Graduate Education Student Scholarship                                    Education

Spring 2018

# Adapted Art Curriculum: A Guide for Teachers of Students With Disabilities

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Adapted Art Curriculum: A Guide for Teachers of Students With Disabilities

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Curriculum and Instruction Research Project

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Spring 2018

Abstract

Due to the changes in the educational system since the 1997 Individuals with Disabilities Act, few resources have been created to assist art teachers in adapting curriculum and art tools for students with disabilities. This research project explores studies in art and disabilities, as well as curriculum adaptations. The literature review offers an extensive view at current literature on four major themes: a need for curriculum, general education curriculum adaptations, adapted arts curriculum, and the impact of arts education in the lives of people with disabilities. Based on this research, a project was developed to incorporate aspects of these themes into a usable curriculum map, with accommodation considerations provided. This product also includes three unit plans on three types of media found successful with students of disabilities: digital art, two-dimensional media, and three-dimensional media. Each is elaborated on its usefulness for students with varying need. This adapted curriculum map provides a solution to the research problem because it plans for diversity of needs from the onset, and allows for flexibility. Lastly, the researcher discusses the possible implications of this research project.

*Key words*: disability, curriculum, adapted arts, arts education, special education, special needs

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**Chapter 1: Introduction**

This chapter provides an overview of a research study that explores adaptations for individuals with disabilities. It includes an adapted art curriculum map for students with disabilities. The curriculum plan includes three unit plans complete with adaptations, accommodations, art tools, standards, and rubrics appropriate for students with disabilities of elementary age-range and ability. This curriculum plan will be based on research of people with disabilities. In this chapter, I will describe my journey through art and education in relation to special needs and my Christian faith. I also describe the background to the problem and provide a brief overview of the literature on adaptations for individuals with disabilities. I then discuss the study's purpose, the methods for collecting and organizing data, and the definitions of key terms in this study.

**Narrative**

Art has always been my passion. Since I was a little girl, I have always known that the act of creating art would play an important role in my life and bring me joy. The joy of teaching came later in life. I began to think about my gifts and talents given to me by God. One of these talents was my ability and desire to help others. Taken together, my amiable nature and my passion for creating art developed into the field of art education. In praying and searching for a path to start my career, God placed me in a school for students with severe disabilities. I had taken undergraduate courses pertaining to students with special needs, but I was not prepared for the level of need for those with severe and multiple disabilities. My lack of experience at the time pressured me to become more knowledgeable and fight for ways to achieve success and participation on behalf of my students. I took additional classes in graduate school on special education, I met and talked with special education teachers in my building for ideas, and I

listened to and watched the paraprofessionals work with the students. Coming out of college I was prepared to challenge students' abilities and raise the bar of what it meant for arts education to be a part of schools. However, when I found out that many of my students could not hold a pencil, I wondered, "How can I challenge these students?" The challenge looks different, but it is still possible. Part of my experience has taught me that success looks different for everyone. For many students, it is gripping an item such as a spoon or a paintbrush for longer periods of time. For others, it is tolerating hand-over-hand movements or tolerating certain textures. For some, it is learning about cause and effect when they push a switch button and electric scissors turn on. In creating this curriculum, I acknowledged that every child is unique and has their own set of successes and challenges. Loesl (2012) stated,

> The lives of students who have experienced adaptive art making have been changed in ways that others may not understand. As with most students, the experience of art making is very personal. And, like the other student artists, their work may never hang in an art gallery…The work that is created comes from the very essence of who they are.

In essence, these individuals benefit greatly from artistic expression, and it is my desire to make this possible for every child. Art is a method in which to express one's self. For some individuals, art is a part of their identity and they choose to fulfill that inner desire, despite any physical or mental disabilities that try to hold them back. It is my aspiration that other teachers can use this curriculum and research practices to provide opportunities to open the doors to art tools, media, and techniques for individuals with differing abilities regardless of age.

## Contextualizing the Problem

According to the American Community Survey approximately 12.6% of the U.S. population was diagnosed with a disability in 2015 (Kraus, 2017). A total public school

enrollment survey taken in the same year measured children enrolled under the Individuals with

Disabilities Act (IDEA) and concluded that 6.6 million students were in need of free and

appropriate education (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). Despite higher education

programs promoting the instruction of students with special needs, many non-special education

teachers feel unprepared for teaching students with disabilities. There is a vast need for school-

age curriculum designed specifically for these individuals, especially in the special subjects of

art, physical education, and music.

A search of many education journals and articles for research on "adaptive art" produces

few results. The immense lack of relevant or current literature on the subject is troubling. With

growing numbers of students in need, scholars can no longer ignore the necessity of adaptive

curriculum and tools for educators to use within their art studies (Cramer, Coleman, Park, Bell,

& Coles, 2015; Derby, 2016; Guay, 1994; Mason, Thormann, & Steedly, 2004). As an educator,

I have experienced the lack of resources available in adaptive art for individuals with autism,

emotional and behavioral needs, life skills, multiple disabilities, blind/visually impaired, and

deaf/hard of hearing. Not only are special tools needed for these students to participate and

access their materials, but existing curriculum needs to be modified to the individuals as well.

A lack of curriculum for adaptive art poses many issues for the inexperienced teacher.

Teachers of individuals with disabilities, especially severe disabilities, have no pre-established

goals or objectives to aim for or draw from without an adapted curriculum. With no objectives, it

is difficult to assess the students' abilities and understanding of the content. The educator does

not know where to start, what they are to accomplish, or how to know they have arrived at a

finishing point. The students also do not know their end goal, what it means to achieve mastery,

or what it means to have any sense of continuity within the course. Both teacher and student

should aim to build on their skills each week as they progress through any curriculum.

Students with disabilities are required under IDEA to have equal access to materials.

Why then, are there so few resources available to special subject teachers in the way of

curriculum and tools? Mason et al. (2004) listed implementation of a specific arts curriculum as

one of six ways future researchers could measure academic achievement and cognition through

the arts. Individuals with disabilities have often been marginalized in our society and in

education (Coleman, Cramer, Park, & Bell, 2015). Educators and researchers are the pioneers for

giving these students an opportunity to be successful. Art curricula found in schools K-12 today

assumes that a child has the use of their hands, including fine motor skills. This is not the case

for many individuals in special education, and special tools must be used for these students to

participate. A curriculum that addresses this issue best suits the needs of these individuals and

provides equal opportunity for learning (Coleman et al., 2015; Erim & Caferoğlu, 2017;

MacLean, 2008).

**Purpose of the Project Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate methods of teaching and adapting art materials

and concepts to students with one or more disabilities. The research guided the researcher to

create a curriculum plan with select lesson examples that breaks down the steps and provides a

comprehensive walkthrough of options and considerations for teachers working with these

students. Even though there are multiple traits and variations of disabilities, the curriculum

provides some guidance for altering lessons so that students with disabilities can be successful in

the art classroom. Creators of curriculum in core subjects, who have these students in mind, have

also discovered underlying theories, ideologies, and practices that can be transferred to the field

of art education for those with disabilities. As many general-education teachers do not have experience with severe disabilities, this curriculum plan based on existing research will be a useful resource for this field.

**Methodology**

To address the study's problem, peer-reviewed research was gathered on the topics of adaptive art, special needs, art curriculum, special education theories, adaptations, and occupational tools. Relevant studies were used to source additional resources from the reference sections of each article. Not only did this ensure that the articles shared a similar theme, but the reference sections allowed me to see what authors are most prominent in this field of study. Data collected from these academic journals were collected, examined, and organized according to common themes. A grid was used to collect specific examples of adaptations used in general education and art education. For art education, information was collected on three art categories: digital art, two-dimensional media, and three-dimensional media. These criteria are standard elements of an art curriculum and will be useful for art teachers to see specific examples in literature. As the themes were recorded and sorted, I was able to see the needs, solutions, and evidence-based theories to implement or consider in planning an adaptive art curriculum plan.

**Definition of Terms**

The following key terms are used throughout this research study:

*Accommodation*: A type of adaptation to the curriculum content, teaching strategies, location, timing, schedule, student response, environment, or other aspects of learning that increases access for a student with a disability to participate without lowering the expectations or standards of the course content (Wright, 2003).

*Adapted art*: Artwork created by students with disabilities that is changed or modified to allow the student to create and experience art methods as independently as possible.

*Assistive technology* (AT): A device or piece of equipment that allows a child with a disability to improve, maintain, or increase their speech or physical experiences and capabilities.

*Curriculum*: A set of lessons or courses focused on one overarching subject that builds on concepts over a period of time. Curricula are planned experiences often taking place within educational institutions.

*Severe disabilities*: An individual with greatly impacted physical or mental capacities. These impairments may greatly limit the individual's mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, and work skills and may include a hearing, visual, or health impairment.

**Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This literature review presents research from general education programs that provide adaptations and modifications to curriculum for students with disabilities. It will then consider what past literature has found in regards to what should be included in adaptive art curricula through the use of different art mediums, assistive technology, independence, and instruction. Finally, it will address what literature says about why arts education is valuable in the lives of students and people with disabilities in multiple facets.

**A Need for Curriculum**

On November 29, 1975, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142) was passed providing access for students with disabilities to general education at public schools (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). Today, this is known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Since this law was passed, many education programs in universities and colleges have required at least one special education course for students in teacher education programs. However, large numbers of teachers still feel unprepared for teaching students with special needs, especially severe disabilities (Cramer, Coleman, Park, Bell, & Coles, 2015; Derby, 2016; Guay, 1994).

In a study of preservice preparation to teach art to students with disabilities, Guay (1994) found that the teachers she interviewed relayed that they lacked preparation and had to learn from their students, or by working closely with a special education teacher, through trial and error, returning to graduate school, or through workshops. Not much research has been done on the subject since Guay's 1994 study, so it is often used as a reference in other researchers' work (Coleman et al., 2015).

In interviewing educator's perceptions of teaching students with disabilities, Mason et al. (2004) wrote, "Comments from teachers across the country support the value of the arts for students with disabilities" (p. 39). Coleman, et al. (2015) similarly found that 96% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that it is important for students with significant disabilities to participate in art making. This underlines the problem of this study. If teachers are open to the idea, then why are there so few curricula and tool resources available to art teachers in order to prepare them for the increasing number of students with disabilities in public schools?

## General Education Curriculum Adaptations

In researching curricular needs and accommodations for people with disabilities, findings suggest there is a need for more universal design for learning, normalization, higher order thinking skills, and adaptations. The following sections will address each of these methods.

### Universal Design for Learning

In Robinson's (2013) study of the quality of arts integration research, she noticed that universal design for learning (UDL) principles were being used in many school districts, such as New York City. UDL is an interdisciplinary approach that provides students with multiple means of engaging, expressing, and representing their ideas and learning. It is also a backwards design that allows for essential concepts to connect to big ideas. Pugach and Warger (2001) also mention UDL as a "goal yet to be fully realized in most contemporary classrooms" (p. 196), especially when it comes to the textbooks chosen within the curriculum. The special education teachers interviewed by Ponder and Kissinger (2009) felt that "the arts might play a role in differentiated teaching strategies that could address the various learning styles and dominant multiple intelligences of their students in order to meet educational and behavioral goals" (p. 41). While students that need multiple means of learning and acquiring information might benefit

from UDL and the use of multiple intelligences, some authors suggest curriculum needs to be

chronological, age-appropriate, and teach functional skills that are representative of non-school

environments (Baumgart et al., 1982). On the other hand, the teachers interviewed by Ruppar

Ruppar, Roberts, and Olson (2017) noted the importance of teaching life skills, but also

emphasized the importance of persistence in teaching academic skills to those with severe

disabilities. The teachers did make an effort to make sure their curriculum was age appropriate

with a sense of equity to what other students were doing in the school building. Guay (1993b)

refers to this as normalization.

**Normalization**

Guay (1993b) describes "normalization" as an ideology that is "a combination of beliefs,

attitudes, and interpretations of reality, that derives from one's experiences, one's knowledge of

what one presumes to be fact, and above all, one's values" (p. 59). Normalization is about

keeping classroom topics, student interests, social interactions, and other needs similar to that of

students with disabilities peers. For Guay (1993b), "Normalization focuses on the classroom

system. It does not seek to provide simplified art or in any way to separate or segregate students,

but rather makes instructional provisions that accommodate the diversity" (p. 62). Broderick,

Mehta-Parekh, and Reid (2005) agree that inclusive education should resist students being

excluded and marginalized, but they differ in their approach from Guay. They wrote, "Offering

the same lesson to all makes no sense when every indication is that U.S. classrooms are

inherently diverse" (Broderick et al., 2005, p. 196). They describe differentiated instruction (DI),

which allows teachers to address diversity by "planning and delivering rigorous and relevant, yet

flexible and responsive, instruction" (Broderick et al., 2005, p. 196) in general-education

classrooms.

**Higher Order Thinking**

When it comes to curriculum, many authors expressed the need for higher order thinking skills to be addressed (Ponder & Kissinger, 2009; Pugach & Warger, 2001; Robinson, 2013; Ruppar et al., 2017). Pugach and Warger (2001) express the curriculum issue of complex content that requires deeper understanding, when many students with disabilities lack basic skills that could inhibit them from reaching these deeper concepts. They wrote: "The underlying assumption has always been that content requiring higher-order cognition was beyond the reach of most students with disabilities" (p. 196). Instead of offering a watered-down curriculum or only focusing effort on basic skills, these authors point out research that states, "Students with disabilities are capable of achieving far higher levels of understanding of complex material than many special educators previously believed was possible" (Pugach & Warger, 2001, p. 196).

In a study by Ruppar et al. (2017), they interviewed 11 teachers of students with severe disabilities and were identified as expert teachers in this field. One theme that came up in this study was high expectations. One teacher said, "You really have to believe that every single student is capable of learning anything that you're teaching" (Ruppar et al., 2017, p. 128). Presuming competence is something that Broderick et al. (2005) address:

> One is left in the position of having to make decisions about a student's curriculum and instruction based on assumptions, rather than certainty. One is thus faced with a choice: (a) assume that the student is probably not able to comprehend and elect to provide that student with more limited learning opportunities, focusing on intensive remedial coverage of very basic concepts; or (b) assume that the student is able to comprehend beyond his or her ability to demonstrate that comprehension and elect to provide that student with more rich and varied learning opportunities, while continuing to seek a more

reliable means for that student to demonstrate comprehension through differentiate

process and products. (pp. 198-199)

Ruppar et al. (2017) wrote, "High expectations for students are reflected in teachers' advocacy,

systematic instruction, curricular decisions (i.e., academics), and collegial relationships" (p.

128). All of these authors feel that curriculum for those with disabilities can and should include

higher order thinking skills. These skills are made possible through the use of adaptations.

**Adaptations**

Adaptations for general education curriculum may include many things. Some authors

offer specific examples (Broderick et al., 2005; Guay, 1993a; Ruppar et al., 2017). In Ruppar et

al.'s (2017) study, expert teachers thoroughly individualized their instruction. They also used

adaptations that were specific to the students and customized their learning. Knowledge of these

adaptations was key. For instance, these expert teachers used multiple ways to present materials,

such as visual, tactile, and kinesthetic information, providing schedules, using manipulatives, and

using technology. Teachers also noted that having a deep knowledge of the student allowed for

more individualized instruction and allowed them to choose adaptations based on the students'

strengths. Just as the teachers in Ruppar et al.'s study did not believe that one size fit all,

Broderick et al. (2005) also discovered that people with disabilities are not all the same:

Disability does not play out for all students in the same way, even when they carry the

same label. . . . The intersectionality of all personal and social characteristics determines

how disability will be experienced. Thinking about disabilities as absolute categories of

difference also causes trouble because it emphasizes students' common deficits . . . rather

than their uniqueness and competence. If teachers are to provide access to the general

education curriculum, as the 1997 . . . IDEA . . . mandate, they must identify and build on

all students' strengths, talents, and prior knowledge. Only through building on their

strengths and acknowledging their experiences can teachers engage students in

appropriately challenging classroom activities. (p. 196)

Regardless of their label, many students with disabilities are unable to read at the expected grade

level. Broderick et al. (2005) suggested using a reading buddy, assigning parts ahead of time,

allowing them to decide what they read, bypassing reading altogether, providing an alternative

text, placing visual aids within the text, or supporting the text with graphic organizers. Teachers

must be aware of and practiced in using adaptations in all subjects. Regardless of the adaptation,

it is the teacher that must problem-solve and remain flexible to adapt, but not water down the

material (Broderick et al., 2005; Coleman et al., 2015).

## Adapted Arts Curriculum

Is there a need for specialized arts curricula? In kindergarten through 12th grade,

respondents reported that "66.7% taught students with disabilities only in integrated

classes, 30.9% taught a combination of integrated and segregated classes, and 2.4% taught

students with disabilities only in segregated classes" (Guay, 1994, p. 46). This is part of the

change brought on by IDEA. Guay (1994) goes on to say that, "Consequently, all art teachers

must be prepared to teach students with disabilities in integrated classes and to respond to the

social, instructional, and curricular needs of students with a broad range of ability" (p. 44). Many

teachers are not prepared for this, however; and therefore points to a need for adapted

curriculum.

While art educators may be provided with a typical standards-aligned curriculum, it may

not be appropriate for many of the students that are included in their classrooms. For Zederayko

and Ward (1999) a rigorous visual arts program contains "a range of elements including art

study, two-dimensional and three-dimensional work. Thus, the student in a wheelchair who is unable to make any marks on a two-dimensional surface will be able to experience only a portion of a full art education experience" (p. 18). MacLean (2008) puts it this way: "The goal of inclusion is not uniformity, true inclusion means offering each student the opportunity to learn in a style and environment that maximizes his/her ability to fully develop as a human being" (p. 95).

Art educators do not have to work alone. In collaboration with universities, art educators could provide knowledge of tools and adaptive materials for review. Another form of collaboration takes place within the school building: "Art teachers often serve students with significant disabilities for limited amounts of time and have limited disability-specific knowledge while special education teachers understand individual students' needs but have little knowledge about the art curriculum" (Coleman et al., 2015, p. 639). Both special educators and art educators must rely on each other for support and the exchange of knowledge.

**Artistic Media**

**Digital technology.** In an art-based study conducted by Darewych, Carlton, and Farrugie (2015), digital technology was explored as a possible art medium for adults with developmental disabilities in art therapy. It was found successful, especially by those on the Autism spectrum with touch, tactile, or smell sensitivity (Darewych et al., 2015). The authors found that "participants with tactile sensitivity favoured creating art on the texture-free touchscreen devices because of its compact, mess-free therapeutic environment. Such results support . . . that certain individuals may interact more effectively with low kinetic sensory or mess-free digital device than with traditional messy art materials" (p. 99). Taylor (2005) also investigated ways in which the arts curriculum could be made accessible to young disabled people through digital

technology. Although many disabled students have difficulties with manipulative skills that keep them from techniques such as drawing, she argued that "digital technology if managed appropriately, has the power to obviate the requirement for high levels of manipulative skills and physical dexterity in the production of visual images" (Taylor, 2005, p. 327). Digital technology is just one artistic medium available to students with disabilities. Next, literature on two-dimensional art will be explored.

      **Two-dimensional arts.** Painting, printmaking, collage, and drawing are all techniques found in art curricula. As mentioned previously, drawing can be a particularly difficult technique for students with severe disabilities to accomplish (Taylor, 2005). Zederayko and Ward (1999) have also seen this struggle in two-dimensional works: "The student who is physically unable to hold a pencil or paintbrush, for example, is bound to have difficulties with a lesson on painting or drawing" (p. 18). In Guay's (1993a) study of effective art programs, she noticed that "teachers emphasized assignments that did not require realistic drawing. Printmaking and ceramics were the most frequently observed studio activities" (p. 228). The teachers in Guay's study often chose art media and processes for whole class success. For painting, LaMore and Nelson (1993) found that "adults with mental disabilities painted significantly more if they were given options and the opportunity for choice than if they were not given options" (p. 400). Although many students struggle to hold a pencil or paintbrush, Zederayko and Ward (1999) constructed assistive technology, which was designed to address this issue. This technology will be discussed in a later section of this review.

      **Three-dimensional arts.** Art also consists of the three-dimensional arts including sculpture and ceramics. Timmons and MacDonald (2008) conducted a study on the experience of using clay for people with chronic illness and disability. They wrote, "Occupational therapists

have reported that clay offers an opportunity for creativity, imagination and expression, whilst at the same time requiring dexterity and strength, making it useful for improving fine motor control and coordination (Breines, 1995)" (pp. 86-87). Not only did the clay provide opportunities for fine motor skills, but "the diversity of techniques and the essence of clay as a sculptural medium enabled the participants to create pleasing work despite physical limitations" (Timmons & MacDonald, 2008, p. 91). Similarly, clay stood out as an artistic medium because no tools were needed and the participants enjoyed the feeling of the clay. For those that do not like the feel of clay, gloves could be worn as protection.

**Curricular Content**

Some authors lamented that current art curricula lack in value and effectiveness for individuals with disabilities. Having a curriculum that was meaningful was important to multiple researchers (Broderick et al., 2005; Ponder & Kissinger, 2009; Pugach & Warger, 2001). In addition, Eisenhauer (2007) advocated for "the inclusion of disabled people doing art in art curriculum," which "placed an emphasis upon the representation of difference through a curriculum of admiration and appreciation in which individual artists are admired for their ability to create work similar to other able-bodied artists" (p. 9). Lastly, Schiller (1994) and Guay (1993a) both mention the discipline-based arts education (DBAE) as a recommended focus for art education goals. For example, Schiller (1994) writes, "Art lessons that are content-rich, in that they include concepts in art history, criticism and aesthetics, can promote the use of oral and written language, as well as addressing specific art learning" (p. 12). Looking at these studies, a combination of meaningful art lessons, the inclusion of disabled artists, and DBAE would give an art educator focus for a well-rounded art education curriculum.

**Accommodations and Adaptations**

When looking at accommodations or adaptations to the curriculum, some researchers consider teachers being proactive to be the best approach (Cramer et al., 2015; Pugach & Warger, 2001; Wexler & Luethi-Garrecht, 2015). Cramer et al. (2015) believe that "students require teachers to be proactive in creating art experiences that are meaningful by being fluent in various accommodations and modifications that allow them to participate fully in the preK-12 art classroom" (p. 7). Pugach and Warger (2001) feel that being proactive is not only important in understanding accommodations, but in redeveloping the way curriculum is approached. They shared:

> . . . Bart Pisha and Peggy Coyne, are among those who are taking a proactive approach to "hardwiring" curriculum materials from the outset so that they naturally accommodate a far greater range of students and motivate them as well. In this way, they are attempting to relieve an unreasonable burden for teachers and make curriculum materials flexible enough from the start to meet typical differing needs. This in turn, can free up specialists to work on very complex needs. (Pugach & Warger, 2001, p. 196)

When a teacher is proactive in their approach to inclusive curricula, they consider the environment, any need for assistive technology, opportunities for independence, and their instructional methods.

**Environment: bringing out the best in students.**

The environment, and even the layout of the art room can have an impact on whether or not a student with a disability feels welcomed and included. Wexler and Luethi-Garrecht (2015) found that the physical arrangement of the art room was more of an obstruction to collaboration, independence, empathy, and dialogue than the lack of communication itself. MacLean (2008) put

it this way: "Because she is in charge of creating an environment that is conducive to learning, the teacher has many decisions to make including how she will physically set up the space, what materials she will make available, and the best way to plan" (pp. 93-94). Broderick et al. (2005) suggested:

> To accommodate disabled students, aisles should be clear and wide enough to be wheelchair accessible and students should be able to choose the specific environment in which they prefer to work. . . . Materials should be accessible, charts and bulletin boards at eye-level. (p. 198)

Not only does the physical environment play a role, but the teacher's perception and attitude toward diverse individuals. Broderick et al. (2005) seems to also make this point, "Students tend to take cues from the teacher, and so the teacher's attitudes toward disability will greatly influence how students treat difference. Thus, teaching about diversity . . . should be an integral part of the curriculum in inclusive classrooms" (p. 198). Teachers can take care to set up their room to accommodate different needs, as well as check their own engagement with students with disabilities in the classroom. Next, assistive technology will be discussed in relation to participation in the art room.

**Assistive technology: the sky's the limit.**

Assistive technology (AT) is a device or piece of equipment that allows a child with a disability to improve, maintain, or increase their speech or physical experiences and capabilities.

> Finding the most effective combinations of adaptations and teaching strategies for students with physical, visual, severe, or multiple disabilities access to the general curriculum can be especially difficult for teachers. Though true for all-inclusive environments, this especially applies for art classrooms where curriculum access relies

heavily on physical, visual, and abstract problem solving abilities. (Coleman & Cramer,

2015, p. 638)

The results of Coleman et al.'s (2015) study showed that over half of surveyed teachers rarely or

never used assistive technology. In contrast, the experienced teachers in Cramer et al.'s (2015)

study often used more than one type of assistive device to help students with disabilities. Taylor

(2005) asserted that students with disabilities are subject to the lottery principal when it comes to

teachers that are trained to use assistive technology. She writes, "They may or may not encounter

the teachers and technicians who can equip them with the adaptations to the computer, its

hardware and software that they require, and they may or may not encounter a teacher who is

committed to the creative use of [Information Communication Technology] in the arts" (Taylor,

2005, p. 331). It is because of this that teachers must become more knowledgeable of current

technology, tools, and adaptations for these students.

Zederayko and Ward (1999) suggest varieties of adaptive strategies such as adjustable

tables, elevated lapboards, or tools to modify art materials, such as larger crayons, for the student

to be able to grasp them more easily. These are not just tools; they are opportunities for children

to experience art as their peers do. After creating an adaptive tool for a student to use, Zederayko

and Ward (1999) wrote:

> At last Craig was making his own drawings. Craig felt intense personal achievement with
>
> his accomplishments and felt ownership for his drawing. He was so engrossed that he
>
> refused to give up his activity long enough to allow his aide to switch pen colors in the
>
> drawing tool. In the past Craig permitted his aide to complete most of his art projects for
>
> him as he sat placidly watching the process. (p. 21)

This incredible transformation would not have been possible without assistive technology. In Guay's (1993a) study, "traditional art media and processes were found viable for all students, although adaptations of tools and alternative methods for working with materials were observed" (p. 230). She also found that a student's physical needs could require media to be chosen or adapted in order to provide independence. For example, "Oak tag and chunky crayons helped when hands were awkward. One used a turntable when students had limited reach . . . five styles of scissors were found in classrooms along with teacher-invented paper and scissor holding devices" (Guay, 1993a, p. 229). Taylor (2005) also made a suggestion about adapting art materials: "There are a range of both sophisticated and simple technological solutions that facilitate students' learning in the arts. These can be as simple as a crayon attached to a long stick or a moulded splint that supports or effects grasping a drawing implement" (p. 326). AT does not have to stretch the budget or be store bought.

Baumgart, Brown, and Pumpian (1982) list five ways to create individualized adaptations. These include: (a) utilizing/creating materials and devices, (b) utilizing personal assistance, (c) adapting skill sequences, (d) adapting rules, and (e) using social/attitudinal adaptations. However, many solutions should be attempted before an adaptation is decided upon. An expert teacher would have multiple adaptations of tools prepared for each lesson to individualize the technology to each student. As seen in Coleman et al.'s (2015) study, teachers need to be more active and conscientious of creating adaptations through the use of assistive technology. Assistive technology is used to increase skills in many areas but with a common goal to increase independence.

**Independence: the artist in me.**

Independence is something that individuals without disabilities may take for granted. When students with disabilities are provided with aides or lack AT, their voices may not come through in their artwork (Taylor, 2005; Zederayko & Ward, 1999). Taylor (2005) believes that "The enabler's role should be to build confidence in independent thought and recognition that difference is valid and worthy of aesthetic consideration. A significant part of this creative process is to learn by making mistakes or by taking advantage of the 'happy accident'" (p. 330). The art classroom is an ideal place to allow for independence, as there are multiple ways to interpret art, and children with or without disabilities should not be pressured to conform. Ruppar et al. (2007) also felt that the teacher played an important role in creating student independence. They wrote, "An expert teacher takes responsibility for equipping students for independence and recognizes that part of the job of teaching is to find opportunities for students to build on their strengths" (Ruppar et al., 2007, p. 128).

In the reviewing studies focused on adapting art for people with disabilities, independence was always seen as a positive. For example, Ponder and Kissinger (2009) shared that during multiple projects taught by a special education teacher, a teaching artist, and an arts specialist, "the students learned to work independently and to meet the challenge of producing finished objects to certain specifications, and they have successfully sold their works at gardening shows" (p. 42). With some students with disabilities being segregated in different schools, it was important for Guay (1993a) to see that a "normalized art curriculum" was still being used to promote independence and provide the students with "classroom responsibilities similar to those at non-segregated sites" (p. 230). Through the use of computers, Darewych et al. (2015) found that there was an improvement in independence of digital art over traditional art:

Due to the multimedia design of touchscreen devices and the proximity of the digital

canvas right at one's fingertips, as sessions progressed, participants were able to

independently choose their preferred art tools, blend their desired colours, and transfer

images from the Internet onto digital collage work. The participants often require

assistance with mixing colours and operating tools such as scissors when creating

traditional art. (Darewych et al., 2015, p. 98)

LaMore and Nelson's (1993) study shows that "choice making within parameters set by the

therapist can enhance performance. In addition, choice making is a developmental achievement

in its right that should be encouraged" (p. 400). This is one method for creating independence so

that the child has a voice.

**Instructional methods: initiating student artistic success.**

In addition to the environment and assistive technology, a teacher's instructional methods

can be adapted to accommodate or modify a student's access to learning. In the pilot project

initiated by Ponder and Kissinger (2009), the arts specialists learned that "they needed to give

directions in a very linear way, that they might have to repeat themselves more often, and that

they had to give directions in smaller 'chunks,' step by step" (p. 43). The arts specialists also

learned "how to structure activities so that students with a variety of abilities could be successful.

They learned how to differentiate teaching in classes where students have various dominant

learning styles and multiple intelligences" (Ponder & Kissinger, 2009, p. 43).

For further instructional adaptations, Guay (1993a) lists "one-one-one directness,

repetition, example, and modeling" (p. 228). One might think that repetition might decrease the

likelihood of creativity, but she found that "students experiencing developmental disabilities

gained in art knowledge and art skills while creating original designs" (p. 223). Similarly, Arem

and Zimmerman (1976) found that "modeling art behaviors, demonstrating techniques, and showing completed examples of art products did not stifle creativity but rather enhanced it" (as cited in Guay, 1993a, p. 223). Task analysis, a strategy found useful by Guay (1993a, 1993b) is an approach used to reduce specific skills into small sequential steps. In her study, Guay (1993a) also breaks instruction down into different categories. For students needing academic assistance, she recorded that "teachers used a cue hierarchy, verbal cuing, and additional demonstration preceding hand-over-hand assistance if needed" (Guay, 1993a, p. 229). For students with attention and behavioral disabilities, Guay found that teachers allowed them to work in the media of their choice, instructed in small increments, provided effective tools, and tried to keep frustration levels down.

Zederayko and Ward (1999) suggested an approach to lessons that move away from "appropriate" activities and instead focuses on skills needed for the lesson, such as holding and using a pencil. For Broderick et al. (2005), "Students need many and varied smaller opportunities throughout the course of study and having multiple opportunities for rehearsal and practice of assessment activities typically supports students' successful performance" (pp. 199-200). They also stated that "goals and procedures are clearly articulated; the instruction is relevant, accessible, and responsive; and the tasks are interesting and challenging, but reachable with effort. Disabled students benefit from good instruction, just as all students do" (Broderick et al., 2005, p. 200). It is clear that there are many techniques a teacher must consider as they instruct individuals with disabilities to promote success.

## Impact of Arts Integration

If you are wondering why arts education is important in the lives of children with disabilities, the literature so far discussed so far has found many benefits to not only teacher

perceptions, but to the individual student's perceptions of themselves and their disability (Derby, 2016; Guay, 1994; Mason et al., 2004). Some of these benefits include: (a) a greater range of communication possibilities through visuals (Coleman et. al, 2015; Mason et al., 2004; Zederayko & Ward, 1999); (b) developed literacy, writing, and numeracy skills; (c) improving motivation and comprehension; and (d) opportunities to find success, build confidence, social skills, fine motor skills, problem solving, and participation (Erim & Caferoğlu, 2017; Mason et al., 2004). Given these benefits, "to deny students access to art is to deny them the opportunity to develop themselves" (Zederayko & Ward, 1999, p. 19). According to Ponder and Kissinger (2009), students with disabilities gain many additional benefits through the arts:

> Students are "given a voice," are allowed to solve problems in different ways, and are inspired to ask more questions and make their own choices, improving communication skills. Students are proud of their work and their self-esteem "blooms" when they get to show it to visitors. Some commented on how the arts encourage practice in skills such as fine motor control, following instructions, and seeing a project through to the end, and how they provide direct connections to academic subjects (i.e., arrangements of colors, shapes, and patterns connect to mathematical abilities). (p. 45)

Some of the most significant benefits will be discussed in the final sections of this review.

**Motor Skills Development**

Because the arts allow for more than one solution to a problem, they encourage students to problem-solve in new and creative ways, differing from the structured path of academic core subjects (Guay, 1993b; MacLean, 2008). The arts also provide opportunities for fine motor skills to be developed. Erim and Cafeogu (2017) found that "most of the special education teachers have agreed that using art education for the education of mentally retarded children has a

positive effect on the motor skills development of the children" (p. 1306). Motor skills are not the only benefit to arts education, but communication skills are also found to increase with time spent in the arts for those with disabilities.

**Communication: Art as a Voice**

Another common theme of previous research was the ability to communicate through, or because of, the arts (Coleman et al., 2015; Kissinger & Ponder, 2009; MacLean, 2008; Schiller, 1994; Taylor, 2005; Zederayko & Ward, 1999). Schiller (1994) believes that "the link between language development and art should be highlighted as an important aspect of lesson objectives" (p. 13). In *Give Students With Special Needs Something to Talk About*, Schiller interviewed a speech pathologist, Dora, to get her perspective on art and communication. Dora said, "By doing art projects, I can see, coming from a language perspective, how advantageous it is to do these kinds of activities" (Schiller, 1994, p. 13). Zederayko and Ward (1999) found that "art study also provides the student with a greater range of communication possibilities because it provides students with access to the language of the visual" (p. 19). Taylor (2005) expresses that although augmentative communication may be used, teachers and assistants may also look for eye direction, facial expression, gesture and sound as communication for choices and art criticism.

Students may also find ways to communicate or collaborate in the arts through the social interaction of class. "One special education teacher reported discovering that her students learned 'so much more than art' in the project: vocabulary, social skills, cognitive skills, planning, and pride in their work" (Ponder & Kissinger, 2009, p. 43). Art is interdisciplinary in nature, but does lend itself to other opportunities outside of traditional art making. Robinson (2013) felt that "arts integration is naturally engaging, as it offers students many opportunities for individual choice, autonomy, and self-regulation through collaborative learning experiences with peers" (p. 192).

Likewise, Coleman et al. (2015) wrote, "Students of all ages and ability levels can benefit from expressing their thoughts, ideas, and emotions through the multiple modes of learning (intuitive, kinesthetic, etc.), creative processes, graphic narratives, and social experiences of an art classroom (e.g., working with shared materials, learning how to critique constructively, participating in group art projects)" (p. 638). All of these authors have found that art provides opportunity for growth in multiple areas of their learning, and should not be discounted.

**Self-Esteem and Expression**

Self-empowerment, enjoyment, confidence, and expression through art making were common themes in the literature (Darewych et al., 2015; Erim & Cafeogu, 2017; Mason et al., 2004; Ponder & Kissinger, 2009; Schiller, 1994; Timmons & MacDonald, 2008). In exploring in digital technology, Darewych et al. (2015) found that, "through the creative process, participants gained a sense of empowerment and utilized their talents and imaginative thinking abilities" (p. 100). In the evaluation of clay for people with disabilities, Timmons and MacDonald (2008) wrote, "Whether it was through the process of making or the end product, all the participants gained a sense of enjoyment and satisfaction from creating works in clay" (p. 89). Erim and Cafeogu (2017) found the exploration of art materials to create expression despite physical developmental delays:

> Art materials result in beneficial outcomes for mentally retarded children in terms of coordinated use of their hands and eyes simultaneously. Different materials and methods affect the developmental processes of children and increase their interest for art lessons. Since techniques and methods taught by working with different materials help children link their physical and personal features, children find opportunities to express themselves in a better way. (p. 1302)

Not only did students' self-perception change positively after engaging in the arts, but the teachers' perceptions of the students' capabilities and strengths also changed in positive ways.

**Teacher Expectations and Perceptions**

Many researchers found that teacher perceptions of success reflected the expectations that were set (Broderick et al., 2005; Guay, 1993b; Mason et al., 2004; Ponder & Kissinger, 2009; Wexler & Luethi-Garrecht, 2015). In one study that conducted focus groups with teachers, Mason et al. (2004) found that they reported being thrilled when students demonstrated artistic talents or abilities in their classroom, and were encouraged when they observed students engaged in the artistic process. These authors state, "Many teachers truly believed that students with and without disabilities who experience success with the arts and have experiences with the arts, tend to learn more and be more successful academically" (Mason et al., 2004, p. 27).

Ponder and Kissinger (2009) also saw similar results: "[Special education teachers] also reported learning that their students were capable of creating in the arts beyond the levels they had imagined at the beginning of the project" (p. 43). In these authors' pilot program, "Parents were very pleased with the works of art their children created, were surprised they were so successful, and were very proud" (Ponder & Kissinger, 2009, p. 44). In addition, Guay (1993b) found that "many art teachers have shared their belief that disabled students seem to rise to expectations, often surprising other teachers and parents" (p. 59).

According to Valle and Connor (2011), "What teachers believe about disability determines how students with disabilities are really educated" (p. 13). This means that teachers must be prepared and educated on disabilities and more resources are needed to demonstrate to these teachers how to believe in these students' strengths. How does one raise teacher expectations of learning for those with disabilities? Broderick et al. (2005) state "Educators must
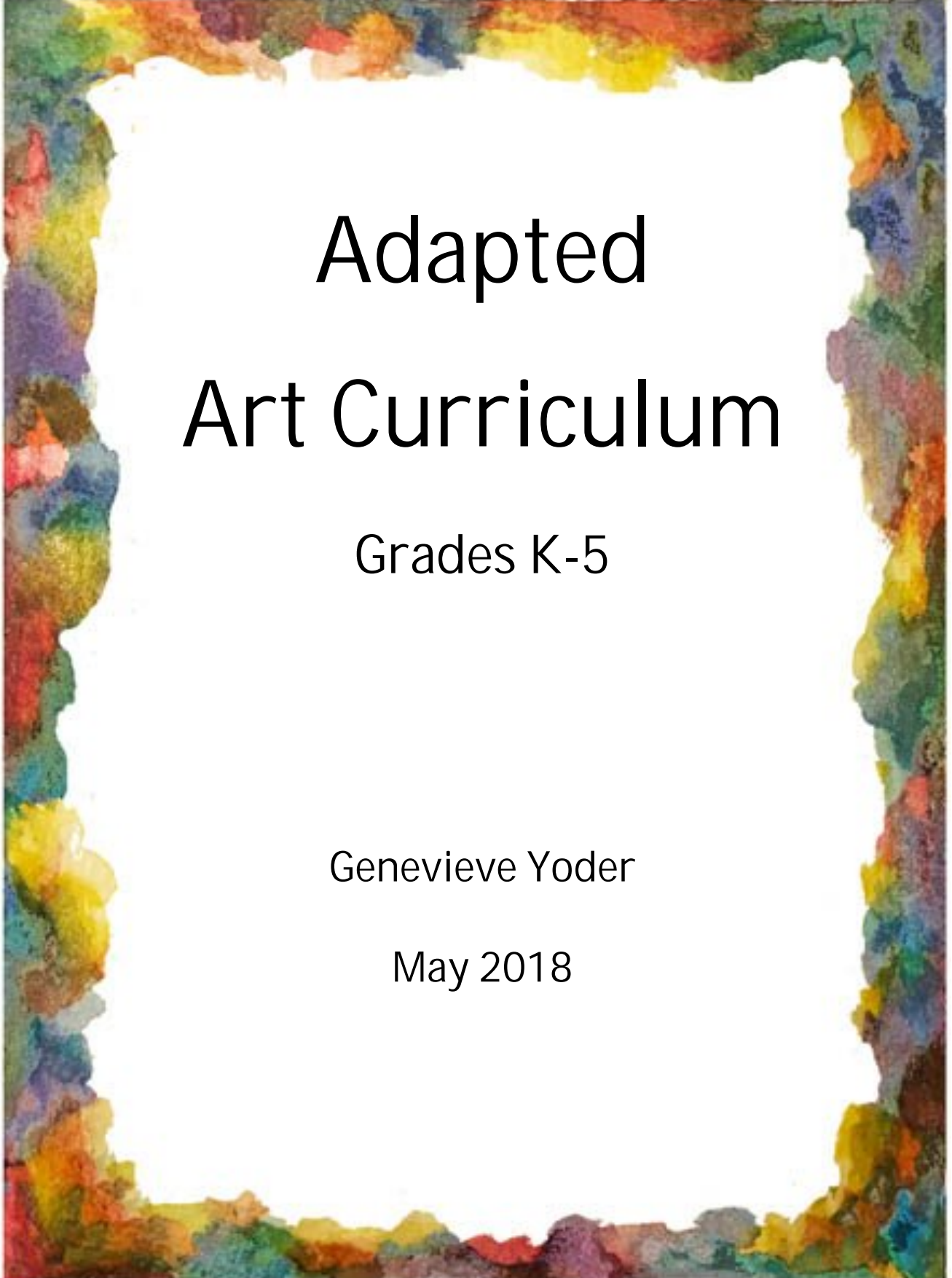
presume, first and foremost, that their students are competent individuals who are ready for and

capable of benefitting from academic curricular content, and then must create the necessary

instructional package to ensure students' access to that content" (p. 199). Teachers must presume

competence, and set high expectations of learning for these individuals to be welcomed and

included in education.

## Conclusion

Throughout this chapter it has been clear that there is a need for individualized

curriculum. Peterson (1995) warns that it "does little good to include a student only to have the

group or program exclude the individual beyond observation of activities" (p. 6). This literature

review has pointed to past research indicating that arts integration for students with special needs

is important (Derby, 2016; Erim & Caferoğlu, 2017; Guay, 1994; Mason et al, 2004) and yet

lacking (Coleman et al., 2015; Cramer et al., 2015; Guay, 1994; Mason et al., 2004; Zederayko

& Ward, 1999). This review considered the accommodations and adaptations of both general

education curriculum and arts education curriculum and instruction. It also included multiple

studies on the benefits of arts education in the lives of individuals with disabilities and the

changed perception of their teachers. With a look into past and current literature, it is still

apparent that even with the enactment of IDEA, there is still a need of specific art-related

knowledge for art educators including instructional adaptation, curriculum, and tools.

**Chapter 3**
**Adapted Arts Curriculum**

# Adapted

# Art Curriculum

## Grades K-5

Genevieve Yoder

May 2018

**Table of contents**

**Introduction**

This curriculum produces the application and response to the meta-analysis research found in the Adapted Art Curriculum thesis project by Genevieve Yoder. First, the following curriculum will cover the application and background of the curriculum plan. This curriculum will include three in-depth unit plans that demonstrate the three art media sections mentioned in the research meta-analysis: Digital Technology, Two-Dimensional Arts, and Three-dimensional Arts. Each unit plan will incorporate accommodations and modifications for successful art making for students of all abilities. After that, there will be a separate table for an Accommodations Template to help teachers plan for accommodations that can be made for presentation, response, and setting. The full curriculum plan will be shown as a map for overarching topics to be covered for the entire year for elementary students levels K-5. This map can be viewed as a supplemental document.

**Art for Grades K-5**

The curriculum map is designed to be age appropriate, rigorous, and relevant, while still allowing flexibility for individualization (Broderick et al., 2005; Guay, 1993b). There are columns, or sections, to the curriculum map for each grade K-5: Units, Media, Art Production, Cultural History, Art Criticism, Aesthetic Standards, and Modifications. Art Production, Cultural History, Art Criticism, and Aesthetic Standards are all established on the Disciplined-Based Arts Education (DBAE) principle, suggested earlier by Schiller (1994) and Guay (1993a). "Art lessons that are content-rich, in that they include concepts in art history, criticism and aesthetics, can promote the use of oral and written language, as well as addressing specific art learning" (Schiller, 1994, p. 12). These four areas of learning are also reflected in the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for the Arts and Humanities. Because of this, the

Pennsylvania (PA) standards were applied to each category according to the unit topics being

covered. For the individual unit plans, the National Core Art Standards were included in addition

to the PA standards.

**The Goal of the Curriculum Map**

The goal of the curriculum map\* was to make sure that:

**1.** Learning was tiered, becoming more complex with each grade level

**2.** Each academic standard was accomplished within a student's elementary educational

experience

**3.** There was some form of proactive adaptation or modification 'hardwired' in the

curriculum from the start (Pugach and Warger, 2001).

\*The curriculum map is available for reference in a supplemental document created for

these units.

These modifications were made directly from the research above, including specific items

under three categories: Environment, Instruction, and Materials. A teacher with one or more

students with disabilities will need to be proactive in accomplishing or preparing many of these

items. This is why it is important to have it listed in the curriculum plan, so that it is in the

forefront of the teacher's mind. They must plan with purpose to allow for the most success.

Many items, such as AT communication devices may require collaborating with speech

therapists in order to understand what words the child has access to, or how to assist the student

in using the device if it is new to them. As far as artistic tools, teachers may need to purchase

these before the need arises so that they are prepared to swap out materials at any moment.

The Elements, Principles, Artists, and Cultures are intended to be closely related and

overlap to an extent, activating prior knowledge. For instance, in 5th grade, students will learn

about artists Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo. In order to learn about these artists appropriately, the culture of Mexico would also be taught. A lesson on the Dias de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) may include symmetrical skeletons of Diego and Frida (Cortes, n.d.). During the lesson students will learn about art elements and principles such as shape, pattern, balance and unity. These elements and principles of design would be discussed and learned prior to this lesson, which incorporates a merging of artist, culture, and design. This repetition will be helpful to typical students, as well as students with disabilities. Each district has differing amounts of time spent in the arts, so the number of lessons that include the art elements and principles, artists, and cultures would be flexible according to the needs of each teacher.

<div align="center">**The Unit Plans**</div>

Each unit plan includes a description, essential questions, learning objectives, curriculum standards, assessments, materials, instructional activities, accommodations, and resources. The description is important for the teacher, administrator, or substitute teacher to familiarize themselves with the overarching concepts and goals of the unit. The essential questions and vocabulary focus the teacher to address the learning so that the students will be able to answer the questions by the end of each lesson or unit. The summative assessments included in the unit plans are geared towards elementary-aged students. The rubrics are visual, allowing for understanding for students with English as a second language, students with disabilities, and typical students alike. The materials, resources, accommodations, and instructional activities are all structured in a way that will lead back to the instructional objectives. This creates a backwards, universal design where students have multiple means to represent and express their learning (Robinson, 2013).

**Digital Technology**

In Chapter two, it was expressed that Darewych et al. (2015) found that digital technology benefitted those with touch and smell sensitivity because it is texture-free and mess-free. Using technology in the art room provides engagement different from the traditional tools that may also be used for creation. For this unit, students will be creating an artistic image using an iPad application (app) called Pic Collage. It is a free application, and with instruction, is easy to learn and use. Many children are already exposed to this technology by this age, but it is important for the teacher to go over the basic functions of the device before beginning the lesson. Not only does this unit incorporate technology skills, but it also provides interdisciplinary avenues through the use of literature.

Through the use of a digital surface, an accommodation is already being made for whole class success. Since the iPad is the only art media being used, there are not an abundance of adaptive materials to worry about. However, there may be students with severe disabilities who lack fine motor capabilities that may find the screen too small for their arm movements. In this case, under the Modifications/Accommodation section of the unit plan, a suggestion was included to have the student(s) use the interactive classroom board, whether it is a Smartboard, Promethean, IPEVO, or other interactive instructional device. If the digital pen is too short, it can be attached to a yardstick and wielded hand-over-hand if necessary. For students are visually impaired and would not be able to engage with the device by touch, it was suggested to modify the assignment by having the student use three-dimensional materials such as foam, so that they can feel the shapes they are producing and arranging. While these adaptations or modifications do not address every possible scenario, they demonstrate the flexibility in the lesson and the possibilities to create success for individual learners.

**Unit:** **Eric Carle iPad Collages**                    **Grade Level:** 1st Grade

**Description:** Students will use the app Pic Collage on their iPads to create an Eric Carle inspired digital collage. As a class, we will complete an author study by reading multiple books by Eric Carle. We will compare them and look at how each shape is made up of smaller shapes. We will watch a short video to see Eric Carle painting and creating the textures, then cutting them out. Students will learn how to use tools in Pic Collage such as web search, clip tools, and creating shapes. They will search for Eric Carle backgrounds, add them to their Pic Collage gallery, and then cut shapes from the textures using their finger. They will then use these shapes to create an image that illustrates a part of a fable found in one of the books on Epic! Students will be assessed on this final design.

**Essential Learning/Instructional Outcomes:** (Identify the important concepts and skills that students are expected to learn)

**Students will be able to:**
- Identify similarities between books illustrated by Eric Carle
- Illustrate for another book using Eric Carle's style and textures
- Create a unique image using shapes, texture, and color on the iPad

**Essential Questions:**
- How can I illustrate a book using implied textures?
- How can I use technology to create a digital collage?

**Vocabulary:**
- Eric Carle
- Illustration
- Implied Texture
- Shape
- Collage

**Curriculum Standard:**

**PA Academic Standards:**

9.1.3.A: Know and use the elements and principles of each art form to create works in the arts and humanities

9.1.3.B: Recognize, know, use and demonstrate a variety of appropriate arts elements and principles to produce, review and revise original works in the arts.

9.1.3.C: Recognize and use fundamental vocabulary within each of the arts forms.

9.1.3.E: Demonstrate the ability to define objects, express emotions, illustrate an action, or relate an experience through creation of works in the arts.

9.1.3.J: Know and use traditional and contemporary technologies for producing, performing, and exhibiting works in the arts or the works of others.

9.2.3.L: Identify, explain, and analyze common themes, forms, and techniques from works in the arts.

9.3.3.A: Recognize critical processes used in the examination of works in the arts and humanities (compare and contrast)

**National Core Arts Standards:**
Va:Cr1.2.1a: Use observation and investigation in preparation for making a work of art
Va:Cr2.1.1a: Explore uses of materials and tools to create works of art or design

**ELA Standards:**
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.7
    Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by
    the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting)
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.9
    Compare and contrast the themes, settings, and plots of stories written by the same
    author about the same or similar characters (e.g., in books from a series)

**Assessment:** (Identify the formative or summative assessments you will use to determine
student progress toward achieving that instructional outcomes of the lesson)
**Formative:**
- Whole class discussion- "What is similar about the way these books are illustrated by Eric Carle?"
- Whole class discussion- reading comprehension of books
- Ticket in/out the door on the artist

**Summative:**
- Students will be graded according to this rubric:

|  | 4 points | 3 points | 2 points | 1 points |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Image fills the entire screen | 😄 | 🙂 | 😐 | ☹️ |
| Collage has two or more shapes and two or more textures | 😄 | 🙂 | 😐 | ☹️ |
| Collage illustrates part of a fable | 😄 | 🙂 | 😐 | ☹️ |
| Creativity- the image created is unique and complex | 😄 | 🙂 | 😐 | ☹️ |

**Materials and Resources:** (Identify major resources/materials needed for the lesson)

LESSON 1: Reading; Drawing
- Eric Carle books
- Epic! reading site
- Pencils*
- White copy paper

- Pic Collage app on iPads*
- Drawing from previous week

LESSON 3:  Create Illustration

- Pic Collage app on iPads

| LESSON 2: Collect textures | • Epic! reading site |
|---|---|
| • Eric Carle books* | • Drawing from first week |
| | *Denotes something that may require an adaptation |

## Instruction/Activities:

1. Whole class author study of Eric Carle
2. Compare and contrast books illustrated by Eric Carle and determine how the images are made
3. Watch a short video to see Eric Carle painting and creating the textures, then cutting them out
4. Whole class discussion on fables- Look at fable stories on Epic!
5. Choose a fable and brainstorm ideas and do a preliminary sketch on copy paper before designing on the iPad
6. Use tools in Pic Collage such as web search, clip tools, and creating shapes to search for Eric Carle backgrounds, add them to their Pic Collage gallery, and then cut shapes from the textures using their finger
7. Create an image made of smaller shapes using Eric Carle's textures on a digital device

**Anticipatory Sets**

- Read a selection of books illustrated by Eric Carle
- Discussion on common themes
- Discussion on fables
- Video(s) on Eric Carle's process spaced out over the course of the unit

**Technology Integration**

- PowerPoint Presentation on artist
- iPad app (Pic Collage) to create final product

**Modeling/Guided Practice**

- How to use the Pic Collage app
  - o Web search through app- "Eric Carle Backgrounds"
  - o Select and add to library
  - o Add background image(s)
  - o Shapes- use existing and create your own using your finger
  - o Continue creating and moving around shapes to create a larger image
  - o Mistake? - How to change a shape once it has been clipped

## Adjustments/Modifications/Grouping:

Hard of Hearing- face student during presentations; sign language and visual cues for each step

Students with Physical Disability- Hand over hand creation; use wheelchair trays or elevated board to support the iPad; wheelchair tray or clipboard to support paper during preliminary drawing; in small class sizes, they could create on the app using a large interactive white board, instead of creating directly on the iPad. Student may need the digital marker to be attached to a

yard stick for additional length

<u>Students with Autism-</u> Few transitions; visual cues for steps

<u>Students with Visual Impairment-</u> puffy paint, glue lines, or braille for book images/text; text to speech option for Epic! books; black background when presenting visuals; screen brightness turned up, preferred seating close to the board
*A student whom is fully blind would create the shape collage using paper or foam sheets to be able to manipulate tactilely

<u>Non-communicative students-</u> AT options (such as Big Mack button or LAMP communication device) for participation/assessment; eye gaze for color/texture choices, sign language for instructions/prompting

## **Resources:**
Manipulatives:
- iPads
- Pic Collage App
- Epic! Reading site
- Eric Carle books
  - *Very Hungry Caterpillar*
  - *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*
  - *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?*
  - *From Head to Toe*
  - *10 Little Rubber Ducks*

Instruction:
- PowerPoint Presentation
- Videos on Eric Carle
  - 40 Years- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vYG1tLt5GCQ#t=119
  - Brown Bear Series- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QbCOteqvdII#t=84
- Eric Carle's Process: http://eric-carle.com/photogallery.html
- Lesson: http://www.erintegration.com/2016/12/21/eric-carle-style-digital-collages-on-pic-collage/

**Two-Dimensional Art Lesson**

In art, there are many two-dimensional media. As mentioned above, in a study conducted by Guay (1993a) she found that teachers relied most on printmaking and ceramics when fine motor skills were compromised. For this reason, printmaking was not selected as the model unit, but instead a paper collage was chosen as a demonstration of adaptations for materials, such as scissors. There are four examples of differentiated scissors for a range of capabilities. A short description is included. There is also a handgrip option for a larger grasp for items such as paintbrushes, pencils, crayons, and other straight materials. Lastly, another option for watercolor painting is included, called the Aqua-flo brush. These come in three brush sizes and can be filled with water or ink to allow for more continuous painting with no fear of knocking over cups of water.

In addition to the added section of adapted materials, this unit was selected because of the opportunity to promote people with disabilities or restrictions as artists. In the literature review, it was advocated that disabled people doing art in art curriculum would place "…an emphasis upon the representation of difference through a curriculum of admiration and appreciation in which individual artists are admired for their ability to create work similar to other able-bodied artists" (Eisenhauer, 2007, p. 9). Although Henri Matisse was not born disabled, he experienced difficulty in creating art from a wheelchair, needing help to accomplish his visions. This is one example of representation within the art curriculum so that people with disabilities are not continually marginalized.

## Unit: Matisse Paper Collage                    Grade Level: 3rd Grade

**Description:**   Students will learn about the French artist Henri Matisse and his unique decoupage style that began later in his life due to external factors. After surgery for severe intestinal disease, Matisse was confined to his bed or to a wheelchair and needed create differently than he had in the past, due to his restricted movement. Instead of painting, Matisse began to "draw with scissors." An assistant helped Matisse arrange his cut shapes onto a large surface until he was content with it. After watching short videos of Matisse and participating in read aloud stories on Matisse, students will discuss disabilities and art.

For their project, they will create multiple geometric and organic shapes and use both the positive and negative shapes (the cut pieces and the scraps) and glue them overlapping in an abstract collage. For an added element of fun, students can work in artist/assistant pairs to direct one another in the placement of the pieces for their own respective artwork, as Matisse did. Students will also learn about watercolor techniques and how to create a watery texture using plastic wrap. Students will learn about symmetry and create a symmetrical fish bowl and stool. Students will be assessed on the use of color, space, and shape in their final arrangement.

## Essential Learning/Instructional Outcomes:
**Students will be able to:**
- Identify artwork created by Henri Matisse
- 'Draw' with scissors to create organic and geometric shapes from paper
- Create a unique image of goldfish in a fish bowl using watercolor, cut paper, and collage techniques

**Essential Questions:**
- Why did Henri Matisse 'draw' with scissors?
- How can I create an artistic collage using geometric and organic shapes?
- How can I design and cut a symmetrical shape?

**Vocabulary:**
- Organic/Geometric shape
- Positive/Negative space
- Overlap

- Henri Matisse
- Symmetry

## Curriculum Standard:
**PA Academic Standards:**
9.1.3.A: Know and use the elements and principles of each art form to create works in the arts and humanities
9.1.3.B: Recognize, know, use and demonstrate a variety of appropriate arts elements and principles to produce, review and revise original works in the arts.
9.1.3.C: Recognize and use fundamental vocabulary within each of the arts forms
9.2.3.L: Identify, explain, and analyze common themes, forms, and techniques from works in the arts
9.3.3.B: Know that works in the arts can be described by using the arts elements, principles, and concepts

9.4.3.D: Recognize that choices made by artists regarding subject matter and themes
communicate ideas through works in the arts and humanities

**National Core Arts Standards:**
VA:Cr1.2.3a: Apply knowledge of available resources, tools, and technologies to investigate
personal ideas through the art-making process
VA:Cr2.1.3a: Create personally satisfying artwork using a variety of artistic processes and
materials
VA:Re.7.1.3a: Speculate about processes an artist uses to create a work of art

## Assessment:
**Formative:**
- Whole class discussion
- Ticket in/out the door on the artist and vocabulary
- Museum walk- progress critique of positives and improvements

**Summative:**
- Students will be graded according to this rubric:

| | 4 points | 3 points | 2 points | 1 points |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Shapes created with scissors are different in shape, color, and size | 😃 | 🙂 | 😐 | ☹️ |
| Student combined organic and geometric shapes in the background | 😃 | 🙂 | 😐 | ☹️ |
| Artwork demonstrates symmetry | 😃 | 🙂 | 😐 | ☹️ |
| Creativity- the image created reflects Matisse's style but is unique and complex | 😃 | 🙂 | 😐 | ☹️ |

## Materials:

LESSON 1: Bowl Texture
- Watercolors (cool colors)
- Aqua-flo Water brushes*
- Plastic Wrap
- Watercolor paper 9x12"

LESSON 2: Background Collage

- Construction paper- pre-cut rectangles
- Scissors*
- Stencils*

LESSON 3: Goldfish; Fish Bowl

- Orange paper
- Scissors*
- Printer paper- 8.5x11"
- Pencils*

LESSON 4: Stool; Complete Bowl

- Stool template
- Pencils
- Scissors*

- White paper 12x18"
- Glue sticks

- Glue sticks

*Denotes something that may require an adaptation

## Adaptive Materials:

**Scissors** (in order of least need to most):

- Self-opening: use as typical scissors, but with a spring to help open after each cut



- Loop easy grip: Student squeezes handles together; Can be used hand-over-hand



- Mounted spring: Student presses down on the top handle, adult helps by moving the paper



- Electric scissors with a switch button: Student presses the button to activate the scissors



**Hand grips**:
- For paintbrushes and pencils



**Aqua-flo Water Brush**:
- Creates ease of painting without the need to go back and forth between paint and water



## Instruction/Activities:

1. PowerPoint presentation on the artist, Henri Matisse
2. Compare and contrast his paintings to his cut outs (Look specifically at *The Goldfish*)
3. Watch a short video to see Matisse cutting and applying shapes to a large surface
4. Whole class discussion on disability and the arts
5. PowerPoint presentation on shapes and vocabulary
6. Ticket in/out the door on artist and vocabulary
7. Create a unique two-dimensional work of art based on Matisse's painting *The Goldfish* in his cut out style
8. Museum walk- students walk around the room and say something positive about someone else's work

**Anticipatory Sets**

- Read aloud "*Henri Matisse: Drawing with Scissors* book by Jane O'Connor and/or *Matisse: The King of Color* book by Laurence Anholt
- Discussion on artists with limitations/disabilities
- Discussion of vocabulary words
- Video(s) on Matisse's art and process spaced out over the course of the unit

**Technology Integration**

- PowerPoint Presentation on artist and concepts

**Modeling/Guided Practice**

- Watercolor techniques- painting and using plastic wrap
- 'Drawing' with scissors
- Gluing down geometric shapes for the background
- Gluing organic positive and negative shapes overlapping
- Folding paper in half and drawing half a bowl shape
- Cutting on the line to create a symmetrical shape
- Drawing and cutting fish
- Arranging and gluing fish in the bowl

## Adjustments/Modifications/Grouping:

Hard of Hearing- face student during presentations; sign language and visual cues for each step

Students with Physical Disability- Hand over hand creation; use wheelchair trays, elevated board or clipboard to support paper during cutting; stencil options to choose from for the vase; adapted scissor options (Loop easy grip, Table-top spring, Mounted spring, Self-opening, electric scissors with a switch button)

Students with Autism- Few transitions; visual cues for steps, wet towel or wipe for sticky hands

Students with Visual Impairment- puffy paint, glue lines, or braille for concept; black background when presenting visuals; preferred seating close to the board, hand-over-hand creation if needed, stencil options to choose from for the vase
*A student whom is fully blind would create the shape collage out of foam for a more three-dimensional surface.

Non-communicative students- AT options (such as Big Mack button or LAMP communication device) for participation/assessment; eye gaze for color/shape choices, sign language for instructions/prompting

## Resources:

Manipulatives:

- *Henri Matisse: Drawing with Scissors* book by Jane O'Connor
- *Matisse: The King of Color* book by Laurence Anholt

Instruction:

- PowerPoint Presentation
- Videos on Matisse
  - Footage of Matisse cutting- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GN0okOq8Hyc

- - Art with Mati & Dada- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s37OoBXkYAc
  - Matisse at the Tate Modern-
    https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=32&v=I1W4fdGyS98
  - Drawing with scissors MoMA animation-
    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=si_GBCJGIP4
  - A Cut Above the Rest- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wCgNY0jAOZU
- MoMA- https://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2014/matisse/the-cut-outs.html
- Lesson: https://wilderpaintsplatters.wordpress.com/2011/11/08/marvelous-matisse-cut-outs/

**Three-Dimensional Art Lesson**

In the three-dimensional arts, sculpture and ceramics can be used to create forms unlike

the methods used for two-dimensions media. For Timmons and MacDonald (2008) clay provided

opportunities for fine motor skills, and "the diversity of techniques and the essence of clay as a

sculptural medium enabled the participants to create pleasing work despite physical limitations"

(p. 91). A clay lesson was chosen for this reason to represent three-dimensional studies. There

are far less tools needed for certain types of clay making (Timmons & MacDonald, 2008) and

therefore, there is not an additional section for adapted materials. The adaptations are more in the

process of creating the flower. If a student is unsteady in gripping a pencil, a stencil can be used

to give them something to aim for. Because creativity and choice are important in art (LaMore

and Nelson, 1993), a student should have multiple items to choose from, so that they can still

take ownership of their work. Handgrips, as seen in the previous unit, may be necessary to use

with the pencil or with the straw.

## Unit: Van Gogh Clay Sunflowers                    Grade Level: 5th Grade

**Description:** Students will learn about the Dutch Post-Impressionist artist Vincent Van Gogh through the use of illustrated books, videos, and PowerPoint presentation over the course of three classes. Students will look specifically at his series of paintings *Sunflowers*. In learning about these paintings, students will create three-dimensional flowers using clay slabs and molds. Students will make their flower unique by the shape and number of the petals, as well as the glaze and additional texture they apply.

## Essential Learning/Instructional Outcomes:
**Students will:**
- Identify artwork created by Vincent Van Gogh, such as the *Sunflowers* series
- Classify Van Gogh's work as the artistic movement known as Post-Impressionism
- Create a unique three-dimensional sunflower using a traditional art medium: clay
- Learn how to create a clay slab, use glaze, and learn about the process of firing clay in a kiln
- Observe color choices made by the post-impressionists and apply similar choices of color to their individual art pieces

**Essential Questions:**
- How can I create a three-dimensional flower using clay?
- How can I design a realistic and unique flower using the elements of art?

**Vocabulary:**
- Vincent Van Gogh
- Post-Impressionism
- Sunflowers
- Three-dimensional
- Clay slab
- Score/Slip
- Glaze
- Texture

## Curriculum Standard:
**PA Academic Standards:**
9.1.5.A: Know and use the elements and principles of each art form to create works in the arts and humanities
9.1.5.C: Know and use fundamental vocabulary within each of the art forms
9.1.5.J: Apply traditional and contemporary technologies for producing, performing, and exhibiting works in the arts or the works of others
9.2.5.C: Relate works in the arts to varying styles and genre and to the periods in which they were created
9.3.5.B: Describe works in the arts comparing similar and contrasting characteristics

**National Core Arts Standards:**
Va:Cr2.2.5a: Demonstrate quality craftsmanship through care for and use of materials, tools, and equipment.
Va:Re7.1.5a: Compare one's own interpretation of a work of art with the interpretation of others.
Va:Re8.1.5a: Interpret art by analyzing characteristics of form and structure, contextual

information, subject matter, visual elements, and use of media to identify ideas and mood conveyed.

**Assessment:** (Identify the formative or summative assessments you will use to determine student progress toward achieving that instructional outcomes of the lesson)

**Formative:**
- Whole class discussion
- Ticket in/out the door: ordering the steps of the stages of clay
- Preliminary drawing of flower

**Summative:**
- Students will be graded according to this rubric:

| | 4 points | 3 points | 2 points | 1 points |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Clay- Flower is three-dimensional and realistic | 😃 | 🙂 | 😐 | ☹️ |
| Glaze- Glazing is even and opaque | 😃 | 🙂 | 😐 | ☹️ |
| Creativity- flower stands out because of colors, shape, or textures | 😃 | 🙂 | 😐 | ☹️ |
| Student cleaned up and followed directions each class | 😃 | 🙂 | 😐 | ☹️ |

**Materials and Resources:**

LESSON 1:
- Flower pictures/ Fake Sunflowers
- Clay
- Rolling pins
- Styrofoam bowl
- Saran wrap
- Painter's tape
- Circle shape (Ex: bowl)
- Straws- different sizes*
- Plastic knives/Pencils*

*denotes something that may require an adaptation

LESSON 2:
- Under glazes
- Paint brushes*
- Containers with lids
- Glass pieces/Red marbles for center

LESSON 3:
- Clear Glazes
- Paint brushes*
- Containers with lids

### Instruction/Activities:

1. PowerPoint presentation/video on the artist, Vincent Van Gogh
2. Compare and contrast the different *Sunflower* paintings
3. Watch a short video to see the size of the painting at the Philadelphia Museum of Art
4. PowerPoint presentation on clay and other vocabulary
5. Ticket in/out the door: vocabulary and artist
6. Preliminary drawing of flower- look at pictures or tangibles
7. Create a unique three-dimensional flower using form, texture, and color
8. Ticket in/out the door: ordering the stages of clay

### Anticipatory Sets

- Read aloud *Camille and the Sunflowers* book by Laurence Anholt and/or *Katie and the Sunflowers* book by James Mayhew
- Discussion of the process of clay
- Discussion of vocabulary words
- Video(s) on Van Gogh or the Sunflower paintings spread out over multiple classes

### Technology Integration

- PowerPoint Presentation on artist and concepts

### Modeling/Guided Practice

- How to roll out a slab
- How to cut out a flower based on design
- How to create the center circle by pressing an object lightly on top
- How to place the flower into the mold to give it a three-dimensional form
- How to create texture using straws, pencils, or additional clay using the slip and score technique (coils or rolled balls)
- How to glaze the flower (discuss how it is different than paint)

### Adjustments/Modifications/Grouping:

Hard of Hearing- face student during presentations; sign language and visual cues for each step

Students with Physical Disability- Use wheelchair trays as work surface if needed; Hand-over-hand creation, especially with rolling pin; use hand grips for holding the straws and pencils

Students with Autism- Few transitions; visual cues for steps; wet towel, wipes, or gloves for hands if tactile defensive

Students with Visual Impairment- puffy paint, glue lines, or braille for concept (sunflower shape); fake flowers for tangible connection; black background when presenting; preferred seating close to the board, hand-over-hand creation if needed; Different flower shape stencil options to cut from clay

Non-communicative students- AT options (such as Big Mack button or LAMP communication device) for participation/assessment; eye gaze for color/shape choices, sign language for instructions/prompting

**<u>Resources:</u>**

Manipulatives:

- o Fake Sunflowers for inspiration
- o *Camille and the Sunflowers* book by Laurence Anholt
- o *Katie and the Sunflowers* book by James Mayhew

Instruction:

- • PowerPoint Presentation
- • Videos on Van Gogh
  - o Biography- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qv8TANh8djI
  - o Philly Museum "Sunflowers"- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEf7Y8UtEsM
  - o LIVE Philly (until 3:10)- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DzYsk6cWSeM
  - o Mati & Dada- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9lGEvm1Lve0

**Accommodations Template**

In the following table, the researcher will go into more depth on the types of accommodations that can be made for presentation, response, and setting. These follow similar suggestions made in the Adapted Art Curriculum Map and unit plans; however, this format may be useful for some as a focused accompanying document to each lesson. The suggested accommodations are not exhaustive and there may be other beneficial options that a teacher can explore. The format is adapted from the Pennsylvania Department Of Education, *Accommodations Guidelines* (Rendell & Zahorchak, 2010).

| Category 1: Presentation Accommodations | |
|---|---|
| **Auditory**<br>*Sign language* | Rationale: Students, hearing impaired or not, can benefit from additional visuals (sign language) to accompany spoken language. Students with hearing impairments must be seated where the teacher is less likely to turn their back to the student, so that they may read the teacher's lips. |
| **Tactile**<br>*Gloves*<br>*Hot glue on pictures*<br>*Real life objects*<br>*Project* | Rationale: Students who have sensory issues have the option of wearing gloves while working with clay or paint.<br>The teacher may raise the surface of artwork by using hot glue on laminated pictures for students with visual impairments as well as students with autism who desire more tactile interaction. Similarly, real objects can be used. Ex: foam or wood forms for learning shapes<br>Lastly, the project itself is tactile in nature, students get a chance to apply what they learned and create something with various materials. |
| **Visual**<br>*Hot Glue*<br>*Contrasted pictures (light tables)*<br>*PowerPoint (PPT)* | Rationale: When painting, students with Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI) may use a light box to illuminate the colors and create needed contrast. Images are used to "brand" each topic (ex: balance) so that students associate the image with the word. Auditory is not the only form of instruction, but should be paired with PPT visuals. |

| **Multi-Sensory** *Project* | Rationale: Art involves all senses and uses auditory, visual, and tactile at different times during each lesson. |
|---|---|
| Category 2: Response Accommodations | |
| **Assistive Devices** *LAMP devices* *Low-tech art mats* *Eye monitors* | Rationale: Students are encouraged to use the LAMP devices provided to them by their speech pathologists as a secondary voice. I have made low-tech art mats as another option for students to use throughout the lesson to support learning, to request items, or demonstrate knowledge independently. Some Multiple Disability Support (MDS) students who do not have the use of their hands have eye-tracking devices that allow the students to communicate. Any of these devices can be used at any point in the lesson. |
| Category 3: Setting Accommodations | |
| **Organizers** *Visual schedules* *Art Bins* *Visual Timer* | Rationale: Visual schedules are used for the progression of the art class as well as for each step of the project. I have found this helpful in providing structure and predictability for students as well as providing context clues and support for learning outside of auditory.  Each class has their own Art Bins that contain the materials needed only for the lesson they will be working on that day. This helps with organization because it provides fewer distractions from unnecessary materials and students know where to return the materials when the steps are complete  Lastly, I started using a visual timer that changes colors when class time is running out. When the light is blinking on red, it is time to clean up |

| **Location** | Rationale: Adults are placed between students |
|---|---|
| *Assigned seating that keeps in mind:* <br> • *Paraprofessionals/Agency staff* <br> • *Students with ADHD* <br> • *Students with violent behaviors* <br> • *Students with visual impairments* | to maximize control over behaviors and assistance with steps. Students with violent behaviors are placed near the door for easy exit when necessary. Students with ADHD and other attention issues are seated so that they can have direct sight of the teacher. |
| **Conditions** <br> *Lighting* <br> *Temperature* <br> *Decorations/Environment* | Rationale: The room does not have an abundance of decoration or distractions. Parts of the room are sectioned off, to create flow. The temperature is constant and lighting is kept low for videos and presentations. |

**Chapter 4: Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to research existing methods of teaching and adapting art concepts and materials to students with disabilities. Research was also found on the benefits of teaching arts to individuals with disabilities. This step was important because many art teachers may not be aware of the impact their class has on individuals with disabilities. Nor do administrators or policy makers always understand the impact art classes can have on people with disabilities. Unfortunately, as a result of administrative shortsightedness, art classes are often eliminated from student schedules. The purpose of the project was to create an informed, purposeful art curriculum for elementary aged students with disabilities in mind. This chapter covers the implications of the research and project through theory, practice, and proposals for future research on adapted arts education. The epilogue concludes this research project with an emphasis on the researcher's mindset and journey throughout the process.

**Implications**

By examining and utilizing this research, art teachers can incorporate methods of adaptation to their own classroom teaching using creative problem solving by this example. Art educators can directly apply this framework and varying types of adaptive art tools, to their curriculum planning, with consideration for additional changes based on grade level and severity of the disability. As this curriculum is practical and feasible, it is likely that a sense of accomplishment will be acquired on behalf of the students they engage in the lessons. Each facet of the lesson provides accommodations or modifications in such a way that the goal will most likely be attainable to the child or individual, then these students, despite their disability, will do it! This research has shown that motivation and high expectations will lead to interest and stimulation in art.

Due to this notion, administrators can provide their teachers with tools and modification concepts from this study to enhance their students' engagement through the integrated arts. Universities can use this research to adjust the educational curriculum for general education teachers (specifically art teachers) to promote experience with students with severe disabilities and adapting lessons for these individuals. This project has covered the presentation, methods, and assessment of an inclusive elementary art class. Therefore, teachers can improve their ability to reach these individuals academically by addressing the environment, instruction, and materials of each lesson they teach.

In current art curricula there is a lack of acknowledgement of students with severe disabilities that face difficulties with basic skills, such as holding a pencil on their own. It may not address sensory issues, or language communication barriers. This is what led the researcher in pursuit of peer-reviewed studies to determine proven methods of accommodation to better inform the creation of art curricula. During the research phase, there was a lack of literature pertaining to severe disabilities in art. In addition, there were not many findings of specific lesson examples or curricula. This changed the direction of the project, and the scope was then broadened to all disabilities, with the inclusion of art therapy. Continued research is needed to point art teachers in the direction of inclusion and building success for these marginalized learners by concrete examples and strategies in curricular design.

This is not enough, however. In order to narrow the gap in understanding disabilities, additional research is also needed on the preparation of art and general education teachers in pre-service programs for teaching these individuals. As more teachers become knowledgeable, preparation and shared knowledge would impact the research base and studies completed on adaptive art education. Collaboration with a special education teacher or specialist, occupational

therapist, or speech therapist is vital to problem solving solutions for many of the instructional

needs a child may face in the art room accessing their materials. Additional research can be

conducted on the use of assistive technology (AT) in general education classrooms to see how

often they are used and how they increase participation and inclusion for that student. Guay's

1994 study titled "Students with disabilities in the art classroom: How prepared are we?" was

conducted twenty-four years ago. Current, more recent, data is immensely needed based on our

present-day standing with the laws of special education inclusion and the preparedness of

teachers.

## Epilogue

In a time after the Individuals with Disabilities Act was passed, teachers, administration,

and policy makers have been called to create an inclusive education for all learners. We are

required to make learning relevant, engaging, and rigorous. We cannot sit idly by and wonder

why 'those kids' are in our classroom, when they were not previously. As education policies

change, so must our curriculum and mindset.

As stated in the meta-analysis, little research has been completed on adaptive art

curricula. Through the process of collecting, sorting, and summarizing literature on this topic, I

have refined my knowledge of adaptations for a variety of disabilities. My perspective on

instruction, environment, adaptations, and curriculum has all been influenced by this research.

While I work with students with severe disabilities every day, I have been reminded of the

importance of participation and independence. Prior to this experience, I only had my hunches

and self-discovery to guide me, whereas now I have study-based facts to direct my instruction.

Through this research and creation process, I have a renewed sense of wonder for

teaching those with special needs. It is incredible to see their progress in tangible ways, such as

artwork. I have come to learn how important art can be on an individual level. It is my desire for

students to create projects that are meaningful, yet create a sense of pride and accomplishment

that they may not experience in other classes. During the process of creating a curriculum map

and three unit plans, I was able to discover how well arts and inclusion work together. Art is

open to possibilities, and "…beauty is in the eye of the beholder..." It is with this, that I will

continue to create opportunities for growth, learning, and independence in the lives of people

with disabilities.

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