworks, which I will describe later. The majority of bulletin board space in all 12 classrooms was devoted to word walls and number sequences, suggesting a literacy and numeracy focus. Although the word walls could have included art terminology (gesture, contour, rendered, palette), none contained words related directly to art education.

2. Resources

As stated earlier (see 'Other data' section in chapter four), there was a variety of books available to the participants in both school boards through their classroom support centres. The majority of the interviewees, however, used art books they had bought, that had been given to them by administrators and colleagues, and/or had been left behind by retired teachers. Ace, for example, had craft books, purchased with her own money, on a shelf behind her desk. All of these books contained step-by-step illustrations for doing inexpensive elementary-level crafts such as holiday ornaments, jewellery, and functional items. Only one of these craft books, Laura Martin's (2003) *Nature's Art Box*, included connections to art history; for example, links between working with natural materials and prehistoric art. Lee had several books with a fine arts focus, plus blank notebooks for each student to use as sketchbooks for 'filler time'; that is, when they were finished a task early and

had free time to do sketches and plan future art projects. These notebooks included mainly pencil drawings of cartoons and a few sketches of trees.

Melanie seemed to have the most art-related resources in her classroom. She had exemplars in her art education portfolio from her Bachelor of Education year, plus a binder that was given to her by her school board. When she showed the binder to me she said:

Two years ago we had an art workshop ... and each teacher was given a binder ... prepared by our high school art teacher so that we could add to it. In it were a number of art ... ideas that she uses that we could use, which was really nice, because a lot of ideas that she uses in grade nine [age 14], we could use at a simpler level.

Of the eight teachers I interviewed from her school board, Melanie was the only one to mention, let alone show me, that art education binder. It was an impressive, user-friendly collection of lesson plans, handouts, and diagrams for ideas appropriate for early high school.

When I interviewed Laura, I noticed Carol Strickland's (1992) *The Annotated Mona Lisa* perched on the chalk ledge. When asked for her impressions about the book, Laura raved about it:

It's a great book. I ... stumbled on a painting by Mondrian and I thought, "This would be perfect. I'm teaching a lesson on primary colours. I can have the kids use this as a model".

Hers was the only classroom with a book specifically for teaching art history.

With regard to other available supplies and resources, the school libraries had very little other than art history books about specific artists. Most schools had a central location for art and other supplies, situated adjacent to the main office. Some teachers, however, kept their supplies in their classrooms. Ace, for example, mentioned that she had a crafts cupboard. Many of the classrooms that I visited had similar in-class storage for art supplies: usually a shelf or box with scraps of paper, scissors, glue bottles, glitter, and other items for teaching art lessons. Melanie admitted that she hid her classroom art box because colleagues took supplies from each other.

Despite the presence of textbooks, supplies, and other resources, there was only some evidence of their use. There were craft examples displayed in Ace's classroom, which could have been inspired by her collection of books, but the other participants with fine arts and art history textbooks had few examples of art projects that were from those books. Laura, for example, talked about using her art history textbook to teach primary colours, but there were no primary-colour paintings displayed in her classroom at the time of my visit.

3. Student artwork

During each classroom visit, I searched for projects created by students during their art lessons. I found these not only within some classrooms but also displayed in school hallways. In most cases, the projects were holiday-based: tree ornaments during the December interviews, Valentine's Day hearts trimmed with doilies during the February ones, and construction paper clovers and leprechaun hats during my March visit to Red's school. There were very few examples of traditional fine arts activities.

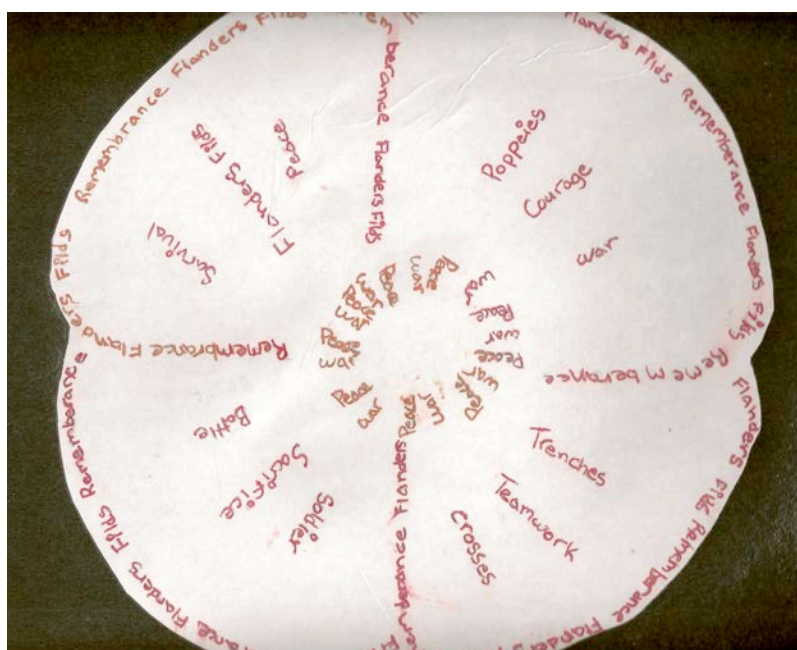
Figure nine: Contrast activity sample



Regardless if their art education focus was fine arts or crafts, the participants were proud to show me the artwork their students had created. Meme, for example,

shared designs from a recent contrast activity. Figure nine is an example from that activity where students cut out black construction paper shapes and pasted them on white backgrounds to show positive shapes (those that stand out from the background) and negative ones (those around or between the positive shapes). Others who shared student artwork included Lee, who showed me various ornaments that her students had made and how she had displayed them on an artificial Christmas tree in her classroom. Dreamer welcomed me to photograph a Remembrance Day piece (see figure 10).

Figure 10: Remembrance Day activity sample



Despite the fact that Melanie had a thick portfolio of samples she had made as a Bachelor of Education candidate and the art ideas binder from her school board, the only artworks on display in her classroom were 'bug' names (see figure 11).

Doreen's classroom housed samples from art integration projects she had done with her students; for example, as part of a science unit, her students created water cycle dioramas from cardboard, paper, paint, cotton balls, and found objects (see figure 12). According to her, this project was one of many where she blended art with other subjects:

I don't have a big art background so my goal is that they have fun and that they see the connection between art and what we are doing in class with different subjects, for sure with social studies and science.

Doreen's comment echoed those of others who stated that they blend art with other subjects not only to tie their personal strengths and subject areas with art but also to help their students meet hundreds of curriculum expectations by 'clumping' them within multi-disciplinary projects.

Figure 11: 'Bug' name design sample

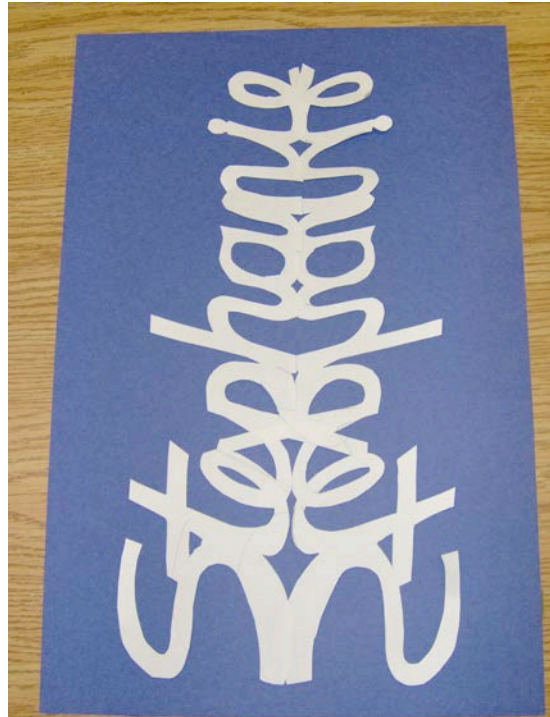


Figure 12: Water cycle diorama sample



There were only two classrooms (those of Dreamer, Doreen) with sculptures but these were in the form of models for integration activities. The only participant with examples of printmaking was Laura. When I visited her class, Laura told me that her students had been pressing pencil designs into styrofoam trays and then inked and printed them on paper (see figure 13).

Figure 13: Printmaking samples



Observation summary

Although it would have been ideal to visit all 19 interviewees in their classrooms in order to observe their teaching environments, the 12 visits allowed me to obtain much visual information to augment the transcript data. From these observations, and the information I obtained from informal conversations with stakeholders, plus classroom support centre visits, I was able to practise some degree of what Richardson (2000) calls 'crystallization' (p. 934). I looked at the central research issue from various angles, and by doing so, I found information that seemed to both support and conflict with what the participants said in their interviews. That said, just because I did not see many examples of fine arts activities does not mean the participants' students did not do them. Although my observations could have been different at different times of the school year, adding observation data to the transcript data helped give me a somewhat clearer picture of the state of art

education in the participants' schools whilst I interpreted such observations with caution.

Analysis summary

Throughout the analysis segment of this study, I combined methods suggested by Woods (1986), Marton (1994, 2000), Miles and Huberman (1994), Hammersley and Atkinson (1995), Ashworth and Lucas (2000), Bowden (2000), Richardson (2000), and Richards (2005). I looked at the transcript data first, then compared and contrasted it with my observation notes and related documents, and reduced all data sources through topic coding. I was careful to be open to new information and not look for only what I wanted to see. Like developing photographs in a darkroom, the analysis process rendered both expected and unexpected results.

The analysis was engaging and expanded my knowledge about elementary art education in general and the issue of art education expendability specifically. Some teachers were doing more with their art lessons than I had expected but some of the conditions and practices present in the participants' elementary schools were, in my view, obstructive to effective art education implementation (see details in chapter six).

Modeling Relationships

After I conducted the coding and purposive reading, the next step was to create visual models of relationships identified. These models were impact displays; that is, diagrams that showed what issues impact elementary art education in the schools of north-eastern Ontario studied here. They were based on the information I obtained from all sources but are, of course, limited by the small scale of this study. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), 'a display is an organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action' (p. 11). After I identified several impact issues from the analysis, I knew that visual representations could help me see relationships better and develop understandings to explain what impacts art education in the location of the study. I wanted to, eventually, ask questions around the generalisability of these displays; for example, 'Would other schools in the same boards or other school boards in the same region yield similar data?'

Most of the issues were negative (see figure 14) but there were a few positive ones (see figure 15). Figure 14 is based on data that illuminated issues that had a negative impact on art education in the participants' schools. It illustrates a hierarchy of impact relationships, according to all sources of data for this study. The issues with the most impact are at the top of the triangle, followed by those of lesser impact underneath.

Figure 14: Issues with a negative impact on art education in north-eastern Ontario elementary schools

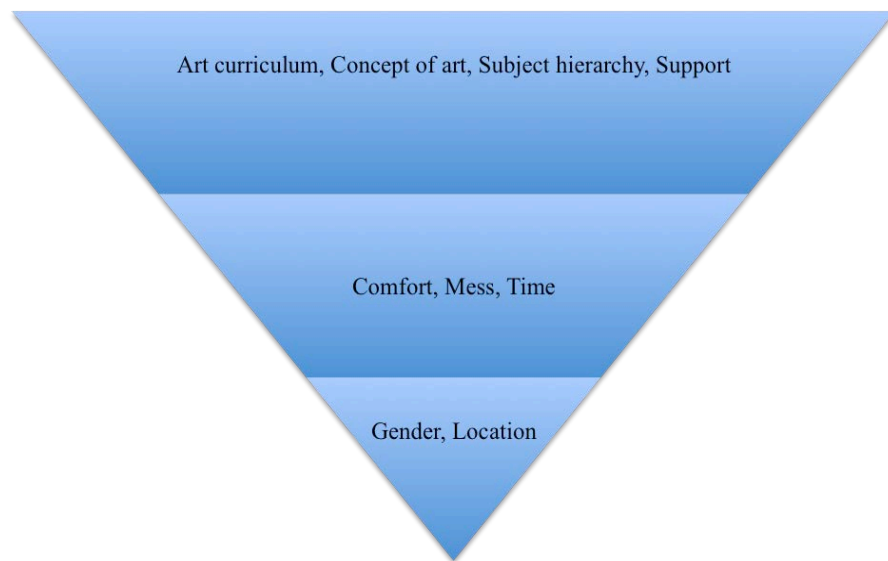
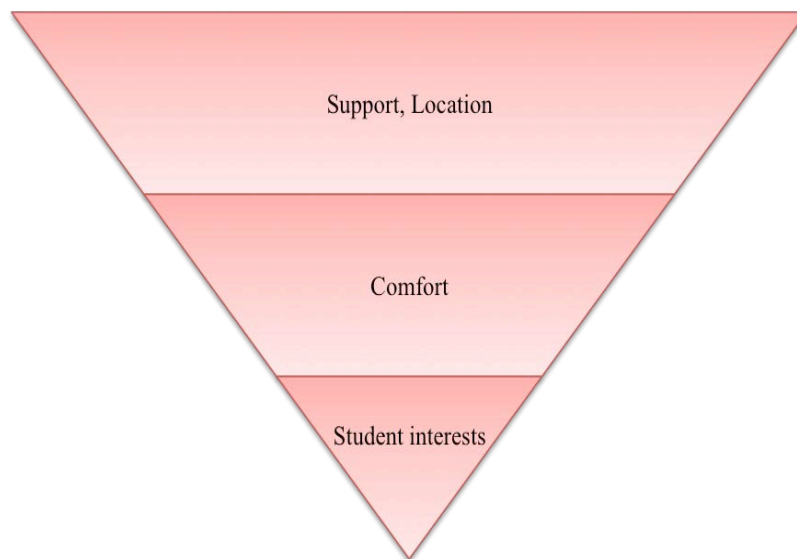


Figure 15: Issues with a positive impact on art education in north-eastern Ontario elementary schools



In contrast, there were issues that had a positive effect on elementary art education in the location of the study and figure 15 illustrates the positive issues, according to all sources. Although support, location, and comfort were included as having a negative impact on art education, some participants and the elementary coordinators shared examples of how these issues were helpful.

In chapter six, I will discuss the findings related to both the negative and positive issues that impacted elementary art education in the location of this study and develop understandings from the analysis segment. I will link the data to the literature in the first three chapters and to my practice as an art education lecturer.

CHAPTER SIX

Scrapbooking The Issues



Introduction

Photographs, like other art media, are representations of reality. They are often small windows into artists' views of their worlds and, according to Hedgecoe (1990), '... should be interpretations rather than just records of what is in front of the camera' (p. 196). In order to share these interpretations effectively, they need to be organised and displayed well.

As described in chapter two, modern scrapbooking provides a means of organising and displaying photographs with text so that representations are clear for the viewer/reader. The artist starts with a stack of photographs and then organises them into sub-groups that relate to each other. Scrapbooks are usually organised by themes (celebrations, holidays, vacations), like the travel one in the photo at the top of this page, with each scrapbook page representing a facet of those themes. Once the photographs have been laid out on the page, text is added to support the images. A scrapbook, however, can be a malleable work of art that can evolve by enhancing existing items, moving pages, and inserting new ideas. Research results are similar to scrapbook pages: they are interpretations of the data by the researcher that are organised and displayed in a way to make them clear to the audience. Like a scrapbook, a conceptual framework can change: assumptions can be tested, information can be supported or challenged, and new understandings can be generated.

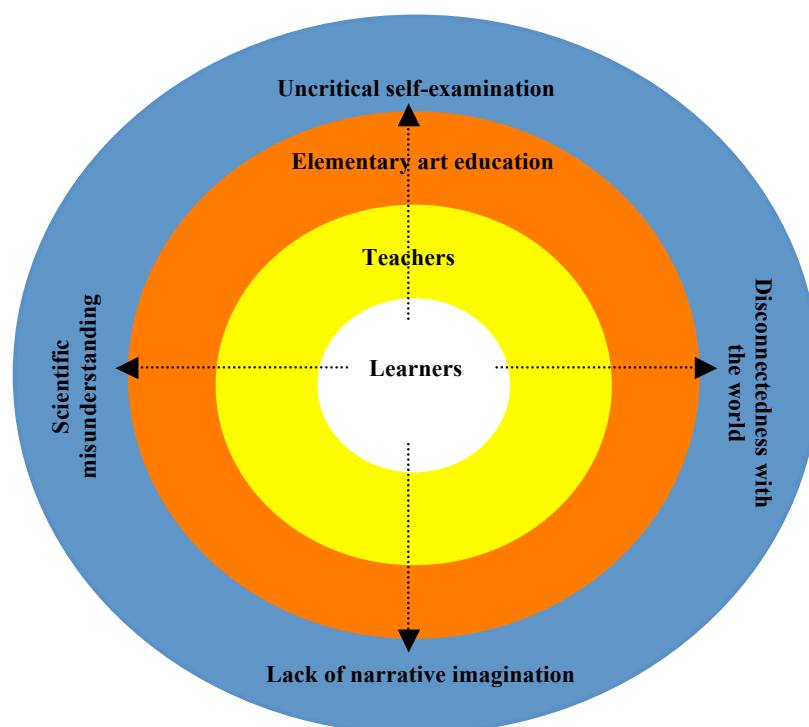
This chapter focuses on how the participants' stories, and other data, helped to clarify the importance of this study. It considers the evidence of that importance, and the difference it might make to elementary education not only in north-eastern Ontario but also in other locations. Connections to the conceptual framework are

explored first, followed by how the data provided some answers to the guiding questions for the study and to further questions that arose during the study.

Changing concepts

I explored the data from various angles and then returned to the conceptual framework to use it as a lens to view my findings. When I analysed the data from the interview transcripts, observation notes, and related documents, and looked at the impact relationships illustrated in figures 14 and 15 (see chapter five), I noted connections among them. These connections pointed to themes that linked the external and internal issues back to Nussbaum's (1997) capacities (see chapter two). Although I found some evidence to support how elementary art education in the participants' schools provided ways to nurture the four capacities (critical self-examination, connectedness with the world, narrative imagination, scientific understanding), I also found many more ways in which teachers, both directly and indirectly, erected and were met by barriers between learners and effective art education (see figure 16). These barriers could disable elementary art education, in effect 'incapacitate' the capacities to become what I call 'uncritical self-examination', 'disconnectedness with the world', 'lack of narrative imagination', and 'scientific misunderstanding'.

Figure 16: Concept map three



The participants offered many examples of visual arts content and delivery and described the challenges they faced from both within and outwith their classrooms. I later felt, however, that key information was missing and further questions arose after I spoke with the elementary coordinators and those who worked in classroom support centres. These new questions resulted in an alteration of the ‘filter ring’ of figure six (see chapter three). ‘History’, ‘policy’, ‘practice’, ‘economics’, and ‘geography’ were replaced with ‘teachers’ because they can be the first and last filters between learners and art education. So, figure 16 now illustrates how elementary teachers value and teach art and how this value and practice can ultimately impact Nussbaum’s (1997) capacities. Teachers are closest to learners and are placed between them and the elementary art curriculum. They make decisions on how learners will engage with the curriculum and that engagement could affect the quality of the learners’ experiences and development of the capacities. I also changed the relationship arrows because these same barriers could lead to one-way in addition to two-way relationships. If learners, for example, do not have opportunities to experience art activities that promote critical self-examination, then they might not receive the benefits of that capacity. There is a potential, therefore, for learners to develop ‘incapacities’.

Uncritical self-examination

As noted in chapter two, for Nussbaum (1997), critical self-examination is the capacity to self-evaluate based on experiences. In art education, students can learn this through reflection via art criticism of their own works and those of others. Problems can occur when learners may have opportunities to describe their and others’ art without reflection. They may create and view works without being encouraged to think deeply and this lack of opportunity for self-examination might be caused by both external and internal issues in the classroom.

There was an entire section of analysis expectations in the OME (1998) arts document, yet only three participants (Renée, Red, Laura) mentioned having their students look at works from art history in order to inform their own works. Although looking at works from art history is often beneficial for inspiration, the benefit can be lost if the students do not participate in reflections, either on the original work or their own pieces. Not one interviewee mentioned having his or her students write, or talk on, reflections at any part of the art-making process. Whilst

this does not, of course, provide evidence that such practice does not actually occur, it raises a question mark on the issue. Reflection writing, through individual student journals, has been a common practice in Ontario classrooms for the past decade but that practice did not seem to be present in the elementary art programmes researched in this study. Lee's students were the only ones who had sketchbooks and these were used for learner's individual interests for 'filler time' rather than for reflection as part of the process of creating art. A reason for this could be the lack of use of the OME (1998) arts document. Participants in this study said that they did not use it due to their perceptions of its incomprehensible language for them and its unsuitability for their students. It could also be due to a perception of subject hierarchy; that is, reflection is considered more often in 'academic' language classes than in optional art lessons.

Another possible reason for a disconnect between the learners and critical self-examination could be that some teachers planned their programmes around student interests rather than the mandated curriculum. Eight participants noted their students guide the content of their art programmes, either entirely, with all art activities determined by the learners, or in part, with a mix of student choice and mandated curriculum content. Whilst applauding autonomy, content relevance, and some degree of learner control, surely this should be connected to mandated expectations. Learner choices could impact art education negatively; for example, students could be exposed to a restricted view of art rather than one that incorporates critical examination of diverse media and works from other cultures.

Perceptions of support could have some bearing on why the participants rarely provided opportunities for critical self-examination. Most said that they had few PD days devoted to art and when they did, these days were focused on hands-on activities. Such activities can be influential for art-making but, if generalist teachers are not taught how to reflect on art and practise art criticism, then they are not likely to do so with their students. Time could also have been a factor because most said that time for art was limited. Although the average amount of time was healthy in relation to that in classrooms I had visited in the past, it was still limited in comparison to the minutes mandated for language, mathematics, and physical education. This may explain why those mentioning time as an external issue focused on basic hands-on activities rather than taking time in lessons to

incorporate opportunities for art criticism and reflection. Additionally, all but three of the participants involved in this study indicated that they did not feel comfortable with planning, implementing, assessing, and/or creating art. This lack of comfort, combined with few PD opportunities, could explain why they focused on hands-on art activities to the exclusion of those fostering critical self-examination by students. If teachers have never participated in formal critiques of works of art, for example, using Feldman's (1987) method of description, analysis, interpretation, and judgement, then they would not have the experience, or perhaps the comfort, to bring such activities into their practice.

A teacher's concept of art, whether it is fine arts, or crafts, or visual culture studies, or any blend of the same, could impact critical self-examination negatively. If, for example, teachers focused only on holiday crafts, then art could be 'impoverished'. When participants who did crafts exclusively with their students discussed their favourite activities, they placed emphasis on the high fun factor of those lessons and no mention was made of any student reflections linked to those activities.

Disconnectedness with the world

Nussbaum (1997) suggests that her second capacity, connectedness with the world, helps people look beyond themselves to make connections to others to better understand them. If learners are not given opportunities to make these connections then they might miss out on experiencing the world beyond their location and this may lead to disconnectedness. In the data here, there appeared to be several forms of disconnectedness and these seemed to impact art education in negative ways. Some appeared to affect art instruction minimally whilst others had the potential to make art expendable.

The OME (1998) arts document is full of ways to help teachers enable their students to make connections with the world. There are, for example, many art history examples suggested for learners in all grades (ages) that include lists of works by Canadian, American, British, European, African, Asian, and Oceanic artists, all of which are appropriate for elementary learners to view and discuss. By comparing them with local works and creating works inspired by them, learners could make relevant connections to their own worlds. Even in the three classrooms where art history was included, I saw no works of art by students that

had any connection to the art history being studied. When I asked Renée, Red, and Laura about student works inspired by art history, none had any on hand to show me from that school year. Laura added that she had done projects in the past using a variety of images from art history as story- and artwork-starters but she had not saved examples after switching schools to teach a different grade/age group.

I found some disconnectedness in the form of absence of artwork inspired by location. Although two participants (Trinity, Mary) mentioned advantages of teaching in schools bordering the wilderness, and had included activities where students created works inspired by their rural environments, the others who taught in rural schools seemed not to take advantage of this connection. The students' drawings in the classrooms of Meme, Lee, Sophie, Melanie, Renée, and Andie were imagined, urban scenes with no apparent connection to their unique rural locations. Their drawings seemed, instead, to be influenced by what interested them individually (comic book characters, television cartoons). Although these drawing activities could have been a way for students to learn about visual culture studies, when asked about Visual Culture Art Education (VCAE), the participants had no understanding of it. VCAE is a relatively new focus within art education (see chapters one and two) and has been part of art education, in various forms, since the 1960s. It seems that influence, at least in a formal sense, has not had much impact on the practice of those I talked with in this study.

As mentioned earlier, there were some participants who chose to let the learners dictate the content of the art lessons. Although empowerment and freedom can be good for students, it can also lead to disconnectedness if they do not learn what is mandated by the province. One of the reasons the OME created such detailed expectations was to streamline content for all students in Ontario. They did this to ensure that if a student moved from one school board to another, he or she would have the same knowledge and skills as his or her peers in the new location. As I found in this study, however, this was not necessarily working well in practice, even within a school board. Lee, Dreamer, Sophie, Joe, Kelly, and Lori, for example, all taught the same grade (grade three/age eight) but did not teach similar art activities. According to the OME (1998) arts document, the expectations for that grade/age include specific design-related skills for students

to learn; for example, create paintings using warm and cool colours, do drawings using a variety of lines, identify symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes, describe a variety of textures, and use a variety of tools to create paintings (sponges, straws, toothbrushes). I did not see one example of any of these prescribed skills in the classrooms of Lee, Dreamer, Sophie, or Lori, nor did they mention these skills when they answered questions about art activities they did with their students. I saw neither Joe's nor Kelly's classroom and they, too, did not mention any activities related directly to the OME (1998) arts document.

Subject hierarchy appeared to be a major concern for the participants and the emphasis on core subjects by the province, administrators, and individual teachers showed in disconnectedness. This was apparent in how students in the north-eastern Ontario location of this study learned subjects most often in a vertical rather than a lateral way. In the elementary schools involved in this study, for example, subjects seemed to be taught in isolation. Only Meme, Dreamer, Caley, Doreen, and Laura mentioned anything related to integration and the others taught art separately in its own weekly time slot. Although art instruction on its own is good for teaching specific artistic concepts and skills, it could also lead learners to believe that it has no connection with other subject areas. If it is infused into other subjects, like the core ones, then learners would be more likely to have a broad education experience (see 'Connectedness with the world through elementary art education' in chapter two).

Yet another example of disconnectedness involved the concept of support. One coordinator, for example, told me that there was an arts representative in each elementary school but not one participant from that school board mentioned these people. It is possible that those participants did not know about the liaisons, did not realise that they were responsible for helping teachers with visual arts needs, or did not think to mention them. As well, the classroom support centres had free art textbooks, kits, posters, videos, and DVDs available to be sent to any school by courier but few teachers used those resources. This lack of use, according to the secretaries of the classroom support centres, was likely due to ignorance among teachers as to what was available to them.

The use and availability of older art textbooks and resources (published before 2000) in both school boards could lead to disconnectedness. Art, generally, does not change much. Basic drawing, design, painting, printmaking, sculpture, and craft practices have remained the same for decades. Additions are made to art history rather than replacing it. What does change in art education, however, are new foci and technologies (visual culture studies, digital tools). Without the augmentation of old resources with current ones, teachers and students are left using outdated art education resources. This lack of attention to renewing resources could result in teachers and learners not being exposed to current art media and practices.

As already noted, many of the interviewees indicated that time for art was a concern due to the amount needed for effective preparation, implementation, assessment, and exemplar creation but it was not available due to mandated weekly time allotments for language, mathematics, and physical education. With little remaining time for art instruction, learners were left with an average of 75 minutes each week for art activities: hardly enough time to make connections with their worlds through, for example, out-of-class field trips.

Perhaps disconnectedness could arise, too, from teacher insecurity. Of the 19 participants, only three seemed to feel comfortable planning and implementing art lessons and assessing their students' work. If teachers do not feel comfortable creating art themselves then this insecurity could be transmitted to their students. It goes back to value: if teachers give the impression that they do not place importance on visual arts, or even an area of study within it, then impressionable learners could follow suit. Whilst I would not wish to suggest clear conclusions, the students' artwork in the classrooms of those who said they did not feel comfortable teaching art seemed to be of less quality than those in the rooms of more confident teachers.

Comfort issues could have a detrimental influence on concept of art which, in turn, could lead to inconsistent art education programmes and lost opportunities to connect with a wide variety of media. Some participants, for example, felt comfortable teaching crafts, to the exclusion of fine arts and/or visual culture studies. This could lead their learners to miss out on connections with media beyond crafts (drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture) or on exploring media

that saturate their worlds (comic strips, music videos, magazine advertisements). This could impact not only individual classrooms but also outwith these classrooms through its influence on other teachers' programmes. If several teachers, for example, do only clean art activities with their students, then colleagues who do not feel comfortable with art could feel that they do not have to, or even should not, undertake messy ones either.

Although mess was a relatively small concern among the participants, it could add further to learner disconnectedness. The majority of artworks were pencil drawings, suggesting to me that even messy drawing materials, such as chalk pastels or inks, were not used often. The problem with doing mainly, or only, clean activities in art is that, again, learners might not have opportunities to explore a variety of media. This lack of variation could be limiting to their general understanding about what art is. I found this in specific responses to the question, 'What is your concept of art?'. Most answers were very narrow, perhaps as a result of the participants' limited exposure to art education in their own backgrounds.

Lack of narrative imagination

Nussbaum's (1997) concept of narrative imagination involves learners using 'sympathetic imagination' (p. 85) to help them understand the world. They can do this not only by learning facts about art but also by empathising with the artist(s) in order to interpret meaning better. When learners are not given opportunities to use this imagination, they are only learning, at best, isolated, irrelevant facts.

The OME (1998) arts document contains language that encourages narrative imagination; for example, in an expectation for learners as young as age six:

By the end of Grade one, students will ... express a response to an art work that clearly communicates how the ideas, information, and feelings relate to their own experiences ... (p. 31)

This expectation came from a critical thinking strand and it encourages narrative imagination by having the students look at works of art and construct formal responses and personal connections to these.

When I asked the study participants the questions, 'Based on your experiences so far, what does art education mean to you?' and 'Can you give me a concrete

example of what you do that you feel exemplifies what art education means to you?', their responses were limited. Despite the fact the OME (1998) art expectations include many references to verbal and written analyses of art, I found that the teachers' responses contained little regarding opportunities for nurturing narrative imagination in their students. Although the interviewees were excited to share activities that they did with their students, the majority seemed to focus on basic fine arts skills and holiday crafts without encouraging learners to think deeply about what they created. Andie, for example, had her students make pine cone skiers as an example of a crafts activity. When asked if the learners did anything to extend the art-making into a more narrative experience, such as composing a journal reflection and/or making connections to the sport of skiing, she replied: '*No. They just make them for decoration*'. Most of the other participants shared similar activities and responses. Even those who taught art history as part of their art programmes did little to take the experience to a more imaginative level.

Issues of subject hierarchy and time could also, again, have an impact on narrative imagination. If teachers do not integrate art with language, for example, then they might not consider extension activities to broaden the art experience and help their students find more meaning from creating art. Overall, my impressions of many participants' lack of comfort with teaching art suggested that they were in 'survival mode'; that is, they seemed to be doing what they could to cover the basics of what they thought was art. They knew that they had to have a mark on the provincial report card for visual arts and, therefore, had their students create basic drawings, designs, and crafts, with few exploring other media (printmaking, sculpture, video) to expand that narrow concept of art. Based on the participants' responses and my observations of student artworks, little was being done in art education beyond creating. Students did not have opportunities to plan in sketchbooks, write or talk reflectively, or discuss their works (and those of others) in group critiques. The inclusion of all or any of these extension activities would have provided them with ways to develop narrative imagination. It seems probable that these activities were not happening due to a lack of art education experience among the generalist teachers. They were implementing ideas found from colleagues, books, the internet, and, rarely, from their pre-service art education preparation and/or PD days.

Scientific misunderstanding

For an art education context, I interpreted Nussbaum's (1997) fourth capacity, scientific understanding, as a focus on art-making skills and techniques. According to the OME (1998), teachers must provide opportunities for students to learn a wide range of skills using age-appropriate tools, materials, and techniques. The arts document writers expand these expectations to include a list of suggested media within the areas of fine arts, crafts, and emergent technologies. Art education should surely nurture not only art appreciation through the study of art history and criticism but also allow learners to explore a variety of tools, materials, and techniques within each medium. It is the only place in their education where they learn to make art.

The participants spent the majority of their art education time teaching their students how to make art, whether it was in the form of fine arts, crafts, or visual culture studies. Despite these foci and the OME (1998) expectations, the media, tool, and material choices available to the learners in the location of this study were narrow and did not seem to provide a wide, comprehensive art experience. One reason for the disconnect between the skills mandated by the province and those actually taught by the participants could be that most interviewees admitted to not using the OME (1998) arts document as a source for ideas. Although teachers in Ontario are required to use OME documents for their lesson expectations and assessment guidelines for all subjects, only four of the 19 participants told me that they used the OME (1998) arts document. The majority relied exclusively on other sources (colleagues, books, the internet) for skill and technique ideas. Although sharing ideas with other teachers, for example, could be good for building collegiality, it could end up being a system of 'viral art education'; that is, once one teacher does an art activity and displays it, then others may copy it instead of also getting ideas from the OME (1998) arts document, art textbooks, or the internet. I saw evidence of common activities in a couple of schools where most teachers had done the same art project, regardless of grade/age level. Similarly, letting student interests drive the content of art programmes could also lead to learners missing opportunities for diverse art experiences.

The external issues of subject hierarchy and support seemed to have a strong negative impact on scientific understanding. With much emphasis on literacy and

numeracy in elementary schools, art education skills and techniques could seem unimportant in comparison with reading, writing, and mathematical ones. Lack of emphasis on optional subjects, such as art, could explain why the support needed for effective teaching of art skills and techniques was lacking in some schools. All participants, except Meme and Caley, said that support was minimal, especially in the form of a variety of supplies and tools with most indicating they had access to only construction paper, glue, and tempera paint. Anything else was purchased by teachers to augment those basic supplies. Without access to supplies for all media mandated in the OME (1998) arts document, limited skills and techniques could be taught. The schools seemed to be stocked for drawing, design, and painting lessons; however, I did not see tools and materials for printmaking and sculpture activities. Unlike larger school boards in southern Ontario, neither of the two boards participating in this study had a warehouse for art supplies. Laura was the only participant who did printmaking with her students and, when asked where she got the tools and inks, she said she had borrowed them from a friend who taught art at a nearby high school.

With respect to scientific understanding, time could be a negative factor explaining which art skills and techniques were taught. With minimal time for art education, it was understandable that teachers focused on clean activities such as drawing and design because they take less time to prepare, implement, and clean up. Art lessons that generate mess, like painting, printmaking, and sculpture, often take much more preparation, implementation, and cleaning time. This could be why only Dreamer and Doreen mentioned doing sculpture with their students, albeit in the form of models for science and social studies projects.

Time for PD for scientific understanding (to learn new skills appropriate for elementary art education implementation) seemed lacking, according to the majority of the participants interviewed. Lee, Trinity, and Alice mentioned that their PD time was often pre-determined for literacy and numeracy initiatives, leaving little or no time to learn art skills and techniques. Without this art PD, it was not surprising that most resorted to getting their ideas from colleagues, books, and the internet, leading to a potentially narrow understanding of art media. Although the two coordinators agreed that there was a strong literacy and numeracy focus within their school boards, they added that art workshops were available to

elementary teachers each year on either a voluntary basis or for the arts liaison people.

Comfort or discomfort with art education could be related to choices teachers make on the skills and techniques they teach and/or what art workshops they would choose to attend, if given the opportunity. Although one might assume that teachers might take any opportunity to learn more about a skill they felt they lacked, the opposite seemed true according to the interviewees. Those who mentioned art workshops rarely took advantage of them. Meme, Lee, Dreamer, and Melanie were the only ones who said that they had enhanced their art knowledge through local and other workshops. Meme was the only interviewee to say that she welcomed local artists coming into her classroom. Not one participant mentioned learning art skills and techniques through the local college's 'Artsperience' (Canadore College 2010) summer workshop programme, nor did anyone mention the two public art galleries in North Bay that offer evening and weekend art workshops for both teachers and students. Only Red stated that she used the Ontario Arts Council's (OAC) services and that had been for music, not visual arts.

Concepts of art may be related to comfort with regard to explaining why many participants did not seem to seek help for learning and teaching specific art skills. Regardless if they taught fine arts, or crafts, or visual culture studies, or a blend, if they felt comfortable teaching within their preferred focus, and had not taught much else, they would perhaps not seek new media, techniques, or skills to share with their students. Lori and Andie, for example, said that they focused on teaching crafts to the exclusion of other art media and skills. Although such a narrow art focus could provide some instructor comfort, it would do little to provide opportunities for learners to explore art education in a wide, comprehensive way.

Re-visiting the guiding questions

After focusing on the data through the lens of the conceptual framework, I then turned to the guiding questions for this study to see how well the data analysis helped me to gain a better understanding of what makes elementary art education potentially expendable. In chapter one, I listed the guiding questions as a way of helping me to focus the central research issue:

1. Why is art education important, or not, for students, educators, parents, and other stakeholders?
2. Is art jettisoned in favour of implementing other policies and curricular subjects?
3. Do teachers use other programmes and initiatives as an excuse not to teach art?
4. How do teachers feel about teaching art?
5. Is art expendable?

These questions were answered, in part, through the literature review in chapters one, two, and three. I have noted that I added further questions as I conducted the interviews, recorded observations, and read related documents. To help answer my questions, I drew upon ideas generated from the data analysis using the lenses of the conceptual framework and literature review.

Why is art education important, or not, for students, educators, parents, and other stakeholders?

This question arose from my assumption that there was a range of feelings regarding the importance of art education in schools. Art advocates are always fighting to raise its level of respect among education stakeholders and, often, their battles are lost. Through this study, I wanted to inform my practice as an art education lecturer, as suggested by Galbraith (1995), Richardson (1997), and Cole and Knowles (2000), by finding the answer(s) to this question in order to prepare pre-service teachers better.

Despite art being one of Ontario's mandated elementary curricula, it seemed relegated to the fringe in most classrooms studied here. There was much inconsistency of planning, delivery, and assessment of art, which suggests some indifference among the teachers towards art as a subject area. Art education did not seem to be taken as seriously as other subjects; for example, most participants did not seek art PD that was available locally. This supports the views of Efland (1989), Eisner (1991), Robinson (1999), and Sumara (2005) regarding indifference towards art in comparison with the importance placed on core subjects such as language and mathematics.

In my art education programme, I feel fortunate to have the same amount of time for art as other subject areas. Like mathematics, music, physical and health education, science, and social studies, art is allotted 24 hours of instruction time in the Faculty of Education timetable. This equal-time approach of the education programme supports Eisner (1985) and Goodson's (1993) admonitions regarding art's contribution to curricular balance and only language and methods are given more time (72 hours each) for pre-service teachers. The subject-equity approach is an arguably good model for pre-service teachers to allot equal time for all subjects, regardless of their core or optional status, in future programmes. Whilst Galbraith (1995) suggests that professors/lecturers have much impact, I question how long that impact lasts. Once pre-service teachers are working in north-eastern Ontario schools, this subject equity seems to disappear, even when elementary teachers have much choice as to when, and how long, they teach art. This was seen in the wide range of time spent for art implementation outside of mandated core subject and physical activity minutes in the participants' schools (see table two in chapter five).

Despite its marginalisation, visual arts instruction seemed to fare better than other arts (dance, drama). When the participants mentioned the arts, most said they taught visual arts and music as stand-alone subjects but sometimes visual arts was integrated into other subjects. They taught drama as part of their language classes and dance was included within physical and health education. Music was taught by specialists only in senior elementary schools. This division of the arts, and the difference in attention to each, supports Persky, Sandene, and Askew's (1998) view and the findings of People For Education (PFE) (2004, 2008): music and visual arts have a higher status in elementary schools than dance and drama. That said, I found it interesting that both school boards involved in this study hired specialists to teach music but there were no official art specialists. There were a couple of 'unofficial' art specialists in the form of generalist teachers who were considered talented in art and to whom others would go for ideas.

A reason for the indifference and inconsistency within the study location may be art's high 'fun factor'. Making art engaging to students may make it difficult to justify to conservative stakeholders who value core subjects more than optional ones. As an art educator, I would wish to promote art's intrinsic values. I agree

with Dissanayake (1988), Arnheim (1990), Levi and Smith (1991), Fowler (1996), Pitman (1998), Gardner (2000), Holland and O'Connor (2004), Anderson and Milbrandt (2005), Goldberg (2006), and Davis (2008) who argue that art education experiences are good for learners, allowing them to develop not only basic artistic skills but also awareness of themselves and the world (see 'Looking through the lenses' in chapter two). These values, however, need to be marketed better to stakeholders in order to gain their support for art. According to Apple (1989), Toch (1991), Buchbinder (1999), Gidney (1999), Sears (2003), Emery and Ohanian (2004), Chapman (2005), Clark (2006), Jardine et. al. (2008), and Sobol (2010), in an era of business-driven education, art seems to need justification everywhere, including elementary schools in north-eastern Ontario. The participants in this study perceived that the curricular focus of both school boards was literacy and numeracy. This focus was similar within boards and education authorities in other regions of Ontario, Canada, and the world, as suggested by Bamford (2006), Jardine et. al. (2006), and UNESCO (2006). Unfortunately for art education in the location of this study, my findings showed what seemed to be ample support for the neo-liberal ideologies of Finn (1990), Lazere (1992), and Hanushek (1994) and their focus on core subjects.

Regarding other stakeholders, there seemed to be some influence of students in the choices made for art lessons. Whilst students influenced some implementation, parents, according to the interviewees, had little influence, suggesting a lack of parental understanding and/or interest in art education. The most extreme comment came from Sophie who indicated that the parents of her students discarded their children's artwork when it came home from school. Perhaps the influence of PFE (2004, 2008) in raising the awareness of the importance of the arts, including visual arts education, has not yet reached north-eastern Ontario, leading to a similar lack of parental support to that found by Page (2007). There is some support in my data for art as 'edu-tainment', as described by Geahigan (1992), Pitman (1998), and Farnham et. al. (2005). Although fun can be, and should be, an element of engagement for any subject area, and supports Nussbaum's (2007) capability of play, it should surely not be the only focus or reason for elementary art education.

The participants, for the most part, stated that their administrators were supportive of art education. They included a few examples of how Principals had arranged to

bring in guest artists and provided some compensation for art supplies bought out-of-pocket. There were, however, many more comments regarding the lack of appropriate supplies available in the school storage rooms. If more importance had been placed on art education by the administrators, they might have provided more supplies, with more variety for all areas of art media. These findings were similar to those of Burton, Horowitz, and Abeles (1999), Luehrman (2002), and Davis (2008).

The school boards had different views of art education, depending on the data source. Based on the participants' perceptions, the school boards spent little or no time and money on supplies, resources, or PD opportunities for art education. These perceptions echo parts of Davis' (2008) list of objections to art education (see 'Voices against art education' in chapter three). The elementary coordinators and the classroom support centre employees, however, disagreed. They stated that not only were there yearly art workshops and arts liaison personnel but also there were many forms of art resources available to teachers via courier. This disconnect suggests communication problems between the school boards and their classroom teachers. This could explain why participants felt their school boards saw art as unimportant and why school board representatives felt teachers did not take much interest in art education. This could also answer one of the questions about what causes art expendability raised in chapter one: 'Is it external, political interests that place more value on core subjects than on optional subjects?'. In the location of this study, I think the problem was more of an internal, systemic nature. Although Mary mentioned the EQAO as a provincial influence on art expendability, the problem seemed to be more local, resulting from miscommunication between school boards and teachers.

Is art jettisoned in favour of implementing other policies and curricular subjects?

This question originally arose from my assumption that the Ontario elementary curriculum, regardless of grade/age group, was over-crowded and left little room for what should be taught in art education. I found, through this study, that art in the schools of the participants is taught with a streamlined, narrow focus; that is, using mainly traditional visual arts media (drawing) and/or crafts, with minimal art history and design activities. This finding supports the views of Macdonald (1970),

Gaitskell et. al. (1982), Clark (1994), Brodie (2002), and Wright et. al. (2005) for it is in keeping with the Western norms of what is taught in elementary art education. I would add that, in the north-eastern Ontario elementary schools studied here, art education content may be more sparse because it is lacking in other foci expected by the OME (1998): design, painting, printmaking, sculpture, art criticism, and emergent technologies. Based on this minimalist approach to elementary art education, the learners in the location of this study had only limited opportunities for nurturing Nussbaum's (1997) capacities of critical self-examination, connectedness with the world, narrative imagination, and scientific understanding.

In chapter two, I asked questions regarding effective art education practice in general. I wondered, for example, if elementary students in north-eastern Ontario were getting opportunities, through art education, for skill development and reflection. I found, from teachers interviewed here, that they had opportunities for creating basic drawings, designs, and holiday crafts, plus some for printmaking, sculpture, and video. These practices were fine for the basics of scientific understanding in an art-related way, but I heard described few that could challenge learners enough to help them move from what Perez (1993) and Hobbs and Rush (1997) describe as a universal level of art ability to higher, more sophisticated levels. This could be due to ineffective preparation at the initial teacher-education level, as suggested by Holt (1997) and Bamford (2006). The participants had studied in several Faculties of Education within and outwith Ontario so their inexperience with art education was not necessarily due to insufficiencies in one pre-service programme specifically. It was more likely due to an overview approach to art within the programmes and/or personal comfort issues with the subject. Few opportunities for learners to be challenged through art education could also be related to the views of Woods (1986) and Fullan (1993, 1999, 2003) that point to teachers' general lack of attention to educational research and policy. If they do not see this as relevant, it will not be included in their lives and translated into the classroom setting. As well, few participants included art history and allowed only minimal time for art criticism, both of which are ideal ways to develop critical self-examination, connectedness with the world, and narrative imagination. Although Nussbaum's (1997) capacities are not included within the OME (1998, 2009a) art curricula, they are there indirectly in the form of many theory, creation, and analysis expectations.

Teaching is about values and choices and teachers make pedagogical choices based on what is important to them. Gardner (2000) and Bamford (2006) suggest that there is a huge difference between what is taught and what ought to be taught because of these values. Teachers are the ultimate filters for what happens in their classrooms and, although they have curricular guidelines (OME 1998, 2009a) and rules of professionalism (OCT 2006) to follow, they have control over visual arts content, delivery, and the weekly time devoted to that delivery. They are filters because they can hold other filters (history, policy, practice, economics, geography) within them, either intentionally or unintentionally. I found, through this study, that there was both intentional and unintentional inconsistency in how art education was planned, implemented, and assessed. Laura and Joe, for example, used different approaches to assessment: Laura chose to use the OME achievement chart to mark her students' works whereas Joe chose not to mark art to avoid self-esteem issues among his students.

These findings led me to ask, 'Why is ineffective implementation allowed to occur?'. In addition to the OME (1998, 2004) arts documents and OCT (2006) guidelines for practice, there is some local governance via the OME (2007c) Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA) programme but it is only effective if administrators understand and encourage art education and know what to look for when they evaluate teacher practice. Of the 19 participants, only two (Meme, Dreamer) indicated that their Principals seemed to understand what they did and what they needed for effective art education. Bamford (2006) recommends that administrators reflect more on art education in their schools and become more knowledgeable regarding its planning, implementation, and assessment in order to understand and evaluate it better.

After analysing several interviews and observations, plus 'crystallising' the data, I do not think that the participants' intentionally jettison art in favour of other subjects. I think, instead, that they feel overwhelmed at what is mandated for them to cover in a school year, especially if they are teaching in an EQAO standardised testing year (grade three/age eight, grade six/age 11). They seemed to have good intentions to teach art in order to provide their students with a well-balanced education but felt limited by support, time, and lack of art knowledge to plan, implement, and assess art effectively. As well, I think that the OME (1998, 2004)

arts documents could be examples of what Bowe, Ball, and Gold (1992) criticise as unclear texts because they did little to help generalist teachers understand what needs to be taught, and how it is to be assessed, due to vague language and sparse descriptions.

Do teachers use other programmes and initiatives as an excuse not to teach art?

When I created the list of guiding questions for this study, my assumptions were based on experience and reading. I assumed that elementary teachers not only did not like teaching art but also found ways to work around it. I was, therefore, pleasantly surprised by how much time the participants devoted to teaching art each week: an average of about 75 minutes, plus some integration of art into other subjects through multi-disciplinary projects. This use of integration supports the views of Blecher and Jaffee (1998), Naested (1998), Engel (2002), Goldberg (2006), and Cornett (2007) on the promotion of blending art education with other subjects, especially at the elementary level.

I do not think the participants used standardised testing as an excuse not to teach art. Although the testing had been introduced by a former, and unpopular, Conservative provincial government, the participants did not seem to be fighting the political system through non-compliance in the classroom in ways outlined by Gidney (1999), Sears (2003), and Olssen, Codd, and O'Neill (2004). It seemed that they had moved on from the political turmoil of the late 1990s and were making an effort to provide some form of art education, regardless of how they felt about it and the OME (1998, 2004) arts documents. No one mentioned the Harris years and his government's impact on art education specifically or education in general. I think it was more about the participants being overwhelmed with how much time was mandated for language, mathematics, and daily physical activity, plus student-preparation for standardised tests. As a result, elementary teachers had little comparative time to do art, let alone other subjects like dance, drama, French, music, science, social studies, plus character education and Native studies initiatives. This seems to support Aoki (2005), Jardine et. al. (2006), and Pinar's (2006) attention to a lack of curricular flexibility due to a crowded elementary curriculum.

How do teachers feel about teaching art?

When I included this question, it, too, came from my pre-dissertation study assumptions. I had taught art education mainly at the secondary and university levels and, based on that limited experience, thought that elementary teachers did not want to teach art. In fact, the interviewees were more positive about teaching art than I had expected, regardless of the amount of formal art instruction they had received. I also found, despite this positive outlook, they had much anxiety about planning, implementing, assessing, and creating art and their responses answered another question that I had early in the study: ‘Could the issue [of expendability] be more internal; that is, anxiety among elementary teachers when teaching art?’ . Most of the interviewees shared major concerns regarding what they perceived as their ‘fitness’ for teaching art. Several suggested that art specialists be hired to look after art education at the elementary level or that generalists receive much more art PD. Their comments and suggestions mirror not only the findings of Holt (1997), Wilson (1997a), Ashton (1999), Burton, Horowitz, and Abeles (1999), Duncum (1999), Eisner (1999), Hudson and Hudson (2001, 2007), Oreck (2001, 2006), and Bamford (2006), but also those from my trial study. Comfort with teaching art seemed to be more significant to the participants than the number of subjects and initiatives they had to fit into each school week.

Is art expendable?

This guiding question was based on informal conversations with pre-service teachers and my experience evaluating them during their practice-teaching weeks. I suspected that art was not only marginalised in some schools but also expendable in others. According to Alan Spooner (2003), the term ‘expendable’ may mean ‘disposable, inessential, insignificant, replaceable, [or] unimportant’ (p. 141). My decision to choose that term to describe art education was also based on reading (see ‘Voices against art education’ in chapter three). After meeting the participants and other stakeholders, hearing their perceptions about the state of visual arts in both their professional and personal lives, and making observations about their school environments, I now think the term ‘expendable’ is too strong and inappropriately negative.

The results of this study indicate that art is not missing in the schools of the participants but that its instruction time is minimal in comparison to the amount

taught for core subjects like language and mathematics. There were wide variations in its implementation: art was thriving in some schools but was nearly absent in others. These findings are similar to those of Clark (1994, 2006), Boyer (1995), Chapman (2005), Davis (2008), and Sobol (2010) who expressed concerns about the lack of serious attention to visual arts as a subject, leaving it susceptible to elimination. I also found that the elementary art education taught in the location of this study was probably not as effective as it could be; for example, it was rarely reflective of the OME (1998, 2004) arts documents. I am not an absolute advocate for these documents because some expectations are vague and unrealistic. They are not perfect but they are mandatory for art education content and delivery in Ontario. Similarly, teachers made choices as to what they display within and outwith their classrooms; for example, bulletin boards were used mainly for literacy and numeracy posters/exemplars rather than student artwork, so art could be viewed as unimportant in the minds of not only students but also other stakeholders. These findings support Clark (1994, 2006), Gardner (2000), and Bamford's (2006) views on the ways in which individual teachers' choices can affect content. What ought surely to be taught often is not.

The disconnect between what is expected by the OME and what actually happens raised many questions within me, including, 'Why did many teachers not use the OME (1998, 2004) arts documents as their main resources for planning, implementation, and assessment?'. Perhaps it was the vagueness of the documents' language that allowed for the wide interpretation of visual arts implementation and assessment, as suggested by the views of Bowe, Ball, and Gold (1992). Some participants said that they did not like the language within the documents and were turned off because of it. Others said that they had not had PD opportunities targeted specifically at planning, implementing, and assessing art and, therefore, focused only on what they felt like doing. Most participants admitted that they did little or no assessment of artwork, despite a section for visual arts on the provincial report card and availability of OME (1998, 2004) assessment resources. The achievement chart, for example, has been in existence for over 12 years so the participants should have been aware of it. Only two participants (Meme, Laura), however, mentioned using the chart to help them assess students' work. This lack of attention to OME-prescribed assessment strategies could reflect how teachers deal with the local and provincial emphasis on core-subject standardised testing.

Removing assessment from an optional subject like art could provide test-relief. I think, however, it had more to do with lack of understanding of the subject, and the art-specific language in the achievement chart, among the participants. Hudson and Hudson (2001, 2007) and Oreck (2001, 2006) found similar issues with subject discomfort and art assessment. Without much art education knowledge, teachers might well feel uncomfortable marking art projects, with or without an achievement chart as a guideline.

Other questions

After I established the guiding questions in chapter one, other questions arose. Some were answered whilst some remain unanswered. Based on my many years of teaching experience in the same locality as this study, I thought geography would be an issue but it did not seem to be. This topic spawned the questions, ‘Could geographic location have some bearing on the quality of art education implementation?’, ‘Does a school’s location in relation to the board office and/or major art centres affect art education?’, ‘Do teachers in the rural schools of north-eastern Ontario have less access to school board art resources?’, ‘Are these rural schools compensated for field trips to art centres in order for learners to see real works of art?’, and ‘Does the OME consider “differentness” of learning art in the north in comparison to learning it in an urban centre?’. Based on not only the transcripts but also observations and follow-up discussions with school board stakeholders, the answer to all but the last question seemed to be ‘No’. Although Sharon expressed concern regarding the long distance from her school to the board office to obtain resources, no one else seemed to be bothered by their location. There were no concerns expressed regarding accessibility to resources, art centres, or anything else related to art education. The participants in this study focused on working with what resources and supplies they had at hand. Few seemed to consider going outside of their immediate environments to classroom support centres, let alone beyond the boundaries of their school boards for field trips and/or workshops.

The answer to the last question seemed to be within the OME (1998, 2004) arts documents themselves. The concept of ‘differentness’ relates to the fact that they were written for use in all Ontario elementary schools, regardless of their locations in urban, rural, or remote regions of the province and ‘differentness’ of location and

accessibility to resources and supplies may not have been considered by the OME. Instead, the vague language of the expectations was likely due to an OME goal of ‘sameness’; that is, to provide the same expectations for all students in Ontario, regardless of their different needs and/or locations.

Other questions were related to art as a way of learning, or helping, other subjects. These questions were, ‘Should the justification of the presence of art in schools be only to benefit other subject areas?’, ‘Should nurturing other subjects be the sole purpose of art education?’, and ‘Has the economy-driven education system turned the concept of “art for art’s sake” into “art for language’s sake” or “art for mathematics’ sake”?’ After conducting this study, I think the answer to all three questions is, again, ‘No’. According to the participants, art was not used to develop skills in other subjects, even when it was integrated into cross-curricular projects. Instead, they suggested that integration was used as a way to find more time for art education in the time allotted for other subjects and to incorporate the teachers’ own subject strengths into art lessons. This supports the findings of Winner and Cooper (2000), Winner and Hetland (2000, 2001), Hudson and Hudson (2001, 2007), and Oreck (2001, 2006). None of the participants mentioned that they taught art to help their students develop reading, writing, or mathematics skills, as recommended by DeJarnette (1997), Wilhelm (2004), Danko-McGhee and Slutsky (2007), and Edens and Potter (2007). The two coordinators added that they encouraged blending art with literacy when providing PD for teachers as a way to use OME funding indirectly for art education. Despite this link to literacy, the majority of the participants said that they taught art in isolation, for its own sake.

Caley’s gender and art education concerns raised some questions that remain unanswered in this study. He was worried that a focus on traditional academic skills was not good for boys who, he felt, needed more hands-on opportunities in order to learn better. He favoured using video in many of his lessons in order to provide a medium that would not only appeal to the boys in his programme but also give them an alternative to seatwork. I wondered, after his interview, if his concerns were more widespread; for example, if other participants felt that the boys in their programmes learned better through hands-on activities in art lessons than they did in core subjects. Although nothing in the literature review mentioned this

as either a concern or benefit of art education, this could be a topic I could explore in future work and/or study.

Conclusions

Normally, scrapbooks are representations of personal celebrations. They contain the happy images and thoughts of their creators' major life activities; for example, weddings, anniversaries, births, and holidays. Although there were minor celebrations within this study (more art instruction time than originally thought, integration of art into other subjects, some attention to VCAE), areas of concern overshadowed them when the findings were organised and shared for they illustrate a troubling view of the state of elementary art education in the participants' schools.

Art education is not expendable in the north-eastern Ontario schools studied but it is an endangered subject area. Threats to it come in many forms and from various sources (see figure 14 in chapter five):

1. minimal use of the mandated art curriculum among teachers;
2. individual teachers' wide range of concepts of art;
3. lack of respect for, understanding of, and comfort with art education among many stakeholders;
4. high focus on literacy, numeracy, and other initiatives to the detriment of art education;
5. low expectations of optional subject implementation;
6. inconsistent planning, delivery, and assessment;
7. minimal monitoring of art education among administrators;
8. poor funding for, and/or availability of resources and supplies; and
9. issues associated with mess, time, location, and gender.

Although these threats were of great concern to me, I felt that the biggest threats to effective art education in the participants' schools were systemic problems: miscommunication and disconnection. Many of the concerns listed above could have become non-issues if communication had been better among teachers, administrators, school board officials, coordinators, resource people, the OME, students, and parents. Instead, there seemed to be disconnections among and between all of them. Teachers seemed disconnected from the OME (1998, 2004) arts documents. Their perceptions were that their administrators seemed

disconnected regarding supplies needed for art instruction. The coordinators and classroom support centre workers suggested that the teachers had ample resources and PD support whereas the participants felt that they had hardly any. The importance of art education was rarely instilled within students or parents. The result was a wide range of perceptions of what ought to be taught for elementary art education and the narrow practice of art implementation.

In the next chapter, I will reflect on the dissertation study as a whole and suggest recommendations that might help alleviate personal and systemic issues that impact effective implementation of elementary art education in negative ways. By suggesting these recommendations and acting on them in my own practice and spheres of influence, I want to create positive change in elementary art education, at least in the location of this study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Reflections, Recommendations, Plans



Introduction

According to British educationalist James Calderhead (1991), reflection is the bridge between knowledge and action. This study encouraged and necessitated much reflection and it enhanced my knowledge of not only elementary art education issues but also possible actions to improve its planning, implementation, and assessment. It also provided opportunities to reflect deeply on my practice as a researcher and art educator. In the following chapter, I outline such reflections and acknowledge the limitations of this research. Additionally, I suggest recommendations for art education improvement and detail my own plans to put these into action.

Reflections on the dissertation

I like doing research. At least I like it now. Until I started my graduate studies, my research experience was limited as my undergraduate degrees focused more on essay writing and art portfolio preparation than on research skills. I began to learn about conducting research when working on my Master of Education degree and then dove into it more deeply in my doctoral studies. At times in the past, doing research did not engage me because it did not feel creative so nearly eight years of graduate work took its toll on my inner artist. This dissertation, and its trial study, however, changed my mind about research. I enjoyed working on topics that were of practical importance. One of my concerns on acceptance to the Doctor of Education programme was that I would have to do research on exclusively British education issues and that I would not have the opportunity to explore those with more direct impact on my practice in Canada. Although I have learned much about education in Britain (National Curriculum, Learning and Teaching Scotland's Creativity project) through the programme, I was relieved that I was allowed to

choose topics that were professionally and contextually relevant for me not only for course assignments but also for my dissertation.

The change from non-researcher to researcher was gradual. Initially, I conducted research because I had to but I soon found myself writing topic ideas and reflections on scrap paper and dinner napkins. I would then run to my computer to expand on them in some section of course assignments or this study in order not to lose my train of thought. I composed sentences and paragraphs in my head while walking my dog. I spent hours web-searching the expanding range of related topics and discovered the process excited me.

I also became better at reflection and critical thinking, both of which had been relatively lacking during my years as a classroom teacher. Through reflection, I discovered more about myself as both a learner and a teacher and, through critical thinking opportunities, I learned more about what the Center for Critical Thinking (1996) calls the ‘valuable intellectual traits ... humility, courage, empathy, integrity, perseverance, faith in reason, and fair-mindedness’ (p. 15). I tried to use both my developing powers of reflection and these intellectual traits when reading, listening to the participants, observing their classrooms, and interpreting their transcripts.

This study has provided a glimpse into the art education worlds of a group of elementary teachers in north-eastern Ontario. Their stories were rich with details about the challenges they faced and how they managed teaching a subject with which most did not feel comfortable. It was important to me that their stories were not lost but available for future audiences. As both an art educator and as a researcher, I knew that I was, as Richardson (1997) suggests, ‘doing the staging’ (p. 148) when interpreting and sharing the data. In this study, I represented the individual and collective stories of the participants and spoke for them in their service and this was not without its limitations and dangers. I used my voice, for example, to compare the study findings with similar themes suggested in the literature in order to help inspire what Schön (1983) calls ‘reflection on the action’ (p. 62) of my practice and of other teachers. I found myself finding connections among the different voices and re-thinking my own practice as a result.

Conducting an interpretive study was liberating. I felt that the participants' and others' perceptions, teaching environments, and other observations offered a huge range of new understanding that a Positivist study might not have yielded and inspired me to undertake similar studies in the future. Although this was my second study using developmental phenomenography, I still do not feel comfortable with Marton (1994) and Bowden's (2000) suggestions that interview transcripts should be the primary sources of data for interpretation. Adding observation and other forms of data to my collection and analysis meant that what started as a predominantly phenomenographic study evolved into a critical ethnographic one because the former alone did not seem to allow me to dig deeply enough into the problem.

I found the analysis and discussion segments similar to turning the camera on myself. They provided a means of interrogating my practice and made me, at times, feel uncomfortable. When I read in the transcripts about what elementary teachers said they needed, I felt guilty that I spend the bulk of my course time teaching pre-service teachers how to make art instead of spending more time on the challenges of preparation, implementation, and assessment. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) suggest that, through the reflexive nature of ethnography, the orientations of researchers will be shaped by the socio-historical locations, including the values and interests that these locations confer upon them. (p. 16)

This study forced me to critique local elementary art education and reflect on my own values as an art educator. Conducting research in, and on, elementary environments made me address my former 'high school teacher' prejudices, plus my current ones as a university lecturer, and these led to a better understanding of elementary art education. I knew when I began this study that I would learn much through the process but what I did not expect was how much I would learn about myself.

Writing has always helped me walk through problems and learn along the way. So, writing this dissertation, and especially organising and presenting the results of the data analysis, was a positive process for me. It helped me to re-think the central research issue which was something that had been a part of both my personal and professional life for decades. According to Coffey (1999), research can challenge the self; that is, make one think about unconsidered issues, regardless of how much

background and experience one has with the issue and its location. Through this study, my mind was opened to new concepts that changed some deeply-ingrained attitudes I had carried with me for most of my career. It affirmed some things that I do well in my practice but it also revealed holes within it. I discovered I had what I call ‘experience-centricity’; that is, I thought that only experienced teachers would have valuable knowledge to share. Sophie, however, showed me that the perceptions of new teachers are very valuable. I think that of all the participants, I learned the most from her because she was the closest link to those I teach. As a first year teacher, she was only a few months’ experience away from my pre-service teachers. She also reminded me of myself in my first year of teaching: too afraid to say ‘No’ when asked to teach subjects with which I did not feel comfortable and taking on too much with minimal support. She made me think of how I prepare pre-service teachers and what I need to improve.

Another significant thing I learned is that it does not take long to be out of touch with the world of the classroom. I had the teaching experience related to the junior-intermediate (ages nine to 16) focus of my pre-service courses but my elementary teaching had been limited (two years), ending in 1989. Interviewing elementary teachers helped me to reconnect with, and learn from, their world. During the interviews, the volunteers introduced me to new education acronyms such as ‘DPA’¹¹ and ‘CASI’¹² and I realised how important it was to stay in contact with classroom teachers in order to be current to prepare for and respond to questions from pre-service teachers. Based on my experiences with the participants, I now have more respect for them. They enlightened me about their professional lives and, despite their wide range of comfort with, and implementation of, art education, they seemed to do what they could to provide a well-balanced education for their students.

The opportunity to meet local teachers was invaluable and the connections made with them bode well for future projects. Even meeting with the school and board administrators was a positive move towards strengthening links between them and

¹¹ DPA, in Ontario elementary schools, is an acronym for Daily Physical Activity (approximately 20 minutes per school day).

¹² CASI is an acronym for Comprehension, Attitudes, Strategies, and Interests. It refers to a reading assessment that covers those four areas.

my practice. Not only did most participants express interest in working with me again but also the two elementary coordinators asked me to run workshops to help local teachers become better at art instruction. These connections seem consonant with Canadian educationalist George Siemens' (2004) suggestion that lifelong learning is better in a diversified, connected atmosphere of like-minded individuals.

Despite these positive effects, the study had, of course, some limitations. It was a small study involving only 19 participants within two school boards situated in one part of a large province. Even though I had much communication with the participants, via e-mail and telephone conversations before and after their interviews, I met with each participant only once (see discussion of reasons why in chapter four). These numbers and local context reflect a regional focus and not one that would necessarily be generalised easily for a larger population and area. That said, it was never my intent to do a study reflective of the state of art education for a larger context. Although I concede that this limits the applicability of my study, it might, nonetheless, encourage others to undertake similar manageable projects in their local environments.

Another limitation was my use of photography as the guiding metaphor for this study. Although it fit well with some aspects of research (lenses of inquiry, data collection and analysis), it was more of a creative venture than research.

Photography can re-present reality but it is not reality and it can be augmented with photo-manipulation techniques. Research, conversely, should re-present reality as strictly as possible, without creative adjustments on the part of the researcher. The use of a guiding metaphor was simply a means of clarifying the dissertation topic, research process, and findings and its purpose starts and ends there.

Recommendations

The study provided me with a deeper knowledge of the topic that will inform my practice. I am very aware that I do not have all the answers to the questions generated from this study but I have found some. I discovered not only what external and internal issues I need to address when I teach pre-service teachers but also some of what I need to do in my community and beyond to promote art education.

Addressing external issues

Through this study, I found that elementary art education in the north-eastern Ontario schools I was privileged to study is impacted negatively by several issues and that its potential expendability threatens the work of teachers when they try to help students learn through art education. Based on this finding, I recommend the following ideas to address, and hopefully resolve, external issues.

1. Clarify the art curriculum

For many participants, the OME (1998) art curriculum was a barrier to effective art education in their classrooms. By suggesting some clarification of that curriculum, I am not asking the provincial government to discard their latest elementary arts document (OME 2009a). Instead, I suggest that the school boards involved in this study look at ways to simplify the information in the document to provide their generalist teachers with a reference that includes quick, easy, inexpensive, grade/age-specific art activities in line with OME expectations. I know that the two elementary coordinators have made reference binders that include art ideas for their teachers but these are tied directly to literacy initiatives and are not art-specific. If the elementary teachers within the location of this study had an art-specific resource, they might be less likely to turn exclusively to other sources (colleagues, books, the internet) which may not be connected with the provincial art curriculum.

During her interview, Trinity provided a suggestion that could work well at the school level and, perhaps, at PD workshops:

[We need] an opportunity to share great lesson plans ... Create some kind of network ... “This works in grade one [age six]. It doesn’t take much time to prepare” ... That would be fantastic.

Perhaps the elementary coordinators and/or the arts liaison teachers could organise a network for teachers to share ideas for teaching a variety of fine arts, crafts, and visual culture studies activities in ways that support the current OME (2009a) expectations. These could be included on the school boards’ web sites for easy access. I would also encourage some ‘cross-pollination’ of ideas between secondary specialists and elementary generalists so that the former can help the latter understand the art curriculum better.

2. Embrace rural locations

North-eastern Ontario is a beautiful part of the country yet few participants took advantage of their rural locations. Those who did raved about taking their students into the wilderness to do *plein-air* drawing and painting activities. I recommend that all teachers take their students beyond the walls of their classrooms to learn art. By doing so, they could widen the experience by doing traditional media in an outdoor setting and/or by using materials from their rural environments to create mixed-media works of art.

Related to the rural location issue is the idea of support from administrators for teachers to take students on field trips to art galleries and museums in both local and provincial art centres. A rural location does not mean that learners should be denied the same opportunities enjoyed by those in urban areas and all should be able to see real works of art as part of their education. By having opportunities to see artwork in galleries and museums, students can learn more about art instead of only viewing images in books or digital slide presentations. Most galleries and museums have personnel who help teachers plan and conduct these field trips. North Bay, for example, is at the geographic centre of both school boards involved in this study and, within the city, there are three galleries and two museums that are open for school groups. They not only provide tours and art-based activities but also have connections to artists within the community who are available to do classroom visits. Most of these activities are provided at a minimal cost per student; however, some are free. I suspect that most teachers know that the galleries, museums, and artists are there but most do not realise what support they can offer. I suggest that there be a better liaison system between the school boards and these community resources.

3. Blend student interests with the mandated curriculum

Some participants mentioned that they let their students generate ideas for art lessons and this finding seems to support Irwin and Chalmers' (1996) recommendation that art education should be relevant for learners; that is, it should not only include mandated expectations but also opportunities for students to bring their art interests into the mix. Learners have a wealth of ideas and many at the elementary level, for example, enjoy cartooning. This is a profitable means of promoting engagement and empowerment among learners, especially if they are

allowed to teach their classmates techniques. By allowing them to do so periodically, teachers would not have to feel under constant pressure to be art experts.

4. Reduce subject hierarchy

Subject hierarchy was a huge issue for the participants in this study, especially if they taught in a standardised testing grade/year. Although I might critique standardised literacy and numeracy testing for many reasons, I am aware that it has a strong influence on the classrooms of north-eastern Ontario elementary schools. Teachers must devote large amounts of class time to prepare students for tests which means that non-test subjects, like art, are sometimes reduced in importance. In order to help balance the emphasis on core subjects with visual arts, I recommend that the elementary teachers who are most affected by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) testing should focus on integrating art with other subjects in order to give learners more opportunities to experience learning through visual arts. That way, they can use some time within other subjects to do integrated activities, such as story illustration, in order to not only help their students meet language expectations but also drawing, design, or painting ones for visual arts.

The term ‘literacy’ seemed to have a narrow focus in the participants’ schools; for example, when mentioned, it was associated with developing reading and writing skills. According to Canadian educationalist David Booth (2008), the concept of literacy can be expanded to include visual literacy where the focus is on developing skills for interpreting images. These skills are not only crucial for learners in an age of visual media but also they can be taught and reinforced easily through design, art history, and art criticism activities. The two elementary coordinators used provincial funding to blend art into their literacy resource binders so, at least, the prospects of north-eastern Ontario elementary teachers seeing art as part of literacy are hopeful. I recommend they do the same with numeracy resources by integrating art with mathematics activities; for example, tessellations, perspective drawing, and ratio enlargements.

5. Increase support

During this study, I found that there was a wide range of support for elementary art education. The recommendation to increase it comes in the form of more funding for supplies for all mandated media and for PD for all elementary teachers. This is a timely suggestion because, due to the launch of the OME (2009a) arts document, the provincial government (OME 2008a) announced that they were providing \$10 million (£5 million) in extra funding to support the arts, physical education, and outdoor education in elementary schools. Each school board would have received a small portion of that money to use specifically for visual arts¹³. PD opportunities should be available to all elementary teachers who wish to take advantage of them and not only to arts liaisons. When asked about PD choices, some participants mentioned that they felt obliged to go to literacy and numeracy workshops instead of art ones because of their boards' focus on standardised testing. I recommend that a 'carousel' approach be taken for PD days; for example, organise a rotation of a variety of subject-specific and integration workshops in one setting so that all elementary teachers get some in-service training in art education, along with those for other subject areas. Overall, communication about PD opportunities and support centre resources could be improved so that teachers know what is available to them.

Funding should be increased for proper tools and supplies for the OME (2009a) mandated art media (drawing, mixed media, painting, printmaking, sculpture). Some participants said that they did not do sculpture or printmaking because the supplies and tools needed for those media were not present in their schools. Principals and other administrators who are responsible for ensuring that supplies are within their schools need to be in touch with what is mandatory for elementary art education. Based on my experience as a department head in one of the school boards that participated in this study, I know that most of the supplies needed for these media are on the school board bulk order lists. If they are not on the lists, they are available locally from various art supply and hardware stores. It is up to the individual teachers, arts liaison personnel, and elementary coordinators to work with administrators to apprise them of these supplies so that they are available in

¹³ When I asked representatives from both participating school boards about where that funding had been directed, I discovered that it was used to fund performing arts initiatives (drama, music) rather than visual arts ones.

the schools when needed. If elementary teachers have difficulty finding tools and resources, then I would encourage sharing with nearby high school teachers.

6. Provide time for art education

The participants in this study seemed to find a wide range of time for art education (30 to 120 minutes) within their weekly schedules. Elementary teachers have more opportunities than those who teach at the secondary level to be flexible regarding when they teach a subject and how much time they devote to it. Although the participants were obliged to teach set minutes for language, mathematics, and DPA, they still had much time left in the school week to teach visual arts. I suggested earlier that I had been pleasantly surprised at the amount of time participants set aside for art education and that some added more art time by blending it with other subjects through integration activities. That said, I recommend that all administrators give their teachers the freedom to continue to be flexible in these ways. Teachers should not feel pressured to delete art instruction time from their schedules to make room for EQAO test preparation. Like Eisner (1985), Goodson (1993), and Nelson (2009), I suggest that Principals focus on educating the whole child and not just developing language and mathematics skills. They could help teachers find more time for learning about art education, both in their daily individual preparation time and during board-wide PD days.

Addressing internal issues

If positive attention was paid to the external issues listed above, then many of the internal issues identified through this study could be addressed. I recommend the following actions to help alleviate internal issues: nurture comfort with art education, widen concepts of art, deal with mess anxieties, and be aware of gender concerns.

1. Nurture comfort

Most of the participants in this study expressed anxiety regarding many aspects of art education because of their lack of training. Art-specific workshops could help generalist teachers learn more about art education in order to improve their comfort levels with planning, implementing, and assessing art.

Even if extensive workshops were offered to teachers, would they be enough to combat years of art anxiety? The participants who shared their discomfort with art said that this began long before they became teachers; it stemmed from childhood incidents when their artwork had been ridiculed. Smith-Shank (1995) offers a solution in the form of actions of constructive criticism and encouragement, provided by colleagues and other stakeholders, to help build confidence in what elementary teachers are expected to teach in art and how they are to do it. The art-related anxiety among the participants led me to think about who should, ideally, teach art. Should generalist teachers continue to be expected to teach such a specialised area with which they do not feel comfortable or should specialists be hired to teach elementary art? A few participants (Trinity, Dreamer, Mary, Melanie) asked similar questions and suggested hiring specialists to teach art at the elementary level. Trinity said,

I think that what happens in the high schools where teachers are trained to teach specific courses based on what their passion and their skills are makes a lot of sense in earlier years.

Trinity's rationale of 'passion and their skills' was echoed by Sophie and Renée when they recommended that their school board hire art consultants from whom teachers could get ideas and instruction.

I am sure that the two school boards involved in this study would argue that hiring specialists and/or consultants was too expensive, even though the OME (2008a) provided \$44 million (£22 million) to provincial school boards to hire 590 specialists for elementary schools. These specialists were to be hired for a variety of subjects, including art education¹⁴. If school boards choose not to hire art specialists then I recommend that Principals need further training in what to look for in art education when they are conducting their staff assessments. They have dozens of performance criteria as part of the OME's (2007c) Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA) programme but none are art-education specific. As well, all elementary teachers who are expected to teach art need more opportunities for PD. This could take the form of full-day or after-school workshops or, as Alice

¹⁴ When asked about specialists, representatives from the two participating school boards said that only music specialists were hired and they were designated for senior elementary schools (grades seven and eight/ages 12 to 13), not for regular (kindergarten to grade eight/ages four to 13) or junior (kindergarten to grade six/ages four to 11) elementary schools.

suggested, release time for individual teachers to watch colleagues plan and implement art lessons, and assess artwork.

2. *Widen concepts of art*

The participants in this study saw visual arts as many things. Some perceived it as fine arts, others crafts, many blended the two, and one included visual culture studies within his programme. Despite the OME (1998) expectations that students learn fine arts, crafts, and emergent technologies as part of art education, few in the north-eastern Ontario elementary schools studied here had the opportunity to learn more than one concept of art. This disconnect seemed to be the result of teachers' discomfort with some visual arts media. PD opportunities could not only help build art education confidence within generalist teachers but also help them widen their concepts of art. Through workshops, teachers could learn how to do and teach not only fine arts media but also crafts and visual culture studies to provide a well-rounded art education experience for their students. I recommend that a variety of workshops be available so that all elementary teachers can learn more about the breadth of art education. I also suggest that these workshops be as hands-on as possible and offer take-home resources to encourage participants to take their new, expanded knowledge back to their classrooms.

3. *Deal with mess*

A few participants admitted to not feeling comfortable doing art activities that generated mess and this led them to choose clean activities such as drawing and design. Increased comfort with, and knowledge of, a variety of visual arts media might inspire teachers to do 'messy' projects with their students instead of avoiding media like painting or printmaking. Perhaps Trinity's network idea and Alice's release-time suggestion could encourage teachers to help others manage the realities of teaching art in a regular classroom with no sinks. Similar issues need to be addressed during workshops for generalist teachers so that they know ahead of time how to deal with, and not be deterred by, mess in an art lesson. I recommend that teachers have, or make, flexible time for art lessons so, if they work in a messy medium with their students, they have more time for that to relieve some of the stress.

4. Be aware of gender concerns

Caley felt that the school environment was better for girls, especially in its academic focus. Teachers may agree or disagree with him, based on their own experiences with their students; however, his concerns are a reminder for educators to consider the needs of all students and how they learn best. With regard to his concerns, elementary teachers could be encouraged to blend art into other subjects for a more hands-on approach to learning. I was happy to find that all of the participants did mainly hands-on art activities instead of focusing on art history slide information or dry art criticism activities. That said, I suggest that, if boys do indeed learn better through hands-on projects, then teachers should provide many opportunities, within all subject areas, for them to learn that way.

Plans for positive change

The recommendations above are just the beginning of ways to address the external and internal issues identified through this study. It is one thing to make recommendations but it is another to see them through into action.

Snapshot eight:

I have always been an art education advocate because I have always been an artist and I have my parents to thank for that. What my brother and I were missing in our own elementary art education our parents augmented by driving us, two hours round-trip, into Toronto for Saturday morning enriched art lessons. They also bought us sketchbooks instead of colouring books and paid for our summer art camp experiences. We were very lucky because they saw the need for us to have balance in our education. I doubt that I would be an art educator now, or my brother an architect, if they had left our art education entirely to our schools.

According to Davis (2008), ‘Advocates plead the case; others put it into action’ (p. 87). My brother and I were luckier than most because our parents could afford extra-curricular art lessons but it is ‘the most’ who I want to help now. I want to both plead the case and put it into action. This study was an opportunity to expand my knowledge of art education and now I plan to use what I have learned in order to equip myself to effect change in productive and positive ways, not only in my practice but also in my community and beyond.

Changes to practice

This study helped to clarify, for me, the state of elementary art education in north-eastern Ontario and to understand the needs of its teachers and learners. It helped me to think of ways in which I could change my practice as a university lecturer in order to help pre-service teachers address the same external and internal issues faced by the study participants (see Appendix K).

I first looked at how I present the provincial visual arts curriculum and realised that I need to make it more teacher-friendly. If pre-service teachers see it as overwhelming they might not use it in the classroom. I have used the OME (1998, 2004, 2009a) arts documents as quick reference materials during my one curriculum lesson each course rather than spending time with pre-service teachers deciphering their language and exploring ways to use them as resources. I plan to do the latter by incorporating the documents into all of my lessons in some way; for example, link the expectations and achievement chart to all media demonstrations. I have done so sparingly but need to do it more often.

Although I try to model what pre-service teachers should do in the classroom, I have never taken them outside into the wilderness environment at the doorstep of my workplace. This was mainly due to the courses being run in the winter. I have, however, some classes in the autumn and others in the spring so there are opportunities to create *plein-air* art. I will also have them brainstorm more about teaching art in alternative locations, plus dealing with being in rural or remote schools where resources are distant and/or limited.

I begin each course by asking questions about where my pre-service teachers are from, what formal art backgrounds they have, and/or art-related hobbies they do. I have not, however, spent enough time getting to know them better in order to incorporate their interests into my courses. To do this, I may create a brief survey for the first day to encourage them to share some of their interests. Although I teach them media skills and techniques and have them choose their own content for their images, I will encourage them more to incorporate these interests into their works.

Reducing subject hierarchy is challenging to put into action in my practice. Most of my students come from language, mathematics, and science backgrounds so the core subjects are close to their hearts. It usually takes a full art course to convince them that optional subjects, like visual arts, are as important as core ones for learners to explore. Gardner (2000) suggests that, when developing a vision for change, one should be mindful of the community's needs and feelings and be willing to make compromises. This past school year, I tried a group project that allowed my students to integrate art with a subject in which they felt knowledgeable. The feedback I received was positive because they felt comfortable working in their areas of expertise. They created works of art that were excellent models for exploring concepts in both art and the other subject. I plan to do similar projects with future pre-service teachers to help them practise core and optional subject balance through integration.

The recommendation to increase support, in the form of funding, resources, and PD, was directed mainly at the decision makers within the school system; however, I can help pre-service teachers be aware of the need for support through my practice at the university. I can, for example, spend more time on the realities of funding, access to resources, and PD within my art education courses. I have included discussions on these topics in the past but these were with those who took my senior visual arts elective. They had extensive art backgrounds, were already specialists preparing to teach art at the secondary level, and would likely become department heads. I felt that they needed more knowledge about support than elementary teachers. After conducting the research for this study, however, I realised that I took support for art education within elementary schools for granted and that generalist teachers need to be prepared better to deal with funding, resource, and PD issues that may affect their practice. I need to spend more time with pre-service teachers on how to access money, resources, and PD in the field, and why not to self-fund art activities. Regarding finding more time for art education, I can try to promote integration and teach pre-service teachers how to plan their school weeks better. I usually walk them through how to organise lessons and unit plans, plus create course outlines, but I have not spent much time helping them fit art into an already full week of mandated core-subject minutes.

When I start each course with introductions, most pre-service teachers say they have not studied art since grade eight or nine (ages 13 or 14) but may do some art-related hobbies like photography or scrapbooking. Periodically, someone says that they were told that they were no good at art and seem to believe it. Although I try to build their confidence over the course, I need to address this with more discussion about impact on future implementation. I will encourage them to share these stories, either orally or in journals, to help alleviate their anxieties so that they not only want to teach art but also teach it effectively and encouragingly.

The content of my art courses is usually based on fine arts media (drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture) with other lessons on how to teach design, art history, and criticism. As well, I spend time on the basics of curriculum, integration, and assessment. I admit that I spend little time on crafts and visual culture studies within the generalist course because of its short, 24-hour allotment. I focus on these areas more in the specialists' elective course but now I know that I had been, as Kohn (2004) suggests, perpetuating a fine-arts-focus status quo through my pre-service teachers. Instead, I need to spend more time on a variety of visual arts foci with the generalists rather than a predominantly fine arts one. As a result, I plan to divide my generalist course into three parts: one for fine arts, one for crafts, and one for visual culture studies. This approach will, hopefully, expand pre-service teachers' concepts of art education.

Whenever I teach painting and printmaking, I spend some time addressing the messy nature of these media. Many pre-service teachers seem anxious and despite giving them smocks to wear, having several sinks for clean-up, and reminding them that skin is washable, they still have aversions to messy media. I will have to encourage the high fun factor of these media and discuss time flexibility of elementary classes as ways to deal with mess anxiety.

I never considered gender as being a significant issue for elementary art education before this study. Caley enlightened me through his concerns about how the dominant teaching strategies in the school system favoured academic more than hands-on approaches and how they were detrimental for learning for boys. I plan to look into this concern and concept further so that I can add it to discussions that I already have with pre-service teachers regarding meeting the needs of all learners.

Art educationalists Richard Hickman and James Hall (1995) suggest university staff spend time each week in classrooms to stay connected. They mention a programme at The University of Reading where staff work part-time in local classrooms in order to stay relevant when preparing future art teachers. I like their suggestion as a way to inform my practice better. I enjoyed visiting the participants in their professional environments and look forward to returning to them for future studies. I may return to evaluating pre-service teachers in the classroom so that opportunity will help me re-connect with the real world of teaching.

I know that these plans will improve my practice as a university art education lecturer and pre-service teachers, and their future students, should benefit greatly and widely from them. Although they study in north-eastern Ontario, and a few will teach there, the majority will return to their hometowns across the province and beyond its borders to, hopefully, bring positive art education change to their locations.

Changes in my community

I want to pick up the torch from past art education advocates to become more involved in the field beyond my university classroom (see Appendix K). I know that working with stakeholders who may not agree with more support for art education will not be easy but at least there is a local spark of interest for positive change. The Directors and Superintendents of the school boards involved in this study have requested executive summaries of this study in order to inform them of the state of art education in their schools. The two elementary coordinators have also asked me to share these summaries with them, provide a list of art resources they should have, and organise hands-on workshops for their teachers. These requests reflect a list of necessities for sustained change, suggested by education policy theorists Milbrey McLaughlin and Dana Mitra (2001): resources, knowledge of the reform, and a supportive community.

Although making positive connections with administrators and coordinators is advantageous, my focus for change is the teachers. The participants all said that they would like to stay in contact with me, use my connections as a resource, and would be available for future studies. I want to continue to work with them and meet their colleagues in order to provide ideas for effective art education strategies.

I am also asking for much hard work from them. It is easy to give students worksheets to colour; it is much more difficult to design meaningful art lessons. They require more energy for planning, implementation, and assessment. I will focus first on low-risk ideas to help build their comfort with visual arts; that is, activities that are easy to do, cheap to implement, and fit neatly with the latest OME (2009a) arts document. If and when they are ready, I will gradually help them explore more sophisticated ways to create, teach, and appreciate art so that they can inspire their students more through it.

I want them to look beyond their classrooms by sharing art education and its importance with colleagues, administrators, and parents. They could, for example, use me as a resource for ideas and articles that provide information as to the necessity of a balanced programme so that they could share it at meetings, school open houses, and local gatherings. They need to reach the decision people and discuss the need for high-quality programmes in all subject areas. Since many stakeholders are concerned primarily with funding, I can help them make economic plans to gain support for art education initiatives. I want them to focus on art retention rather than allowing attrition.

Parents could be one of the strongest influences on attitudes towards art education so their support is crucial. I would like to work with local administrators and parent councils to nurture what I call ‘art environmentality’; that is, create art-friendly spaces in elementary schools. This would include artwork-filled bulletin boards within and outwith classrooms, sinks in every classroom, a school gallery near a high-traffic area, displays of students’ artworks at all school functions and in the community, and framed prints of works from art history around the school. If art is around them more often, stakeholders, including parents, may appreciate and support it more.

I was inspired by Luehrman’s (2002) research and want to conduct a similar study about decision-makers’ (Directors, Superintendents, Principals) perceptions of art education based not only on the art programmes within their schools but also on their own past experiences with visual arts. Such a study may incite reflection among them regarding the external and internal issues that affect their teachers and students and encourage administrative support.

During the time that I have lived and worked in north-eastern Ontario, I have made connections with not only gallery and museum personnel but also local artists. Most of these contacts would love to share their knowledge, talents, and ideas with local teachers and learners in order to foster growth in art education. What they do not have are connections within the schools. Through the participants and the elementary coordinators, I can make these connections for them.

Kohn (2004) suggests that researchers share their findings with the general public rather than through education journals alone. He adds that these findings should be in plain, non-academic language, and be shared in diverse ways (newspapers, web sites, school board meetings, public forums) in order to gain support. Through this study, I was able to merge personal, political, and intellectual issues, as suggested by Richardson (1997), and I plan on sharing my findings through various media so that local teachers have another voice of support.

Changes beyond my community

This study was like one of Richardson's (2001) 'writing-stories [that] situate [one's] work in socio-political, familial, and academic climates' (p. 34). It enabled me to make professional connections with elementary teachers and it will expand my practice to help improve and support art education in classrooms beyond my geographic region. I learned much from my literature review about art education practices and issues around the world and, although some of it distressed me, it also inspired me to add my voice to the field (see Appendix K).

I plan to share this study through refereed articles and conference presentations both within and outwith Ontario. I am a member of provincial, national, and international art education organisations through which I can share my findings. Although I have already published articles in journals and presented papers at conferences, I look forward to doing so with this study and to forging the professional connections that could emerge from it.

I may also do a longitudinal study with pre-service teachers and follow their professional journeys beyond my art programme. I would look at their experiences with art education over many years, and in potentially several countries, in order to

explore the issues they face. It would be insightful for me to learn the similarities to, and differences from, my local findings.

Closing thoughts

Curriculum theorist James Macdonald (1977) states, ‘Any person concerned with curriculum must realize that he [or] she is engaged in a political activity’ (p. 15). I know that the central research issue was political because one of my goals for this study was to enlighten not only pre-service teachers about what impacts art education but also the decision-makers at both local and provincial levels. My ultimate goal was to promote positive change in elementary art education and beyond. Art educationalist Olivia Gude (2004) supports this goal:

Art teachers are optimists. They believe in the possibility of a more playful, sensitive, thoughtful, just, diverse, aware, critical, and pleasurable society. They combine the sensibilities of artists with the social awareness of community organizers. If it is indeed true that our notions of the real and the possible are shaped in cultural discourses, art teachers have the potential to change the world. (p. 14)

Maybe the time is right for an education paradigm shift away from a business-driven focus. Lately, the business world does not seem to be as invincible as it was formerly perceived so it could be a good time to look at alternative models for education with a more humanitarian focus, such as those that nurture Nussbaum’s (1997, 2007) capacities and capabilities. Perhaps that is too much to expect but I want to try to improve art education in an attempt to create that ideal place, at least in north-eastern Ontario. I feel like I have moved away from that fragmented viewfinder in the photograph on page one and now feel like my pro-active self in the photograph at the beginning of this chapter, guiding my students as they paint a mural to promote environmental awareness. Like that mural project, this study was my way to start a conversation, encourage steps towards a more balanced education system, and to strengthen the field of art education.

Appendix A: Letter of approval from the University of Glasgow Faculty of Education Ethics Committee

UNIVERSITY of GLASGOW

Faculty of Education

Ethics Committee for Non Clinical Research Involving Human Subjects

EAP2 NOTIFICATION OF ETHICS APPLICATION FORM APPROVAL

Application No. (Research Office use only)	E1006
Period of Approval (Research Office use only)	04 April 2008 to 30 June 2010

Date: 16 April 2008

Dear Elizabeth

I am writing to advise you that your application for ethical approval, reference E1006 for 'The Expendable Curriculum? Art Education in Northern Ontario Elementary Schools, with a trial study exploring the impact of art experiences of pre-service teachers on their attitudes towards art education.' has been approved.

You should retain this approval notification for future reference. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me in the Research Office and I can refer them to the Faculty's Ethics Committee

Regards,

Terri Hume

Ethics and Research Secretary

Appendix B: Letter of approval from the Near North District School Board



Head Office

P.O. Box 3110
963 Airport Road
North Bay, ON
P1B 8H1
Fax: 705.472.9927

Main switchboard
for all offices:
705.472.8170

Toll free:
1.800.278.4922

Web site:
www.nearnorthschools.ca

September 2, 2008

Mrs. Elizabeth Ashworth
Assistant Professor
Faculty of Education
Nipissing University
100 College Drive
North Bay, ON P1B 8L7

Dear Elizabeth:

The Near North District School Board is pleased to approve your request for permission to interview elementary teachers as part of your dissertation research.

Further to our discussion last week please keep in mind that the school staff will be involved on a voluntary basis. Please contact the individual school principals at your convenience.

I wish you every success with your research and the completion of your Doctor of Education degree.

Sincerely,



Patrick Bocking,
Superintendent of Program & Schools.

PB.Is

Appendix C: Letter of approval from the Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board



1140 Front Street
North Bay, Ontario P1B 6P2
Tel: 705.472.1201 • Fax: 705.472.0507
website: www.npsc.edu.on.ca

2008 09 05

Elizabeth Ashworth
Nipissing University
Faculty of Education
100 College Drive Box 5002
North Bay ON P1B 8L7

Dear Elizabeth

Permission is granted to contact teachers in our Board regarding participation in your project, "The Expendable Curriculum? Art Education in Northern Ontario Elementary Schools".

Participation in this project is voluntary and should take place outside class time.

Wishing you success with your project and the completion of your Doctor of Education degree.

I look forward to receiving an executive summary of your findings.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joanne B nard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning of the first name.

Joanne B nard
Superintendent of Education

JB/mn

c. School Principals

ROOTED IN FAITH • ALIVE IN SPIRIT

Appendix D: Sample of letter to Principals

September 24, 2008

Mr./Mrs. _____
Principal
(School name)
(School address)

Dear _____,

I am working on my Doctor of Education degree through the University of Glasgow. As part of the dissertation requirement, I would like to interview elementary teachers within your school regarding art education in the classroom. Ideally, they should have at least five years' teaching experience and not be art specialists. I would like to interview them, outside of class time, between November 2008 and March 2009.

I have received approval from your director to interview teachers in your board but would like your guidance as to how to go about inviting members of your staff to volunteer to be interviewed for this study. I can do a presentation, send a sign-up sheet, or use another approach: whatever works best for you and your staff. I would be happy to meet with you to discuss this study, at your convenience. Please contact me at home (495-2890), work (474-3461 x.4463), or by e-mail (liza@nipissingu.ca) to discuss this possibility. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Ashworth

Appendix E: Participant sign-up sheet

SIGN UP SHEET

If you are interested in participating in Liz Ashworth's doctoral dissertation study about art education in northern Ontario elementary schools, please print your name and e-mail address below **before Friday, November 21, 2008**. If you do not feel comfortable writing your e-mail address, please contact Liz directly at **liza@nipissingu.ca** or **fax this sheet to 474-1947** attn: Liz Ashworth. Interviews will be conducted at times and locations convenient to you. Thank you!

NAME (please print)	E-MAIL ADDRESS

Appendix F: Sample of plain language statement



PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT

November 1, 2008

Dear _____,

You are invited to participate in a research study about art education in Northern Ontario elementary schools. I am a postgraduate student at the University of Glasgow and the results of this study will be included in my Doctor of Education dissertation.

Your participation will involve, with your consent, an audio-taped interview during which you will be asked questions about teaching art. The time commitment for the interview will be between 30 and 45 minutes and will occur between December 2008 and February 2009, at both a time and location convenient for you.

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw consent at any time without any consequences. Your school board is aware of this study and all participants' names will be kept confidential. All information that is obtained in connection with this study that can be identified with you will remain confidential, will be disclosed only with your permission, and only in an anonymised form. It will be kept in both a locked filing cabinet and a password-protected electronic file. Once the study is complete, all contact information and data collected from the interview will be destroyed (e.g., hard copies will be shredded and electronic data will be deleted). When the results of this study are published, your identity will be kept confidential. As well, you are welcome to see a copy of the results, at your request.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at liza@nipissingu.ca or 705-474-3461 x.4463. You may also contact Dr. Nicki Hedge (Supervisor) at n.hedge@educ.gla.ac.uk or 011-44-141-330-5492, or Dr. George Head (Ethics Officer) at g.head@educ.gla.ac.uk or 011-44-141-330-3048, both of whom are at the address below.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Ashworth

Appendix G: Sample of consent form



CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: *An Expendable Curriculum? Art Education in Northern Ontario Elementary Schools*

Name of Researcher: Elizabeth Ashworth

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the Plain Language Statement for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
3. I understand that I will be interviewed and that the interview will be audio-taped. I acknowledge that copies of interview transcripts will be shown to me for verification and that I may ask for information to be deleted and/or not quoted in the researcher's Dissertation or any resulting publications.
4. I understand that my identity will be kept confidential (e.g., I will be referred to by pseudonym in any publications arising from the research and my institution/location will not be named).
5. I agree to take part in the above study.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Researcher	Date	Signature

Appendix H: List of interview questions with probes

1. First, by way of context, please tell me about your current job and a little about your history as a teacher. (*probes: Where do you teach? What grades? Where did you teach in the past? Where did you go for teacher training?*)
2. Based on your experiences so far, what does art education mean to you? (*probes: What sort of things do you do when you teach art? What are you trying to achieve when you teach art? How do you feel about teaching art?*)
3. Can you give me a concrete example of what you do that you feel exemplifies what art education means to you? (*probes: Can you give me a specific example of an art activity to illustrate that? Where do you get your art ideas?*)
4. How would you compare your experiences teaching art now with teaching it earlier in your career? (*probes: How has teaching art changed for you? What influences art education in your classroom? What challenges do you face?*)
5. What do you feel you need as a classroom teacher regarding support for art education? (*probes: How can your principal or vice-principal help? How can your school board help? How can the Ministry of Education help?*)
6. Before we finish, is there anything you would like to add that you haven't already mentioned? (*probe: Is there anything else you would like to say about...?*)

Extra: How much time is devoted to art each week?

Appendix I: Ontario Ministry of Education arts achievement chart (1998)

Knowledge/ Skills	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Understanding of concepts	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - shows understanding of few of the concepts - rarely gives explanations that show understanding of concepts 	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - shows understanding of some of the concepts - sometimes gives complete explanations 	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - shows understanding of most of the concepts - usually gives complete or nearly complete explanations 	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - shows understanding of all (or almost all) of the concepts - consistently gives complete explanations
Critical analysis and appreciation	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - analyses and interprets art work only with assistance - provides analysis that shows limited understanding, and does not give evidence to support opinions 	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - analyses and interprets art work with frequent assistance - provides partial analysis, and gives some evidence to support opinions 	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - analyses and interprets art work with only occasional assistance - provides complete analysis, and gives sufficient evidence to support opinions 	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - analyses and interprets art work with little or no assistance - provides complete analysis, and gives well-considered evidence to support opinions
Performance and creative work	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - applies few of the skills, concepts, and techniques taught - performs and creates only in limited and incomplete ways - uses tools, equipment, materials, and instruments correctly only with assistance - rarely shows awareness of safety procedures 	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - applies some of the skills, concepts, and techniques taught - occasionally performs and creates in complete ways - uses tools, equipment, materials, and instruments correctly with frequent assistance - sometimes shows awareness of safety procedures 	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - applies most of the skills, concepts, and techniques taught - usually performs and creates in complete ways - uses tools, equipment, materials, and instruments correctly with occasional assistance - usually shows awareness of safety procedures 	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - applies all (or almost all) of the skills, concepts, and techniques taught - consistently performs and creates in well-developed ways - uses tools, equipment, materials, and instruments with little or no assistance - consistently shows awareness of safety procedures
Communication	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rarely communicates with clarity and precision - rarely uses appropriate symbols and terminology - communicates only in limited and incomplete ways 	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sometimes communicates with clarity and precision - sometimes uses appropriate symbols and terminology - occasionally communicates in complete ways 	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - usually communicates with clarity and precision - usually uses appropriate symbols and terminology - usually communicates in complete ways 	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consistently communicates with clarity and precision - consistently uses appropriate symbols and terminology - consistently communicates in well-developed ways

Appendix J: Dissertation interview schedule

Pseudonym	Date/Time/Location of Interview
Meme	Monday, December 8, 2008; 3:15 pm; classroom
Ace	Wednesday, December 10, 2008; 4:00 pm; classroom
Lee	Wednesday, December 17, 2008; 3:30 pm; classroom
Trinity	Monday, January 5, 2009; 7:00 pm; home
Dreamer	Tuesday, January 13, 2009; 3:30 pm; classroom
Sophie	Wednesday, January 14, 2009; 2:00 pm; classroom
Joe	Wednesday, January 21, 2009; 4:00 pm; office
Mary	Monday, January 26, 2009; 7:00 pm; home
Sharon	Wednesday, February 4, 2009; 3:00 pm; health room
Kelly	Wednesday, February 4, 2009; 3:45 pm; health room
Melanie	Tuesday, February 10, 2009; 3:15 pm; classroom
Alice	Friday, February 13, 2009; 9:15 am; book room
Caley	Wednesday, February 18, 2009; 1:00 pm; home
Doreen	Thursday, February 19, 2009; 3:15 pm; classroom
Renée	Thursday, February 26, 2009; 3:00 pm; classroom
Red	Thursday, March 5, 2009; 9:45 am; classroom
Lori	Tuesday, May 25, 2009; 12:15 pm; classroom
Laura	Thursday, May 27, 2009; 3:45 pm; classroom
Andie	Tuesday, June 1, 2009; 3:30 pm; classroom

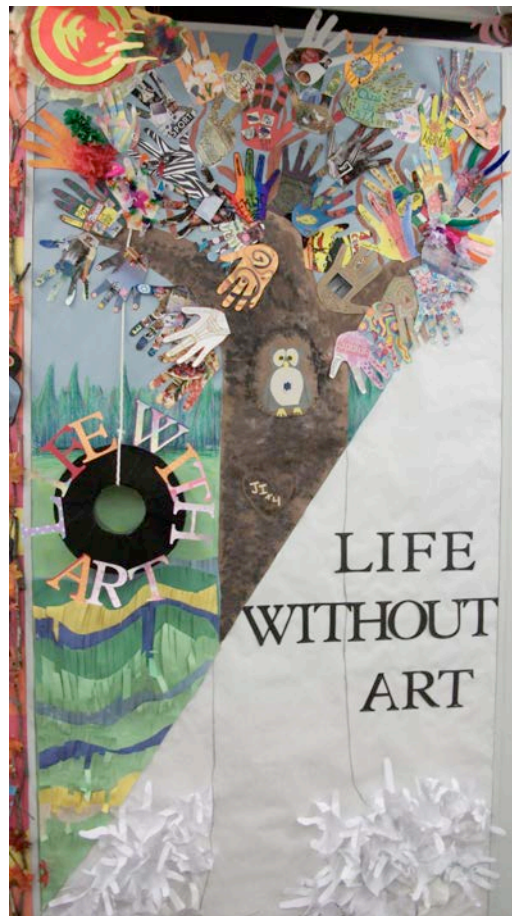
Appendix K: Changes based on recommendations (July-October 2010)

The following are changes to practice that have occurred as a result of my study between July 9, 2010 (submission of dissertation) and October 21, 2010 (viva):

1. Changes to personal practice:

- During September/October of 2010, I taught six classes of visual arts education. Following recommendations made in my dissertation study, I incorporated the OME (2009) arts document expectations and achievement chart into all lessons. Some lessons included extensive analysis of the document while others included homework readings. This extra attention to the arts document was a way of reinforcing its value and use as a resource in the classroom. I revised a group assignment (integration of art and at least one subject area) by expanding it to include the integration of art and other OME initiatives (aboriginal perspectives, antiracism and ethnocultural equity, character education, environmental education, guidance and career education, literacy, numeracy, special education). By encouraging pre-service teachers to integrate art with other subjects and OME initiatives, they should be able to find more time for art during busy school weeks.
- I added a new assignment called 'Art Matters' – a design project where an entire class had to create a bulletin board that promotes art education, or any focus within it, to the university community (see figure 17).

Figure 17: Example of an 'Art Matters' bulletin board



Each class had their own designated bulletin board in the university and, using supplies available in the art room, had to design, assemble, and maintain the

bulletin board. The project not only gave each class an opportunity to work together but also to think about art and its importance in education. An added bonus was that the bulletin boards beautified rather ugly spaces in the building!

- Regarding support, I have spent much time emphasising not only the realities of funding, access to resources, and PD but also encouraging pre-service teachers not to spend their own money on supplies. I also urged them to ask their administrators for art supplies not usually found in school storage facilities, such as those for printmaking and sculpture.

2. Changes in the community:

- Since July, I have been working alongside a local group of artists, businesspeople, educationalists, and gallery personnel whose main goal is to promote the arts in the North Bay region. We are currently planning both a quarterly magazine and web site that highlights regional arts events, contacts, and locations of galleries and museums. The target audience is not only tourists but also local people who want to know more about the arts in the region. Such a publication/web site would be extremely helpful to local educators who may want to visit art galleries and/or plan school trips to them. One of my recommendations was to work closely with administrators to foster art environmentalism in their schools. In order to do this, I contacted the two elementary coordinators who participated in this study and they invited me to make a presentation on my findings and recommendations for their elementary Principals in January 2011.

3. Changes beyond my community:

- Since July, I have been asked to be one of 40 arts educationalists to participate in the 'National Roundtable for the Arts' in Ottawa in May 2011. The focus of this group is to address current arts education issues at the elementary, secondary, and higher education levels and to create a list of recommendations to improve planning, implementation, and assessment of arts education across Canada. I am very excited to be part of this group and look forward to meeting other art educationalists through this venue! Although I have not yet begun to write articles based on this study, I have applied to present a workshop on fostering art environmentalism at the International Principals' Conference in Toronto in August 2011. I am hoping that, through my participation in both the roundtable meetings and/or on acceptance to the Principals' conference, I can encourage positive change for art education beyond the schools in north-eastern Ontario.

REFERENCES

- Åkerlind, G. (2005) 'Ways of experiencing being a university researcher', in *Doing Developmental Phenomenography*, in J. Bowden and P. Green (Eds.), Melbourne, RMIT University Press, pp.145-155.
- Altrichter, H. and Holly, M. (2005) 'Research diaries', in *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, in B. Somekh and C. Lewin (Eds.), London, Sage, pp.24-32.
- Anderson, T. and Milbrandt, M. (2005) *Art for life: authentic instruction in art*, New York, McGraw-Hill.
- Aoki, T. (2005) 'Sonare and videre: a story, three echoes and a lingering note', in *Curriculum in a New Key: the Collected Works of Ted T. Aoki*, in W. Pinar and R. Irwin (Eds.), Mahwah, New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp.367-376.
- Apple, M. (1989) 'Critical introduction: ideology and state in education policy', in *The State and Education Policy*, in R. Dale (Ed.), Milton Keynes, Open University Press, pp.1-20.
- Arnheim, R. (1990) *Thoughts on art education*, Los Angeles, The Getty Center for Education in the Arts.
- Ashton, L. (1999) 'Deconstructing the aesthetic discourse of drawing: a study of generalist primary teachers in transition', in *Australian Art Education*, Vol.22, No.2, pp.41-61.
- Ashworth, E. (2007) *Curriculum studies 2: junior/intermediate visual arts*, Boston, Pearson Education.
- Ashworth, P. and Lucas, U. (2000) 'Achieving empathy and engagement: a practical approach to the design, conduct and reporting of phenomenographic research', in *Studies in Higher Education*, Vol.25, No.3, pp.295-308.

- Aston, J. (2001) 'Research as relationship', in *Lives In Context: the Art of Life History Research*, in A. Cole and J. Knowles (Eds.), Walnut Creek, California, AltaMira Press, pp.145-151.
- Atkinson, P., Coffey, A., Delamont, S, Lofland, J., and Lofland, L. (Eds.) (2001) *Handbook of ethnography*, London, Sage.
- Australian Primary Principals Association. (2007) *The charter on primary schooling*, Kaleen, Australian Capital Territory, Australia, from <http://www.appa.asn.au/cms/uploads/news/charter20071001.pdf> (last accessed 13/04/2008)
- Bamford, A. (2006) *The wow factor: global research compendium on the impact of the arts in education*, New York, Waxmann Münster.
- Barbour, R. and Schostak, J. (2005) 'Interviewing and focus groups', in *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, in B. Somekh and C. Lewin (Eds.), London, Sage, pp.41-48.
- Blecher, S. and Jaffee, K. (1998) *Weaving in the arts: widening the learning circle*, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Heinemann.
- Booth, D. (2008) *It's critical! Classroom strategies for promoting critical and creative comprehension*, Markham, Ontario, Pembroke Publishers.
- Bowden, J. (2000) 'The nature of phenomenographic research', in *Phenomenography*, in J. Bowden and E. Walsh (Eds.), Melbourne, RMIT University Press, pp.1-18.
- Bowden, J. (2005) 'Reflections on the phenomenographic team research process', in *Doing Developmental Phenomenography*, in J. Bowden and P. Green (Eds.), Melbourne, RMIT University Press, pp.11-31.
- Bowden, J. and Green, P. (Eds.) (2005) *Doing developmental phenomenography*, Melbourne, RMIT University Press.

- Bowden, J., Green, P., Barnacle, R., Cherry, N., and Usher, R. (2005) 'Academics' ways of understanding success in research activities', in *Doing Developmental Phenomenography*, in J. Bowden and P. Green (Eds.), Melbourne, RMIT University Press, pp.128-144.
- Bowden, J. and Walsh, E. (Eds.) (2000) *Phenomenography*, Melbourne, RMIT University Press.
- Bowe, R., Ball, S., and Gold, A. (1992) *Reforming education and changing schools: case studies in policy sociology*, London, Routledge.
- Boyer, E.L. (1995) *The basic school: a community of learning*, Princeton, New Jersey, Carnegie Foundation.
- Brittain, W.L. (1990) 'Children's drawings: a comparison of two cultures', in *Art, Culture, and Ethnicity*, in B. Young (Ed.), Reston, Virginia, National Art Education Association, pp.181-191.
- Brodie, A. (2002) 'Professional development in the visual arts discipline of the art in the New Zealand curriculum', paper presented at UNESCO Regional Experts in Arts Education in the Pacific, Nadi, Fiji, November 25-29.
- Buchbinder, J. (1999) 'The arts step out from the wings', in *Harvard Education Letter*, from <http://www.edletter.org/past/issues/1999-nd/arts.shtml> (last accessed 17/02/2009)
- Burger, K. and Winner, E. (2000) 'Instruction in visual art: can it help children learn to read?', in *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol.34, Nos.3-4, pp.277-293.
- Burns, D. and Walker, M. (2005) 'Feminist methodologies', in *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, in B. Somekh and C. Lewin (Eds.), London, Sage, pp.66-73.

- Burton, J., Horowitz, R., and Abeles, H. (1999) 'Learning in and through the arts: curriculum implications', in *Champions of Change: the Impact of the Arts on Learning*, in E. Fiske (Ed.), Washington, District of Columbia, The Arts Education Partnership, pp.35-46.
- Calderhead, J. (1991) *The nature and growth of knowledge in student teaching*, paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, April 20-24.
- Caley, D. (Ed.) (1992) *Ivan Illich in conversation*, Toronto, House of Anansi Press.
- Canadore College. (2010) 'Artsperience: 2010', from <http://www.canadorec.on.ca/ContinuingEducation/Artsperience/index.cfm> (last accessed 21/03/2010)
- Center for Critical Thinking. (1996) *Critical thinking workshop handbook*, Rohnert Park, California, Author.
- Chalmers, F.G. (2005) 'Visual culture education in the 1960s', in *Art Education*, Vol.58, No.6, pp.6-11.
- Chapman, L. (1978) *Approaches to art education*, New York, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.
- Chapman, L. (2005) 'Status of elementary art education:1997-2004', in *Studies in Art Education*, Vol.46, No.2, pp.118-137.
- Clark, R. (1994) *Art education: a Canadian perspective*, Toronto, Ontario Society for Education Through Art.
- Clark, R. (2006) 'Art education in Ontario, 1950-2000: unlimited potential and unfulfilled promise', in *From Drawing to Visual Culture: a History of Art Education in Canada*, in H. Pearse (Ed.), Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, pp.200-220.

- Clifford, P. and Friesen, S. (1993) 'A curious plan: managing on the twelfth', in *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol.63, No.3, pp.339-358.
- Coffey, A. (1999) *The ethnographic self: fieldwork and the representation of identity*, London, Sage.
- Cohen, R. and Greaves, B. (2004) 'Of caterpillars and butterflies: reading Snobelen's infamous speech', in *Alien Invasion: How the Harris Tories Mismanaged Ontario*, in R. Cohen (Ed.), London, Ontario, Insomniac Press, pp.130-148.
- Colbert, C.B. (1984) 'Status of the visual arts in early education', in *Art Education*, Vol.37, No.4, pp.28-31.
- Cole, A. and Knowles, G. (2000) *Researching teaching: exploring teacher development through reflective inquiry*, Toronto, Allyn and Bacon.
- Conference Board of Canada. (2008) 'Valuing culture: measuring and understanding Canada's creative economy', from <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/documents.aspx?did=2671&pf=true> (last accessed 16/02/2010)
- Cornett, C. (2007) *Creating meaning through literature and the arts: an integration resource for classroom teachers, 3rd ed.*, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Dale, R. (Ed.) (1989) *The state and education policy*, Milton Keynes, Open University Press.
- Danko-McGhee, K. and Slutsky, R. (2007) *The impact of early art experiences on literacy development*, Reston, Virginia, National Art Education Association.
- Davis, J.H. (2005) *Framing education as art: the octopus has a good day*, New York, Teachers College Press.

- Davis, J.H. (2008) *Why our schools need the arts*, New York, Teachers College Press.
- Davis, W. (2009) 'The wayfinders: why ancient wisdom matters in the modern world', 30 October, CBC Radio.
- DeJarnette, K.G. (1997) *The Arts, Language, and Knowing: An Experimental Study of the Potential of the Visual Arts for Assessing Academic Learning by Language Minority Students*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, California, USA.
- Denzin, N. (2000) 'The practices and politics of interpretation', in *Handbook of Qualitative Research, 2nd ed.*, in N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (Eds.), Thousand Oaks, California, Sage, pp.897-922.
- Desai, D. and Chalmers, F.G. (2007) 'Notes for a dialogue on art education in critical times', in *Art Education*, Vol.60, No.5, pp.6-11.
- Dissanayake, E. (1988) *What is art for?*, Seattle, Washington, University of Washington Press.
- Dorn, C. (2004) 'The end of art: a postmodernist jihad', paper presented at the annual conference of the National Art Education Association, Denver, Colorado, April 16-20.
- Duncan, E. (2005) *Designing for memory: effective graphic design practices for digital slide presentations*, Unpublished master's thesis, Nipissing University, North Bay, Ontario, Canada.
- Duncum, P. (1999) 'Primary art pedagogy: everything a generalist teacher needs to know', in *Australian Art Education*, Vol.21, No.3, pp.15-23.
- Duncum, P. (2001) 'Visual culture: developments, definitions, and directions for art education', in *Studies in Art Education*, Vol.42, No.2, pp.101-112.

- Edens, K. and Potter, E. (2007) 'The relationship of drawing and mathematical problem solving: "draw for math" tasks', in *Studies in Art Education*, Vol.47, No.3, pp.282-298.
- Education Quality and Accountability Office. (2008) 'About EQAO', from <http://www.eqao.com/AboutEQAO/AboutEQAO.aspx?status=logout&Lang=E> (last accessed 16/06/2009)
- Efland, A.D. (1989) *A history of art education: intellectual and social currents in teaching visual arts*, New York, Teachers College Press.
- Efland, A.D. (2002) *Art and cognition: integrating the visual arts in the curriculum*, New York, Teachers College Press.
- Eisner, E.W. (1978) 'NAEA commission report', in *Report of the NAEA Commission on Art Education*, in C. Dorn (Ed.), Reston, Virginia, National Art Education Association.
- Eisner, E.W. (1985) *The educational imagination*, New York, Macmillan.
- Eisner, E.W. (1991) *The enlightened eye*, New York, Macmillan.
- Eisner, E.W. (1999) 'The national assessment in the visual arts', in *Art Education Policy Review*, Vol.100, No.6, pp.16-19.
- Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario. (2009) 'EQAO testing', from <http://www.etfo.ca/IssuesinEducation/EQAOTesting/Pages/default.aspx> (last accessed 16/09/2009)
- Emerson, R., Fretz, R., and Shaw, L. (2001) 'Participant observation and fieldnotes', in *Handbook of Ethnography*, in P. Atkinson et. al. (Eds.), London, Sage, pp.352-368.
- Emery, K. and Ohanian, S. (2004) *Why is corporate America bashing our public schools?*, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Heinemann.

- Engel, B.S. (2002) *Considering children's art: why and how to value their works*, 2nd ed., Washington, District of Columbia, National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Farnham, D., Hondeghem, A., and Horton, S. (2005) *Staff participation and public management reform: some international comparisons*, New York, Macmillan.
- Feldman, E. (1987) *Varieties of visual experience: art as image and idea*, New York, Harry N. Abrams.
- Finn, C. (1990) *We must take charge: our schools and our future*, New York, Macmillan.
- Fowler, C. (1996) *Strong arts, strong schools*, New York, Oxford University Press.
- Fraenkel, J. and Wallen, N. (2003) *How to design and evaluate research in education*, 5th ed., Boston, McGraw Hill.
- Franz, J., Ferreira, L., and Thambiratam, D.P. (1997) 'Using phenomenography to understand student learning in civil engineering', from <http://www.ijee.dit.it/articles/999987/article.htm> (last accessed 22/01/2008)
- Frayling, C. (1990) 'The crafts in the 1990s', in *Journal of Art and Design Education*, Vol.9, No.1, pp.91-100.
- Freedman, K. (2003) *Teaching visual culture: curriculum, aesthetics, and the social life of art*, New York, Teachers College Press.
- Freedman, K. (2004) 'Becoming a researcher in art education: forming research questions', in *Studies in Art Education*, Vol.45, No.2, pp.99-100.
- Fullan, M. (1993) *Change forces: probing the depths of educational reform*, London, Falmer Press.
- Fullan, M. (1999) *Change forces: the sequel*, London, Falmer Press.

- Fullan, M. (2003) *Change forces: with a vengeance*, London, Routledge Falmer.
- Gaitskell, C.D. (1949) *Arts and crafts in the schools of Ontario*, Toronto, Ontario Department of Education.
- Gaitskell, C.D. (1951) *Children and their pictures*, Toronto, Ontario Department of Education.
- Gaitskell, C.D. (1952) *Art education in the kindergarten*, Toronto, Ontario Department of Education.
- Gaitskell, C.D. (1953) *Art education for slow learners*, Toronto, Ontario Department of Education.
- Gaitskell, C.D. (1954) *Art education during adolescence*, Toronto, Ontario Department of Education.
- Gaitskell, C., Hurwitz, A., and Day, M. (Eds.) (1982) *Children and their art: methods for the elementary school, 4th ed.*, New York, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.
- Galbraith, L. (1995) 'The preservice art education classroom: a look through the window', in *Preservice Art Education: Issues and Practice*, in L. Galbraith (Ed.), Reston, Virginia, National Art Education Association, pp.1-30.
- Gardner, H. (2000) *The disciplined mind: beyond facts and standardized tests, the K-12 education that every child deserves*, New York, Penguin Books.
- Geahigan, G. (1992) 'The arts in education: a historical perspective', in *The Arts, Education, and Aesthetic Knowing, Part II*, in B. Reimer and R. Smith (Eds.), Chicago, University of Chicago Press, pp.1-19.
- The Getty Center for Education in the Arts. (1985) *Beyond creating: the place for art in America's schools*, Los Angeles, Author.

- Gidney, R.D. (1999) *From Hope to Harris: the reshaping of Ontario's schools*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press.
- Golafshani, N. (2003) 'Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research', in *The Qualitative Report*, Vol.8, No.4, pp.597-607.
- Goldbart, J. and Hustler, D. (2005) 'Ethnography', in *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, in B. Somekh and C. Lewin (Eds.), London, Sage, pp.16-23.
- Goldberg, M. (2006) *Integrating the arts*, 3rd ed., Boston, Pearson.
- Goodson, I. (1993) 'Status versus significance in school subject knowledge: the Janus face of art education', in *Journal of the Ontario Society for Education Through Art*, Vol.22, pp.17-25.
- Guba, E. and Lincoln, Y. (1994) 'Competing paradigms in qualitative research', in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, in N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), Thousand Oaks, California, Sage, pp.105-117.
- Gude, O. (2004) 'Postmodern principles', in *Art Education*, Vol.57, No.1, pp.6-14.
- Gunderson, M. (2005) 'Book review: Martha C. Nussbaum, *Cultivating humanity*', in *Frontiers: the Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, from <http://www.frontiersjournal.com/documents/BookReviewsFrontiersAug05.pdf> (last accessed 22/07/2009)
- Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. (1995) *Ethnography: principles in practice*, 2nd ed., London, Routledge.
- Hanushek, E. (1994) *Making schools work: improving performance and controlling costs*, Washington, District of Columbia, The Brookings Institution.
- Harrison, E. (1951) *Self-expression through art*, Toronto, Gage.
- Hedgecoe, J. (1990). *Complete guide to photography*, Toronto, Stoddart.

- Hedgecoe, J. (1998). *The photographer's handbook*, 3rd ed., New York, Alfred A. Knopf.
- Heywood, D. and Stronach, I. (2005) 'Philosophy and hermeneutics', in *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, in B. Somekh and C. Lewin (Eds.), London, Sage, pp.114-120.
- Hickman, R. and Hall, J. (1995) 'Recent and relevant school experience: art teachers as art education lecturers', in *Preservice Art Education: Issues and Practice*, in L. Galbraith (Ed.), Reston, Virginia, National Art Education Association, pp.99-106.
- Hirsch, E.D. (1996) *The schools we need: and why we don't have them*, New York, Doubleday.
- Hobbs, J. and Rush, J. (1997) *Teaching children art*, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall.
- Holland, C. and O'Connor, P. (2004) 'Like writing off the paper: report on student learning in the arts', from http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/_data/assets/word_doc/0003/8976/student-learning-in-the-arts.doc (last accessed 11/08/2009)
- Holt, D. (Ed.) (1997) *Primary arts education: contemporary issues*, London, Falmer Press.
- Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation. (2005) 'HSBC celebrates different points of view', from <http://www.hsbc.com/1/2/newsroom/news/2005/hsbc-celebrates-different-points-of-view#top> (last accessed 16/12/2009)
- Hudson, P. and Hudson, S. (2001) 'Examining pre-service primary teachers' potential for teaching art in primary schools', from <http://www.eprints.qut.edu.au/archive/00003590/01/3590.pdf> (last accessed 03/11/2007)

- Hudson, P. and Hudson, S. (2007) 'Examining pre-service teachers' preparedness for teaching art', in *International Journal of Education and the Arts*, Vol.8, No.5, from <http://ijea.asu.edu> (last accessed 03/11/2007)
- Irwin, R. (Ed.) (1997) *The CSEA national policy and supporting perspectives for practice guidelines*, Boucherville, Quebec, Canadian Society for Education Through Art.
- Irwin, R. and Chalmers, F.G. (1996) 'Art education policy in Canada', in *Arts Education Policy Review*, Vol.97, No.6, pp.15-23.
- Jamieson, B. (2007) 'Male presence in teaching continues to decline', in *Professionally Speaking*, from http://www.oct.ca/publications/professionally_speaking/june_2007/male_teachers.asp (last accessed 17/06/2009)
- Janesick, V. (2000) 'The choreography of qualitative research design', in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd ed., in N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), Thousand Oaks, California, Sage, pp.379-399.
- Jardine, D., Friesen, S., and Clifford, P. (Eds.) (2006) 'Preamble 2: signs of abundance', in *Curriculum in Abundance*, Mahwah, New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp.39-42.
- Jardine, D., Friesen, S., and Clifford, P. (2008) *Back to the basics of teaching and learning: thinking the world together*, 2nd ed., New York, Routledge.
- Jones, K. (2005) 'An introduction to statistical modelling', in *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, in B. Somekh and C. Lewin (Eds.), London, Sage, pp.236-249.
- Jones, L. and Somekh, B. (2005) 'Observation', in *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, in B. Somekh and C. Lewin (Eds.), London, Sage, pp.138-145.

- Katrisky, M.A. (2006) *The art of Commedia: a study in the Commedia dell'Arte 1560-1620 with special reference to the visual records*, Amsterdam, Rodopi Press.
- Kellogg, R. (1969) *Analyzing children's art*, Palo Alto, California, National Press Books.
- Kincheloe, J. and McLaren, P. (2000) 'Rethinking critical theory and qualitative research', in *Handbook of Qualitative Research, 2nd ed.*, in N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), Thousand Oaks, California, Sage, pp.279-313.
- Kohn, A. (2004) *What does it mean to be well educated?*, Boston, Beacon Press.
- Kvale, S. (1996) *InterViews: an introduction to qualitative research interviewing*, Thousand Oaks, California, Sage.
- Lark-Horovitz, B., Lewis, H., and Luca, M. (1973) *Understanding children's art for better teaching, 2nd ed.*, Columbus, Ohio, Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company.
- Lazere, D. (1992) 'Back to basics: a force for oppression or liberation?', in *College English*, Vol.54, No.1, pp.7-21.
- Levi, A. and Smith, R. (1991) *Art education: a critical necessity*, Urbana, Illinois, University of Illinois Press.
- Lowenfeld, V. (1947) *Creative and mental growth*, New York, Macmillan.
- Luehrman, M. (2002) 'Art experiences and attitude toward art education: a descriptive study of Missouri public school principals', in *Studies in Art Education*, Vol.43, No.3, pp.197-218.
- Lutz, C. and Rosaldo, M. (1980) *Knowledge and passion: Ilongot notions of self and social life*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

- Macdonald, J. (1977) 'Value bases and issues for curriculum', in *Curriculum Theory*, in A. Molnar and J.A. Zahorik (Eds.), Washington, District of Columbia, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, pp.10-21.
- Macdonald, S. (1970) *The history and philosophy of art education*, London, University of London Press.
- Martin, L. (2003) *Nature's art box*, North Adams, Massachusetts, Storey Publishing.
- Marton, F. (1981) 'Phenomenography – describing conceptions of the world around us', in *Instructional Science*, Vol.10, pp.177-200.
- Marton, F. (1994) 'Phenomenography', in *The International Encyclopedia of Education, 2nd ed.*, in T. Husen and T. N. Postlethwaite (Eds.), from <http://www.ped.gu.se/biorn/phgraph/civil/main/2approach.html> (last accessed 26/01/2008)
- Marton, F. (2000) 'The structure of awareness', in *Phenomenography*, in J. Bowden and E. Walsh (Eds.), Melbourne, RMIT University Press, pp.102-116.
- Maso, I. (2001) 'Phenomenology and ethnography', in *Handbook of Ethnography*, in P. Atkinson et. al. (Eds.), London, Sage, pp.136-144.
- Mason, R. (2005) 'The meaning and value of home-based craft', in *International Journal of Art and Design Education*, Vol.24, No.3, pp.261-268.
- Mason, R., Nakase, N., and Naoe, T. (2000) 'Craft education in lower secondary schools in England and Japan: a comparative study', in *Comparative Education*, Vol.36, No.4, pp.397-416.
- Maxwell, J. (2005) *Qualitative research design: an interactive approach, 2nd ed.*, Thousand Oaks, California, Sage.

- McFee, J.K. (1961) *Preparation for art*, Belmont, California, Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- McKenzie, J. (2003) *Variation and change in university teachers' ways of experiencing teaching*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Technology, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia.
- McLaughlin, M. and Mitra, D. (2001) 'Theory-based change and change-based theory: going deeper, going broader', in *Journal of Educational Change*, Vol.2, No.4, pp.301-323.
- Miles, M. and Huberman, A.M. (1994) *Qualitative data analysis*, 2nd ed., Thousand Oaks, California, Sage.
- Morse, J.M. (1994) 'Designing funded qualitative research', in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, in N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), Thousand Oaks, California, Sage, pp.220-235.
- Muskoka, Nipissing, Parry Sound Local Training and Adjustment Board. (2007) 'Trends, opportunities, and priorities report 2006-2007', from http://www.localboards.on.ca/top_reports/top_report_20_english.pdf (last accessed 26/09/2008).
- Mykhalovskiy, E. (1997) 'Reconsidering "table talk": critical thoughts on the relationship between sociology, autobiography and self-indulgence', in *Reflexivity and Voice*, in R. Hertz (Ed.), Thousand Oaks, California, Sage, pp.229-251.
- Naested, I.R. (1998) *Art in the classroom: an integrated approach to teaching art in Canadian elementary and middle schools*, Toronto, Harcourt Brace and Company.
- The National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983) *A nation at risk: the imperative for educational reform*, Washington, District of Columbia, Author.

- National Endowment for the Arts. (1988) *Toward civilization: a report on arts education*, Washington, District of Columbia, Author.
- Nelson, H. (2009) 'Arts education and the whole child', in *Principal*, Vol.88, No.3, pp.14-17.
- Noffke, S. and Somekh, B. (2005) 'Action research', in *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, in B. Somekh and C. Lewin (Eds.), London, Sage, pp.89-96.
- Nuance. (2007) 'Dragon naturally speaking 8.1', from <http://www.nuance.com/naturallyspeaking> (last accessed 31/01/2008)
- Nussbaum, M.C. (1994) 'Patriotism and cosmopolitanism', in *The Boston Review*, from <http://www.bostonreview.net/BR19.5/nussbaum.html> (last accessed 06/09/2007)
- Nussbaum, M.C. (1996) 'Aristotle on emotions and rational persuasion', in *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric*, in A. Rorty (Ed.), Berkeley, California, University of California Press, pp.303-323.
- Nussbaum, M.C. (1997) *Cultivating humanity: a classical defense of reform in liberal education*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press.
- Nussbaum, M. (2007) 'Human rights and human capabilities', in *Harvard Human Rights Journal*, Vol.20, pp.21-24.
- Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. (2009) 'Ofsted - about us', from <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/About-us> (last accessed 18/03/2010)
- Olssen, M., Codd, J., and O'Neill, A-M. (2004) *Education policy: globalization, citizenship and democracy*, London, Sage.
- Ontario Arts Council. (2009) '2009-2010 artists in education roster', from <http://www.arts.on.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=2787> (last accessed 25/06/2009)

- Ontario College of Teachers. (2006) *Foundations of professional practice*, Toronto, Author.
- Ontario Department of Education. (1968) *Art: intermediate*, Toronto, Author.
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (1985) *Curriculum ideas for teachers: visual arts – primary and junior divisions*, Toronto, Author.
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (1995) *The common curriculum: policies and outcomes, grades 1-9*, Toronto, Author.
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (1998) *The Ontario curriculum: grades 1-8 – the arts*, Toronto, Author.
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (1999) *The Ontario curriculum: grades 9-10 – the arts*, Toronto, Author.
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (2000) *The Ontario curriculum: grades 11-12 – the arts*, Toronto, Author.
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (2004) *The Ontario curriculum exemplars – grade 2, 5, and 7 – the arts*, Toronto, Author.
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (2007a) *Helping your child do mathematics: a guide for parents*, Toronto, Author.
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (2007b) *Helping your child with reading and writing: a guide for parents*, Toronto, Author.
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (2007c) *Performance appraisal of experienced teachers: technical requirements manual*, Toronto, Author.
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (2008a) 'Education funding, 2008-09', from <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/funding/0809/highlights.html?view=print> (last accessed 26/02/2010)

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2008b) 'School board profiles: Near North district school board', from
http://esip.edu.gov.on.ca/english/profiles/statistics_Comp.asp?ID=B28037#3
(last accessed 10/06/2009)

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2008c) 'School board profiles: Nipissing-Parry Sound catholic district school board', from
http://esip.edu.gov.on.ca/english/profiles/statistics_Comp.asp?ID=B29017 (last accessed 10/06/2009)

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2009a) *The Ontario curriculum: grades 1-8 – the arts, revised*, Toronto, Author.

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2009b) 'Ontario ministry of education', from
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/> (last accessed 19/10/2009)

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2009c) 'Student art centre', from
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/students/centredesarts/index.html> (last accessed 19/10/2009)

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2009d) 'The trillium list', from
http://www.curriculum.org/occ/trillium/resources/The_Arts_elementary.shtml
(last accessed 19/10/2009)

Oreck, B. (2001) *The arts in teaching: an investigation of factors influencing teachers' use of the arts in the classroom*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Connecticut, Storrs, Connecticut, USA.

Oreck, B. (2006) 'Artistic choices: a study of teachers who use the arts in the classroom', in *International Journal of Education and the Arts*, Vol.7, No.8, pp.1-27.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (1999) *Classifying educational programmes: manual for ISCED-97 implementation in OECD countries*, Paris, Author.

- Orgill, M. (2002) 'Phenomenography', from
<http://www.minds.may.ie/~dez/phenom.html> (last accessed 22/01/2008)
- Pacey, P. (1989) *Family art*, Cambridge, United Kingdom, Polity Press.
- Page, T. (2007) 'Conceptions of art education programs held by a rural and remote Australian community', in *Studies in Art Education*, Vol.49, No.1, pp.42-58.
- Palmer, J. (2008) 'President's message', in *The Recorder: the Journal of the Ontario Music Educators' Association*, Vol.L, No.3, pp.6-7.
- Pariser, D. (2009) 'Just remember, wherever you are, there you are, or how postmodern rhetoric impoverishes art teaching', in *Canadian Art Teacher*, Vol.7, No.2, pp.6-13.
- Parsons, W. (1995) *Public policy: an introduction to the theory and practice of policy analysis*, Aldershot, United Kingdom, Edward Elgar.
- Patrick, K.A. (1998) *Teaching and learning: the construction of an object of study*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.
- People for Education. (2004) *The arts in Ontario's public schools*, Toronto, Author.
- People for Education. (2008) 'The arts in schools (mini report)', in *The Annual Report on Ontario's Public Schools*, from
<http://www.peopleforeducation.com/annualreport08/arts> (last accessed 02/06/2009)
- Perez, J. (1993) *A cross-cultural study of child art: comparing for universal and culturally influenced characteristics*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois, USA.

- Persky, H., Sandene, B., and Askew, J. (1998) *The NAEP 1997 arts report card*, Washington, District of Columbia, U.S. Department of Education: Office of Educational Research and Improvement.
- Philip, G. (2002) *Philip's world reference atlas*, London, Chancellor Press.
- Pinar, W. (2006) 'Foreward: the lure that pulls flowerheads to face the sun', in *Curriculum in Abundance*, in D. Jardine, S. Friesen, and P. Clifford (Eds.), Mahwah, New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp.ix-xiv.
- Pink, D. (2005) *A whole new mind: moving from the information age to the conceptual age*, New York, Riverhead.
- Pitman, W. (1998) *Learning the arts in an age of uncertainty*, North York, Ontario, Arts Education Council of Ontario.
- Ravitch, D. (1983) *The troubled crusade: American education 1945-1980*, New York, Basic Books.
- Refsum, G. (2002) 'Contribution to an understanding of the knowledge base in the field of visual arts', in *Working Papers in Art and Design*, from http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/artdes_research/papers/wpades/vol2/refsumfull.html (last accessed 22/01/2010)
- Richards, L. (2005) *Handling qualitative data: a practical guide*, London, Sage.
- Richardson, L. (1997) *Fields of play: constructing an academic life*, Piscataway, New Jersey, Rutgers University Press.
- Richardson, L. (2000) 'Writing: a method of inquiry', in *Handbook of Qualitative Research, 2nd ed.*, in N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (Eds.), Thousand Oaks, California, Sage Publications, pp.923-948.
- Richardson, L. (2001) 'Getting personal: writing-stories', in *Qualitative Studies in Education*, Vol.14, No.1, pp.33-38.

- Rinner, J. (1999) *Scrapbooking made easy!*, Alexandria, Virginia, Time-Life Books.
- Robertson, J. (2003) 'Exploring difference: the metaphors that shape academic thought and practice', from <http://surveys.canterbury.ac.nz/herdsa03/pdfsnon/N1215.pdf> (last accessed 11/11/07)
- Robinson, K. (1999) 'Our obsession with academic ability', from <http://www/sfb.co.uk/cgi-bin/profile.cgi?s=65&t=5&a=5> (last accessed 18/10/2007)
- Rovio-Johansson, A. (1999) 'Constituting different meanings of the content of teaching and learning in higher education', paper presented at 8th European Conference for Learning and Instruction, Göteborg University, Göteborg, Sweden, August 24-28.
- Rubin, H. and Rubin, I. (2005) *Qualitative interviewing: the art of hearing data*, 2nd ed., Thousand Oaks, California, Sage.
- Saskatchewan Ministry of Education. (2009) 'Core curriculum: principles, time allocations, and credit policy', from <http://education.gov.sk.ca/policy> (last accessed 01/04/2010)
- Schön, D. (1983) *The reflective practitioner: how professionals think in action*, New York, Basic Books.
- Schwandt, T. (2000) 'Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry: interpretivism, hermeneutics, and social constructivism', in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd ed., in N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), London, Sage, pp.189-213.
- Sears, A. (2003) *Retooling the mind factory: education in a lean state*, Aurora, Ontario, Garamond Press.

- Siemens, G. (2004) 'Connectivism: a learning theory for the digital age', from <http://www.elearnspace.org/Articles/connectivism.htm> (last accessed 21/05/2010)
- Silverman, D. (2000) 'Analyzing talk and text', in *Handbook of Qualitative Research, 2nd ed.*, in N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), Thousand Oaks, California, Sage, pp.821-834.
- Smith-Shank, D. (1995) 'Mickey Mouse to Mapplethorpe: metaphors for understanding art anxiety', in *Preservice Art education: Issues and Practice*, in L. Galbraith (Ed.), Reston, Virginia, National Art Education Association, pp.33-44.
- Sobol, F.R. (2010) 'Summary of findings from NCLB: a study of its impact on art education programs', from http://www.arteducators.org/research/NCLB_Summary_of_Findings_2-10_3.pdf (last accessed 28/02/2010)
- Sourceforge. (2006) 'Audacity 1.2.6', from <http://audacity.sourceforge.net> (last accessed 04/06/2008).
- Spooner, A. (Ed.) (2003) *Oxford thesaurus of current English*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Standish, P. (1999) 'Education without aims?', in *The Aims of Education*, in R. Marples (Ed.), London, Routledge, pp.35-49.
- Stark, S. and Torrance, H. (2005) 'Case study', in *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, in B. Somekh and C. Lewin (Eds.), London, Sage, pp.33-40.
- Statistics Canada. (2005) 'Culture labour force survey', from <http://www.statcan.ca/english/IPS/Data/87C0032.htm> (last accessed 18/03/2010)

- Statistics Canada. (2006) 'Population and dwelling counts, for Canada and census divisions, 2006 and 2001 censuses – 100% data', from <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/hlt/97-550/Index.cfm?TPL=P1C&Page> (last accessed 18/02/2009)
- Strickland, C. (1992) *The annotated Mona Lisa: a crash course in art history from prehistoric to post-modern*, Kansas City, Missouri, Andrews and McMeel.
- Sumara, D. (2005) 'On the importance of the eccentric curriculum', in *Journal of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies*, Vol.3, No.1, pp.iii-viii.
- Sykes, J.B. (Ed.) (1983) *The concise Oxford dictionary of current English*, 7th ed., Oxford, Clarendon Press.
- Tavin, K. (2003) 'Wrestling with angels, searching for ghosts: toward a critical pedagogy of visual culture', in *Studies in Art Education*, Vol.44, No.3, pp.197-213.
- Thomas, J. (1993) *Doing critical ethnography*, Newbury Park, California, Sage.
- Toch, T. (1991) *In the name of excellence: the struggle to reform the nation's schools, why it's failing, and what should be done*, New York, Oxford University Press.
- Trigwell, K. (1994) 'The first stage of a phenomenographic study of phenomenography', in *Phenomenographic Research: Variations in Method*, in J. Bowden and E. Walsh (Eds.), Melbourne, RMIT University Press, pp.56-72.
- Trigwell, K. (2000) 'A phenomenographic interview on phenomenography', in *Phenomenography*, in J. Bowden and E. Walsh (Eds.), Melbourne, RMIT University Press, pp.62-82.
- Tucker, S., Ott, K., and Buckler, P.B. (Eds.) (2006) 'An introduction to the history of scrapbooks', in *The Scrapbook in American Life*, Philadelphia, Temple University Press, pp.1-25.

- Uljens, M. (1996) 'On the philosophical foundation of phenomenography', in *Reflections on Phenomenography: Toward a Methodology?*, in G. Dall'Alba and B. Hasselgren (Eds.), Göteborg, Sweden, Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, pp.105-130.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (1997) *ISCED 1997: international standard classification of education*, New York, Author.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2006) *Joint declaration of the international drama/theatre and education association (IDEA), international society for education through art (InSEA), international society for music education (ISME)*, UNESCO World Arts Conference, Lisbon, Portugal, March 3-6, from http://www.insea.org/docs/joint_decl2006.html (last accessed 28/07/2009)
- United States Department of Education. (2002) 'No child left behind', from <http://www.gpo.gov/fsys/pkg/PLAW-107publ110/pdf/PLAW-107> (last accessed 27/07/2009)
- Universal MAP. (2002) *Professional drivers' road atlas*, Williamston, Michigan, Author.
- Walsh, E. (2000) 'Phenomenographic analysis of interview transcripts', in *Phenomenography*, in J. Bowden and E. Walsh (Eds.), Melbourne, RMIT University Press, pp.19-33.
- Wilhelm, J. (2004) *Reading is seeing: learning to visualize scenes, characters, ideas, and text worlds to improve comprehension and reflective reading*, New York, Scholastic.
- Wilson, B. (1997a) *The quiet evolution: changing the face of arts education*, Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum.

- Wilson, B. (1997b) 'The second search: metaphor, dimensions of meaning, and research topics in art education', in *Research Methods and Methodologies for Art Education*, in S. LaPierre and E. Zimmerman (Eds.), Reston, Virginia, National Art Education Association, pp.1-32.
- Wilson, B. (2000) 'The parable of the para-site that ate art education', in *Journal of Multicultural and Cross-cultural Research in Art Education*, Vol.18, No.1, pp.24-30.
- Winner, E. and Cooper, M. (2000) 'Mute those claims: no evidence (yet) for a causal link between arts study and academic achievement', in *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol.34, Nos.3-4, pp.11-75.
- Winner, E. and Hetland, L. (2000) 'The arts in education: evaluating the evidence for a causal link', in *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol.34, Nos.3-4, pp. 3-10.
- Winner, E. and Hetland, L. (Eds.) (2001) *Beyond the soundbite: arts education and academic outcomes. Proceedings from 'Beyond the soundbite: what the research actually shows about arts education and academic outcomes'*, Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Trust.
- Wong, B. (2001) *Early childhood art education in Hong Kong: a phenomenographic study*, Unpublished master's thesis, The Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong.
- Woods, P. (1986) *Inside schools: ethnography in educational research*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Wright, P., MacCallum, J., Pascoe, R., Church, T., Dinham, J., Brown, N., and Grushka, K. (2005) 'National review of education in visual arts, craft, design, and visual communication: discussion paper', from http://www.education.murdoch.edu.au/clcd/NRVE_Discussion_Paper.pdf (last accessed 12/06/2009)

Yan, P.W. (1999) 'The dynamics of awareness', paper presented at *8th European Conference for Learning and Instruction*, EARLI 1999, Göteborg University, Göteborg, Sweden, August 24-28.