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# An Art Teacher's Guide to a Cognitive Teaching Process: Prompting Student's Creative Thought

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# AN ART TEACHER'S GUIDE TO A COGNITIVE TEACHING PROCESS: PROMPTING STUDENT'S CREATIVE THOUGHT

by

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# ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to further explore stages an artist moves through that can be applied to teaching art, and helping students understand how to access their creativity. This project involves observation and an auto-ethnographic approach in order to best determine stages artists naturally move through when creating art. In order to most effectively suggest a teachable creative process for secondary art students, this paper will further explore cognitive and disciplinary categories in art education by applying principles and stages to a curricular guide (or lesson plans) for secondary art educators. Topics and studies of design thinking, creative inquiry, studio habits, creative processes, the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP, 2008), and National Core Art Standards will be reviewed and expanded upon in this paper. Using these inputs, a series of 4 recursive, creative stages were observed and applied to teaching art at the secondary ($6^{th}$-$12^{th}$ grade) levels.

# DEDICATION

To my family and loved ones, thank you for your support, encouragement, inspiration, and love.

To educators of the arts everywhere, thank you for your dedication to excellence and achievement, and of course for your hard work.

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Art is a form of expression and communication; teaching and learning in such a topic is an ever-changing, never ending process. Elliot Eisner (1991) expressed the importance of the visual arts because he as a child struggled in core subjects and excelled in the art classroom. In the United States school age children are expected to test well using a written format that many feel excludes and discourages so many individuals. For many students, the arts are their opportunity to learn by experimentation in physical and constructive ways. Contemporary artists use art to communicate social and cultural issues facing the world today. Knowing that school-age students can use art to communicate as effectively as the written word, many have supported the idea of allowing students to access their knowledge in a form that also increases cognition, critical thinking and investigation (Efland, 2002). I feel this knowledge and understanding is critical to consider in the development of a cognitive art curriculum that utilizes creative processing.

It should be an ultimate goal for art educators to actively engage learners in making connections between the artistic material at hand and previously learned information. This requires using content that is relevant as a means to access students' pre-existing knowledge and aids in their creative thought process. Unfortunately, no standard has been set in place to ease secondary students into the cognitive demands of art class, which goes far beyond introductory lessons that only seem to encourage motor and skill development. This lack of a methodical tool causes an extreme variant in the art curriculum students are learning, which also leaves many

students wondering where to begin when creating art. Creativity is defined by Oxford Dictionary as "The use of the imagination or original ideas, especially in the production of an artistic work," it also requires a willingness to try many solutions to a creative problem.

The use of a creative artistic process, that guides student creativity, can certainly build a strong platform for teaching, learning, and curriculum in art education. Though much research has been conducted on the cognitive demand involved in the making of art, not much has been concluded about whether a particular methodology would be beneficial in secondary art instruction. It is my belief that a teachable creative process will aid in the overall success of art students in both the art classroom and in classrooms involving core subjects. By understanding that there is in fact a creative artistic process, students can apply this understanding to symbol making, writing, criticism, and general problem-solving in any subject area.

Drawing inspiration from methods used in creative writing known as the writing process (Murray, 1982; Graves, 1983), this thesis provided me opportunity to explore the stage of creating, developing, and analyzing: some stages artists move through while creating a work of art that I feel would greatly benefit the discipline of art education. The writing process (Murray, 1982; Graves, 1983) is said to exist as a framework of recursive stages which students often engage in at their own developmental pace, and is often illustrated in a circular fashion to suggest a web of interaction between each stage. A very similar process takes place in creating a visual work of art, as artists are constantly asked to problem-solve on a variety of levels both cognitively and aesthetically.

The purpose of this research paper was to explore creative and cognitive processes that relate to the curricular development of art education. Through this investigation I have determined a process that art teachers can use to aid students in accessing their creativity in order to meet the cognitive demands the visual arts set forth. This investigation required reflection on recent assessments, standards, and creative cognition relative to the art education field. Ultimately, using information gathered in this research, a curricular guide (to aid secondary art educators in teaching using a cognitive creative process) was synthesized.

This chapter introduced the purpose of this research, which was to determine the existence and possible application of a creative process in the field of art education. Chapter two will explore research that relates to this topic, including studies on creative processes, art assessments, art studio habits, and studies on the effectiveness of creative processing. Chapter 3 will expand upon the methods used to conduct this research, including investigative questioning. Chapter 4 will reveal the research findings and the curricular guide (lesson plans) that developed as a product of the research. And finally, chapter 5 will express the implications of this research in art education as well as secondary education.

# CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In order to best serve secondary art students, it is important to know what curricular improvements might be necessary by reviewing assessment results from standardized art assessments, like the National Assessment for Educational Progress (2008) in the visual arts. Understanding what assessments are being conducted allows the criteria to be considered when attempting to incorporate a creative artistic process that can be taught in secondary art classrooms to encourage creativity. In addition to assessment, an understanding of research and theory on cognitive and creative processing in visual art is vital in developing a useful resource for secondary art educators. Current national and state standards should also be considered to be sure there is harmony between the existing framework and the instruction of a cognitive creative process. The following NAEP (2008) study expresses many opportunities to improve art instruction that will benefit students' success in the arts and creative development.

**Secondary (Eighth grade) art students abilities documented via NAEP 2008**

The National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) conducts regular assessments of many aspects of K-12 curricula, including the visual arts, music, theatre, and dance. The visual arts are assessed in eighth grade and questions range from multiple-choice selections regarding identification of style, time-period, and various media artists use. The assessment also uses a short answer format where students can earn full, partial or no credit for answers. Several application questions exist that prompt students to create (in this case a self-portrait) based on another artist's example. The portraits are assessed based on the student using similar composition, proportion, and line quality to that of the artist.

The NAEP for eighth grade visual arts consisted of 260 schools nationwide, and 3,900 students participated. Of the 260 schools, 220 were public (with 3,400 students assessed in the visual arts) and 30 were private schools (with 500 students assessed in the visual arts). Overall, students in private schools scored higher on the multiple choice and short answer portion of the assessment, exceeding the average public school scores by 10 points. Private school students also scored, on average, nine points higher than public school students in all categories.

According to the 2008 NAEP for eighth grade students in the visual arts, "53% of students were able to describe specific differences in how certain parts of an artist's self-portrait were drawn" (Keiper, Sandene, Persky & Kuang, 2009, p.3). The analysis can include observations of line quality, composition, or medium. According to the report, conducted in both 1997 and 2008, a 6% increase has occurred in a student's ability to communicate about their own artwork. This communication is vital as it adds to the narrative quality of an artwork, which further engages the artistic process and enters the creative realm of literature and creative writing. According to Arthur Efland (2002), "It [artwork] is an artist's interpretation of what he or she has seen, felt, or undergone" (p.162). This supports the idea that secondary art students posses the ability to speak and write as effectively as they construct their art work. Unfortunately, this NAEP assessment did not report many major gains in the effectiveness of art instruction.

The 2008 NAEP assessment revealed a reported 6% decrease in the number of students that traveled to art museums or shows from 1997 to 2008. If students are expected to have experience and connect with material, this number should be on the rise. Efland (2002) has

concluded that "Different domains of knowledge utilize differing cognitive abilities for their mastery, and such capacities are not likely to evolve if absent from the life experiences of individuals" (p. 157). Students at the secondary level are indeed cognitively apt to handle the demand of a critical-thinking, or cognitive based art program. Teachable creative processes and curricular standards are necessary to guide students to their full capabilities in the visual arts and beyond.

The report noted very little change from 1997 to 2008, which is a bit shocking considering the nine-year time-span to encourage some transformation. Out of 3,900 students that participated in the study, 4% successfully created a self-portrait in the style of an example artist. It is as though secondary students are not being taught a creative artistic process to problem solve, create, and succeed on NAEP tests.

If the visual arts are not enriching students' art understanding, a curricular change for secondary art instruction might be in order. Students should understand the creative process and know how and when to apply it in order to be successful in the visual arts. This creative understanding will surely span into other areas of study while increasing problem-solving skills. I also feel that the decrease in museum trips, where students have an opportunity to connect with art, is detrimental to their educational experience. In order for a student to fully engage in and understand the artistic process, it is essential to know what the artistic process entails by engaging in discussions about artists that use a variety of approaches to creating visual art. (Transition)

## Creative Processes, Inquiry, and Application

It is important to consider creative processes and their possible application to the creative artistic practice in the art classroom. Looking at important studies in art education, along with practical applications of the writing process, it has been made clear that a teaching a creative artistic process is well supported by research. The following sections elaborate on creative research and creative processes and their application to art education.

### Cognitive Processes Present in Art

Creative processes exist naturally in art, be it a literal process due to the use of a specific material, or the process one takes to juxtapose and create a work of aesthetic excellence. Beyond technical procedures in art creation lies a deeper process many artists naturally use, especially contemporary artists that communicate visually on topics such as politics, society, gender, and religion. Contemporary art proves the cognitive strain Efland (2002) has suggested in the field of art education for many years by involving aspects of planning and research, efficient visual communication, decision-making, and often revision throughout the creative process.

Some secondary art teachers I have observed use sketchbooks to evaluate and document student progress. Most teachers use a sketchbook as a form of portfolio, so a student's work is all in one place. A few secondary art teachers will encourage students to plan ideas in their sketchbooks; this is certainly a behavior that should be encouraged. As Sue McNeil and Roberta Rice (1990) have stated in their article, "Sketchbooks," that "Plans for inclusion of sketchbook activity in the classroom, as places of idea generation and critical inquiry, are enormously important for instruction and are personally relevant for the individual" (p. 107). Of the great

masters, DaVinci is most reputable for the use of planning and development in a sketchbook. DaVinci utilized his sketchbooks to explore objects, observe nature, and plan larger works. The use of sketchbooks for planning and experimenting with ideas is natural to the artist and should be encouraged by secondary art educators to aid students in cognitive creative planning.

Many successful artists use planning that appears to take on higher importance than creating the work of art. Planning helps artists clarify the intent of an artwork while allowing for research and idea development. I feel it is highly important to teach effective planning in art education as it aids in a richer understanding of the creative process. Sketchbook planning would be an excellent tool for art educators to utilize with their students, as a student's planning progress can be explored, documented, and tracked in one easily accessible place. I feel the use of planning and sketchbooks should be used to aid in teaching a creative process in art education that will allow for further creative inquiry.

**Creative Inquiry as Process**

Some, like Dr. Maria Letsiou (2014), believed using a creative inquiry process in art education is the answer to building a strong and supportive curriculum. The creative inquiry process in regards to art education uses Graham Wallas's (1926) four stages of creativity including: preparation, incubation, illumination and verification. Letsiou (2014) stated in her article "Issue-based Art Education and Creative Inquiry Process," that "These stages can be used as a basis to develop art teaching methods aiming at the improvement of students' creativity" (p. 3). After all, creativity is useful within and beyond the scope of art education and can be transferred into many aspects of professional application and entrepreneurial endeavors.

Certainly, Letsiou's research (2014) on the application of Wallas's (1926) creative stages to the art education field is certainly the closest teachable format I have encountered in my research. Therefore, this thesis expanded upon this format, as I sought to uncover stages of a teachable creative process.

Drawing from Wallas's and Letsiou's research, similar stages are present in artistic creation among artists and art students. More in-depth research on artistic processing would benefit in the teaching of a creative process in art education, with support from Wallas's and Letsiou's theory, while determining and developing such stages. Regardless, Wallas's (1926) idea that creative thought occurs in linear stages is a bit limiting. Graves (1983) notes that the writing process is recursive, looping, and never-ending. Like an author, the artist is constantly moving back and forth throughout the visual problem-solving process. It has been my observation that similar "stages" exist, but the progression is much like the writing process, as one moves back and forth until the work is at its best.

### The Creative Writing Process

One creative process that closely relates to the process in visual arts is the writing process. The writing process is also highly cognitive and it persuades students to utilize the highest order of synthesis according to the New Bloom's Taxonomy: creating (Krathwohl, 2002). In the attempt to engage students in creating conceptual works based on contemporary themes in visual art, they are essentially visually communicating through a created work with a response to a problem in society or their lives. The writing process prepares students to respond in writing to

a prompt, category or problem, and could be a close relative to the misunderstood artistic process (Pehal, 2002).

The Next Generation Sunshine State Standards in Florida require students to respond to a prompt in the writing sample portion of the FCAT. In order to best respond, students are taught the formal writing process which includes prewriting, writing, revising, editing, and publishing. This process is often illustrated in a circular fashion with arrows that suggest revisiting certain stages, as creative processes are rarely linear. Creative writing and art education have a unique bond and often work hand-in-hand to encourage creative thought and use of imagination. "Essential skills for creative writing: Integrating multiple domain specific perspectives" (Barbot, Tan, Randi, Santo-Donato, Grigorenko, 2012) notes that "Museum education programs that capitalize on children's visual literacy to improve creative writing outcomes have emerged internationally and yielded a new perspective on possible key factors that may contribute to the development to children's creative writing skills" (p. 210). This work provides a start in terms of outlining evidence that an artistic process in stages, similar to the writing process might aid in facilitating secondary art students to create exceptional conceptual visual artworks.

With understanding that a process is being used in education to guide creativity and organization in writing, one might conclude that a similar application would be quite successful in the visual arts. It is essential to consider studies that have sought to determine creative, cognitive, and developmental stages students pass through in the art classroom. Harvard Project Zero (2007) has conducted many studies relevant to visual art education, including the observation and identification of the eight studio habits of mind.

**Studio Habits of Mind (Harvard Project Zero)**

Harvard Project Zero (2007) conducts research in a multitude of areas pertinent to the exploration, identification and enhancement of visual art education. In the 2007 studies published in *Studio Thinking: The Real Benefits of Visual Arts Education* (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan), researchers noticed "hidden curriculum in visual arts classes" (p. 4). These hidden facets were deemed the 'Eight Studio Habits of Mind,' which include the following categories: 1) develop craft, 2) engage and persist, 4) envision, 5) express, 6) observe, 7) reflect, 8) stretch and explore, and 8) understand the art world. These categories, or stages, are met within the realms of serious studio art classrooms in a somewhat naturally occurring way. One might draw the conclusion from this research that if a teacher is attempting to provide excellent art instruction, students will engage in a habitual pattern of artistic development that includes these eight habits of mind.

It appears that though these habits of mind are a natural occurrence: students need to be aware of these habits so they can effectively employ this learning and can address the creative inquiry process both in the art room and perhaps in other subject matter. Project Zero researchers believed that "Once taught in the arts studio, these dispositions might transfer to other contexts of learning" (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2007, p. 7). Therefore, beyond their natural occurrences, these habits are an interesting observation and perhaps should be included in a teachable format for secondary art students to successfully employ creative thought and application.

## Standards in Secondary Art Education

Standards are a guiding principle for all educators, as they are developed to determine what proficiencies students must meet to be considered successful in a given subject area. I have conducted further research through the National Art Education Association (NAEA) for National Core Arts Standards (NCAS, 2014) in order to better understand secondary art student's and teacher's expectations for successful compliance with standards, with consideration of a teachable creative process being applied to said standards.

## Meeting Current Secondary Art Standards in Florida and the Nation

Art teachers are currently using national art standards set forth by the NAEA (National Art Education Association) and their state. In Florida, art teachers are using the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) (2014). Based on the newly developed secondary national art standards, students should be able to "Apply methods to overcome creative blocks, use multiple approaches to begin creative endeavors, and apply relevant criteria to examine, reflect on, and plan revisions for a work of art or design in progress" (NAEA, 2014). These standards require students to use varying levels of cognition, a great deal of art knowledge and a variety of creative processing methods.

At the Florida state level, a large number of standards and course outlines for art classes exist at the secondary ($6^{th}$-$12^{th}$ grade) level. These standards, though thorough, do not suggest the use of a creative or artistic process that students can learn. It is my opinion that the creative thought process is extremely applicable in other disciplines, and I believe until a creative process can be taught, secondary art students will be at a disadvantage. The NGSSS expect students at

the high school level to "Demonstrate visual-thinking skills to process the challenges and execution of a creative endeavor" (NGSSS, 2014, VA.912.S.2.3). I feel that teaching a creative process that includes planning will certainly meet this standard and many others.

Given the excellent standards the nation and Florida have set forth, one must wonder why secondary art students are not scoring well and suffering to excel as proven in the NAEP 2008 report. Students are expected to read, speak and write the English language proficiently. However, the universal language of symbols and visual communication, as measured by the art standards, remains inferior and often overlooked. It appears to be time for change in the field of art education, so students can be prepared to think creatively using cognitive processing. Considering Project Zero's (2007) eight studio habits of mind and Letsiou's ideas (2014) about the creative inquiry process, students would likely benefit from a secondary art curriculum based upon similar principles and ideas. With continued research, it is my goal to create a curricular guide for secondary art educators that includes parts of existing ideologies that will aid in student's creative processing.

## Related Research Findings

### Creative processes

According to Feldhusen and Goh (1995):

> Creative thinking is a complex cognitive activity, and modern conceptions of creativity are so diverse and comprehensive that in defining creativity, it is necessary to deal with

> the related cognitive activities of developing and using the knowledge base, as well as critical thinking, decision making, and metacognition (pg. 241).

Many theories of methods of creative processing exist, though none have resulted in a process to be used in education. My goal was to find commonalities in the many existing methods that can be applied to a teachable process.

Feldheusen and Goh (1995) compiled different creative strategies that might aid in accessing creativity, attempting to determine whether a 'training program' might improve creative thinking. Their research determined that, "Creative thinking and creative problem solving are aspects of human cognition and behavior that probably can be accessed through training programs that focus on cognitive methods, personality factors, motivation, cognitive styles, and metacognitive skills (p.244)." This compilation included Davis and Rimm's (1985) 19 skills that could be used for a program to aid in creative processing, the skills are as follows: (1) fluency, (2) flexibility, (3) originality, (4) elaboration, (5) sensitivity to problems, (7) problem defining, (8) visualization, (9) ability to regress, (10) metaphorical thinking, (11) logical thinking, (12) evaluation, (13) analysis, (14) synthesis, (15) transformation, (16) extension of boundaries, (17) intuition, (18) predicting outcomes, and (19) resistance to closure. These skills should certainly be considered in the creation of a teachable creative process for visual arts students as they suggest some of the most necessary categories in creative processing.

Other models of creative processing were reviewed in Feldheusen and Goh's research, though Davis and Rimm's has been the most broadly applied and elaborated upon. Treffinger et al. (1990), used similar categories including: fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration,

synthesis, curiosity, openness, risk taking, imagination, and humour (Feldheusen & Goh, 1995, p. 242). Treffinger et al.'s categories have not yielded the testable success that Davis and Rimm's process has, as Rimm's Group Inventory for Finding Interests (GIFFI 1 & GIFFI 2) assesses creative abilities that reliably support the use of Davis and Rimm's categories.

**Davis's Research on Creative Processing**

Davis (1969) conducted research involving creative processes and creative prompts in order to test whether processes could influence creative thought. Davis's research was of the first of its kind and even resulted in finding prompts that worked best to promote creativity. This study involved a control group (given only the prompt) along with a group that was given processing questions to creatively problem solve. Several of the experiments conducted asked 3 groups of participants (college juniors and seniors) to redesign a thumbtack, a cup, and a kitchen sink. The groups in the study were given either 10 minutes, 20 minutes, and unlimited time. The test compared the use of 55 of Osbourne's (1963) 73 idea-spurring questions to a checklist of 7 thinking aids generated by Davis and his colleagues. Davis's list, titled 'Aids in Thinking of Physical Changes' included the following ideas: (1) add and/or subtract something, (2) change color, (3) change the materials, (4) change by rearranging the parts, (5) change shape, (6) change size, and (7) change the design or style. The results showed the list Davis and his team generated yielded 2 and a half times the number of ideas from participants than those that used Osbourne's (1963) checklist. The participants that use Osbourne's checklist also did not perform much better than the control group. Though interesting knowledge, Davis and his team took the experiments one step further and used 4 groups simultaneously with a different prompt.

Davis's most influential experiment in the study incorporated Allen's (1962) creative thinking procedure known as morphological synthesis. Morphological synthesis (sometimes called morphological analysis) involves a table that is created with the problem on one axis and related considerations on the other. The table aids in making connections between each of the listed data. In this new experiment, groups were assigned Osbourne's list, Davis and his team's list, instructions on using morphological synthesis, or no creative aid. The new prompt asked participants to redesign a doorknob using whichever aid (if any) they were given without time constraint. The morphological synthesis group outperformed in almost all categories, the exceptions were the time spent working, original ideas, and practicality. Davis's checklist provided the most original and practical results in this experiment. Overall, Davis concluded that, "Though these techniques reasonably should be considered a supplement, not a replacement, for natural ingenuity, the present experiments clearly support the feasibility of increasing creative output by teaching deliberate methods of generating new combinations of ideas" (p.17).

This information is most salient to consider while attempting to teach student's to access their creativity in an original and practical manner. Davis conducted further research, coining 19 skills present in creative thinkers along with a colleague, Sylvia Rimm (1989). This process was discussed by Feldheusen (1995) and compared among other processes thought to help access creativity. The idea that some form of assessment is necessary in determining presence and success of a process is important to consider when attempting to implement a teachable creative process. There exists a similar process that is becoming increasingly recognized and used in

educational settings known as Design Thinking, which is a format used to increase design idea development and generally uses portfolios as a form of assessment.

### Design Thinking to Access Creativity

A strategy developed by David Kelley (2009), a professor at Stanford University, is currently making its way into schools across the nation. Kelly believes, "What we, as design thinkers, have, is this creative confidence that, when given a difficult problem, we have a methodology that enables us to come up with a solution that nobody has before" (Tischler, 2009, p.1). Design Thinking builds creative confidence through a process that involves working situations comparable to that of a problem-solving working situations. Students are encouraged to work in teams to solve creative design problems using a format that guides innovative thoughts and ideas to an inventive solution. Students can be prompted to redesign a playground at school to accommodate wheelchairs, invent new packaging to improve the appeal of ramen noodles, or even create models for environmental solutions using recyclable items in a brown paper bag.

The challenge of Design Thinking is that students have to empathize with an issue and search for a solution. This is a realistic problem-solving rationale for individuals in any line of work or path in life; there is always a problem that must be solved. Creative companies that are at the forefront of creating today rely on the innovative power of their employees in order to succeed. Carrol et. al. (2010), stated that Design Thinking is, "A focus on innovation, creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and collaboration," all of which are necessary for success in the world around us (p.38). Using processes like Design Thinking—that promote

student creative confidence and problem-solving skills, would be a great benefit in preparing students while prompting them to think in a way that has no right or wrong answer.

Art educators can certainly benefit from using Design Thinking in the classroom, as students are connecting to their work and there is great potential for cross-curricular attention. The main ideas to consider when creating lessons that can be inspired by Design Thinking is to be sure students find: (1) relevance in their creations (recreating Van Gough's *Starry Night* has little to no relevance to a student today), (2) that no right or wrong answer to a creative problem exists, and (3) confidence while creating unique works of art. Likely, many creative processes or strategies might be combined to best serve secondary art students as they learn to access and find comfort in their creative ability. It is also important to consider how art standards support students when exploring, creating, and developing creative confidence.

### National Core Arts Standards (2014)

The National Core Arts Standards (NCAS) were established in conjunction with NAEA and released in the summer of 2014. Much like Florida's Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS), there are a plethora of standards that apply to a variety of coursework in k-12 art education. Outlining all of these standards would be a book in itself, therefore I will highlight secondary standards that are applicable and supportive of teaching a creative process. The NCAS have been revised to include standards that require students to create, present, respond, and connect art works. These four categories are broad, and more specific standards exist under each category at elementary and secondary levels. The revised standards would certainly be met while using a creative process that can be taught in secondary art classrooms.

Examples of 8th grade and high school advanced visual arts standards can be found in Table 1. These standards are © 2014 State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education (SEADAE) on behalf of NCCAS.

**Table 1 National Core Arts Standards 2014**

| National Core Arts Standards 2014<br>National Core Arts Standards © 2014 State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education (SEADAE) on behalf of NCCAS. All rights reserved. www.nationalartsstandards.org | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **8th Grade (Advanced)** | **High School (Advanced)** |
| **CREATING** | **VA:Cr1.1.8a** Document early stages of the creative process visually and/or verbally in traditional or new media.<br>**VA:Cr1.2.8a** Collaboratively shape an artistic investigation of an aspect of present-day life using a contemporary practice of art or design.<br>**VA:Cr2.1.8a** Demonstrate willingness to experiment, innovate, and take risks to pursue ideas, forms, and meanings that emerge in the process of art making or designing.<br>**VA:Cr3.1.8a** Apply relevant criteria to examine, reflect on, and plan revisions for a work of art or design n progress. | **VA:Cr1.1.IIa** Individually or collaboratively formulate new creative problems based on student's existing artwork.<br>**VA:Cr1.2.IIa** Choose from a range of materials and methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan works of art and design.<br>**VA:Cr2.1.IIa** Through experimentation, practice, and persistence, demonstrate acquisition of skills and knowledge in a chosen art form.<br>**VA:Cr3.1.IIa** Engage in constructive critique with peers, then reflect on, re-engage, revise, and refine works of art and design in response to personal artistic vision. |
| **PRESENTING** | **VA:Pr4.1.8a** Develop and apply criteria for evaluating a collection of art works for presentation.<br>**VA:Pr5.1.8a** Collaboratively prepare and present selected theme based artwork for display, and formulate exhibition narratives for the viewer. | **VA:Pr5.1.IIa** Evaluate, select, and apply methods or processes appropriate to display artwork in a specific place. |
| **RESPONDING** | **VA:Re8.1.8a** Interpret art by analyzing how the interaction of subject matter, characteristics of form and structure, use of media, art-making approaches, and relevant contextual information contributes to understanding messages or ideas and mood conveyed. | **VA:Re7.2.IIa** Evaluate the effectiveness of an image or images to influence ideas, feelings, and behaviors of specific audiences.<br>**VA:Re9.1.IIa** Determine the relevance of criteria used by others to evaluate a work of art or collection of works. |
| **CONNECTING** | **VA: Cn10.1.8a** Make art collaboratively to reflect on and reinforce positive aspects of group identity.<br>**VA:Cn11.1.8a** Distinguish different ways art is used to represent, establish, reinforce and reflect group identity. | **VA:Cn10.1.IIa** Utilize inquiry methods of observation, research, and experimentation to explore unfamiliar subjects through art-making. |

The NCAS outlined in Table 1 were attained from the Model Cornerstone Assessment; each category requires that student's are able to plan, create, critique, and revise in one form or another based on the standards included. With this in mind, the use of a process that incorporates creative understanding and meets these standards could certainly benefit secondary visual arts education. Aside from the extended research mentioned thus far, I have also included an auto-ethnographic study involving self-reflection of my own creative experience and processing, along with observations of master artists, peers, and students in art classrooms.

**Rationale**

As our nation gears towards rising to the forefront of many industries, as we once did in the past, the need for well-established creative thinking is increasingly evident. Efforts like STEM are even gearing towards STEAM, incorporating the arts, in order to add the unique problem-solving talents artists are capable of. The visual arts should then seek to offer a teachable process to aid in this extremely unique cognitive process to afford students the best possible creative education. After all, the new Bloom's Taxonomy has placed creating at the top of the pyramid due to the cognitive understanding expressed in order to create.

As the NAEP (2008) has demonstrated, no strides (as measured by this test) are being made in the field of art education, as students have little to build experience upon, and the use of a contemporary artistic model is severely lacking. Students are not being prompted to create conceptual work based on a contemporary thematic. Therefore, the cognitive strain that art is capable of encouraging students to engage in is being squandered. Though individuals have researched and connected the need for application of a contemporary framework in secondary art

education, the solution has not been applied as far as how to teach this unique and complex thought process.

In order to teach students a process that aids in the search for imagination and a creative starting point, it is important to understand that there is a variety of conflict on how to best accomplish such a task. Charles Dorn (2008), co-author of *Art Education in a Climate of Reform*, states: "In the field of art education, content has in recent years been derided as idiosyncratic and lacking uniformity" (p. 131). Which leads to the belief that a framework for idea development take precedence in secondary art education to aid every student in expanding their creative limits. Postmodern artist, Sol LeWitt (2008), "Believed art had to begin with the idea" (Dorn & Orr, 2008, p. 103), and many artists and art educators agree that the idea is the central motivation in contemporary artwork. The thought of artists and art educators alike is extremely important to consider on the search for a teachable creative process in art education.

Aside from the works of artists and art educators, it was very necessary to further explore other categories in art education: such as disciplinary study, visual culture, creative inquiry/processing, idea development, problem-solving, and cognition in relation to art instruction. In order to most effectively suggest a teachable creative artistic process for secondary art students, each of the above categories have been explored in detail.

# CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

In order to verify the need for a resource for secondary art educators that outlines and allows the use of a teachable creative process, I conducted qualitative research, using a grounded theory approach and autoethnography, to suggest the existence of a process in art that can be taught much like the writing process. Creswell (2009) suggested that grounded theory includes "Constant comparison of data with emerging categories and theoretical sampling of different groups to maximize the similarities and differences of information" (p.13). Through my own artistic experiences and extensive research in disciplinary study, visual culture, creative inquiry/processing, idea development, problem-solving, and cognition I have noticed an obvious connection to both visual art and secondary art education. Through in-depth research on creativity, standards for Florida and the nation, in addition to curriculum and policy, I have uncovered applicable solutions for art educators to systematically improve student's creative processing.

Based on research in the field of art education and the natural presence of the planning, creating, critiquing, and revising stages, I have created a curricular resource to aid secondary art educators with lessons and applications that meet standards set forth by the nation and the state of Florida in the visual arts. A present need exists for a clear method to aid secondary art educators in prompting students to communicate in a visually imaginative manner and my goal has been to provide an accessible resource that guides and informs secondary art educators.

**Research Questions**

I sought to answer groups of questions with research in order to gain deeper insight in the following categories regarding both art and art education: disciplinary study, visual culture, creative inquiry/processing, idea development, problem-solving and cognition. My research answers the "who, when, why, how and what" in each of these categories, even as new categories presented themselves along the way.

I will sought to specifically answer the following questions:

1. Who would benefit from the use planning as a regular tool in the art classroom (planning sketches, basic art knowledge to build on, etc.)?
2. What would planning encourage in the visual art classroom and beyond?
3. Why would planning be necessary in visual arts?
4. When should planning occur in order to be most effective?
5. How will planning an artwork transfer into overall life skills?
6. Who would benefit from creating works of art in art class?
7. What materials/resources should be used when creating works of art?
8. Why is it necessary for students to learn to create?
9. When will students apply creating skills to other subject areas?
10. How will students use material learned in the creation process in their adult lives?
11. Who will benefit from critique in art class?
12. What will students use in order to effectively critique works of art?
13. Why is effective critique necessary in art class and beyond?

14. When are students best able to handle critique (developmentally speaking)?
15. How will students apply critique in other areas?
16. Who would need/want to revise a work of art?
17. What will revision teach students?
18. Why is it necessary to revise an artwork?
19. When is revision complete?
20. How will revising a work of art help students beyond the visual art world?

**Anticipated Educational Implications of This Research**

I directed my research at many resources to synthesize and align those references to create a much-needed resource. The resource that was created is geared to inform secondary art educators of the necessity of such a process in their art classroom and to the benefit of their students based on similar methods and existing research. This curricular resource also provides examples of lessons that secondary art educators in the state of Florida can use to meet state and national standards while employing this educationally geared process in creative idea development. The research overall, has the potential to affect the field of art education and visual art students across the nation.

# CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

In order to create an effective resource for secondary art educators, I have compiled expanded research in the areas of creative processing theories, observations, and studies as well as more in depth research on national art standards (see Related Research Findings). I have taken into account creative processing in my own educational experience in the visual arts along with observations of artists and art students. This section will reveal this research and answer questions as to the relevance to secondary art education's possible benefit from a teachable creative process.

**Auto-ethnographic Understanding of the Artist's Creative Processing**

As an artist for the past 15 years, and an art student for 23 years, I feel using my own experience and observation for this research (along with additional observation) accounts for an extremely valuable resource. I have observed that art students struggle with creative ideation as they are often expected to have a best or correct answer. With the lack of a right answer when creating, students seem to feel defeated when they cannot produce an idea. They often state the traditional, 'I can't' and 'I don't know what to make' when prompted to create. I have noticed through my own education what has worked for me and my peers when faced with these situations.

The stages I have observed among student and practicing studio artists are planning, creating, critiquing, and revising. To say these stages occur in the same scope and order for each individual would be doing the individuality of the artist a great disservice. These stages occur mostly during idea development, before a full scale piece of work is made, and many practicing

artists automatically pass through these stages as they have more experience with chosen mediums and processes to arrive at their desired endpoint. I feel secondary art students will benefit from learning these stages and how they might use them when developing an idea for an artwork.

**Stages in the Artistic Creative Process**

This research has inspired the creation of a guide that seeks to offer a framework for lessons to expand and access secondary student's creativity. The stages devised in this framework, I have observed to be present in the works of practicing studio artists and students in post-secondary studio art classes. Most practicing artists, myself included, work with a very limited process when creating works of art. This process is usually what works best for the individual, their chosen medium, and the outcome of their overall work or message. My observation and understanding remains- that teaching and equipping secondary art students about these existing stages can help them to access and develop their creative thought process and produce well thought out works that are highly cognitive and conceptual. The presence of planning, creating, critiquing, and revising were observed to be repeatedly present throughout the creative artistic process. This observation has lead to further description of these stages and their application to a curricular guide (or lesson plans) based and research of other forms of creative processing (seen in Table 2).

**Table 2 Creative Concepts Relative to the Creative Artistic Process**

| Creative Concepts and Their Presence in a Creative Artistic Process | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Plan** | **Create** | **Critique** | **Revise** |
| **Design Thinking** | Prototyping (drawing), understanding, observation, point of view, ideation (brainstorming), mindfulness of process | Prototyping (3-D model), testing, mindfulness of process, bias toward action, action oriented | Observe (ask questions), test (gain feedback), mindfulness of process, show don't tell, radical collaboration | Testing (making modifications), mindfulness of process, radical collaboration |
| **Studio Thinking (habits of mind)** | Envision, observe, reflect | Develop craft, engage and persist, observe, search and explore | Observe, reflect, understand the art world | Engage and persist, observe, reflect |
| **Davis & Rimm's (1985) skills for creativity** | Fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration, sensitivity to problem, problem defining, visualization, metaphorical thinking, logical thinking, synthesize, transform and extend bounds, intuition, predicting outcomes, concentration | Fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration, problem defining, visualization, ability to regress, metaphorical thinking, logical thinking, synthesize, transform, extend bounds, intuition concentration, resistance to closure | Fluency, flexibility, elaboration, sensitivity to problems, problem defining, metaphorical thinking, logical thinking, evaluation, analysis, concentration | Fluency, flexibility, elaborating, sensitivity to problems, ability to regress, metaphorical thinking, logical thinking, evaluation, synthesize, transform, extend bounds, predicting outcomes, resistance to closure |

**Planning**

Some artists begin by planning, it seems normal to plan before attempting to do something. Many skilled craftsman often offer the advice, 'Measure twice, cut once,' which exists to avoid wasting time and materials. Introducing planning as a tool for secondary students to begin accessing creativity can be a simple, yet direct way of focusing a student on developing an idea. Planning can be done as a sketchbook activity, so students can evaluate what kinds of planning works best when developing an idea. Planning does not have to include a visual sketch, and can often begin with a word web as a visual element to allow creativity to be accessed through language. After all, Feldman (1994) suggests that the use of language in critique helps a critic discover a strong interpretation of the artwork. Therefore this same use of language can help a student artist determine their artistic purpose.

Planning can also coincide with creation, as many artists plan by creating small-scale, inexpensive models from either clay or paper, especially when creating 3-dimensional works of art. Planning and revision also go hand in hand, as an artist may wish to revise a completed work due to the outcome. This revision requires planning so the new outcome is more successful. Some artworks may be planned with a critic's purpose in mind, as students learn to critique and learn what a critic looks for when interpreting a work of art, they may adjust their plans to accommodate both the critic and their audience. This is especially important to consider when secondary art students are creating art work that is conceptual or idea driven.

**Creating**

The creation stage is an expectation in studio art classrooms, students are expected to create, and teachers are expected to be able to motivate and guide this process. The main problem I have noticed is that teachers attempt to create such step-by-step lessons, that students have trouble accessing their own unique creativity when producing their art work. Student's sit waiting for a prompt, or an answer as to what to create and how, to the point that the experimentation is completely lost. It has been widely discussed that students learn more when they guide their learning and have the opportunity to experiment with materials in a way that interests them. The art studio is the perfect place to employ this fundamental learning, and there is certainly room for a teacher to guide students, make suggestions, and teach technique and process that might aid in the creation stage.

Teaching of techniques and processes should not take away from students dabbling in their own creative process. Obviously for matters of safety (as chemicals are often involved in art making), teachers should always be guiding students. During the creation stage, many practicing artists go through deliberation, they question and critique their artistic decisions. The creation stage is often a frenzy, as the artists (or student) is working to juxtapose to achieve aesthetic excellence. Creating requires flexibility, a willingness to try many solutions to solve the artistic problem. This means a student, like the studio artist, will move between planning, critiquing, and revising throughout the creation stage.

**Critiquing**

Understanding artistic criticism is necessary for a student/artist to create an effective work of art. Artists self-critique throughout the creation process, and often seek opinions from peers or master artists when involved in the creative process. Art teachers tend to teach critique using the Feldman (1994) model that includes describing, analyzing, interpreting, and judging and artwork. This model is the most widely used, and it helps students understand critique using a basic linear process.

Students and practicing artists also learn about critique by viewing contemporary works along with critical evaluations in order to understand how the practicing critic judges works of art. I have observed that many teachers use the Feldman model and consider themselves as experienced critics, rarely do teachers introduce art students to contemporary critical opinion about contemporary art. Understanding current critical discourse is a necessary factor in developing the student as critic and as practicing creator. Developing critical discourse among students has the potential to uncover better understanding of visual communication within a work of art. As mentioned before, studio art students and artists move in and out of critique (peer and self) throughout the creative process. Therefore a solid foundation in critical understanding is necessary to the success of the creative process. If students know what critics look for, they will learn to create, plan, and revise with this in mind.

Most importantly, when students critique their own work, the work of their peers, and the works of contemporary artists, they learn to be flexible in the creative process. This flexibility relies on the willingness to revise, re-plan, and re-create.

### Revising

The creative process is constantly moving, requiring the student artist to be versatile, to 'roll with the punches' so to speak. The ability to revise is necessary when creating art, as a particular medium or material may not yield the expected result. Art is a process of experimentation, trial and error have the ability to rule success. Often, an artist's success is dependent upon the amount of experimenting an individual has done with a variety of materials. Mastering a material or many materials is what creates a successful artist, basically, success is determined by an artist's ability to accept failure as a learning experience.

Revision is important in the creative process, art students should understand the importance of accepting change and develop the creativity to make mistakes into masterpieces. No happy accident occurs in art, it is a learning process that requires making a mistake in order to build knowledge and revise the artistic decision making process. It is my hope that making secondary art students and teachers aware of these processing stages will progress the art student's ability to access their creativity, or at least understand how to jumpstart the creative process.

## Curricular Guide and Lesson Plans

The suggested lessons provided do not ask that each student create something that yields the exact same result, as traditionally expressed in the school art style (Gude, 2013). With the following lessons, students are encouraged to create with influence from a contemporary artist, while maintaining their own unique creativity, not to copy the examples. Learning to draw inspiration from that which exists around us can be a challenge, therefore this framework exists

as a means of understanding how and where inspiration can be drawn. Using trends in contemporary works, the narrative style of these works, and conducting research based on these, can lead students to levels of idea development that are extremely cognitively strenuous, unlike creating cookie-cutter art.

I have devised several lesson plans that incorporate the four stages of creative artistic processing (derived from a combination of existing theories) and influences from a contemporary artist, keep in mind each lesson will start at different points in the creative artistic process. By this I mean, not all lessons will begin with planning and end with revising. The point of utilizing this process for it's teachability, is first to understand it's cyclical and never ending nature that continues until the artist is satisfied with the result. Another important point in incorporating this process into art education is to increase creative ideation through the use of cognitive techniques and steps to guide students through complex thinking strategies. Some lessons will begin by revising a previous work by the student or that of a selected classmate. This approach will require a student to critique, plan, revise, create, while moving in and out of the stages simultaneously throughout the process.

I do feel that introducing this approach in the curricular guide using creative artistic processing might be easiest when initiated with planning, but students must be aware of what they are doing and why. It is often taught in education courses that explaining to students why something is being assigned and what they are going to learn creates a strengthened foundation for learning. Therefore I feel sharing a visual curriculum model with students that explains stages artists move through when creating art will help students understand the creative process.

Sharing the following visual model (fig. 1) will help guide classroom conversation, and let students in on the method they will use and what they are going to learn in order to access their creativity. Lessons also suggest use of the 'critique sandwich' (fig. 2) and the Feldman (1994) model of art criticism (table 3) which will be helpful whenever critique is necessary.

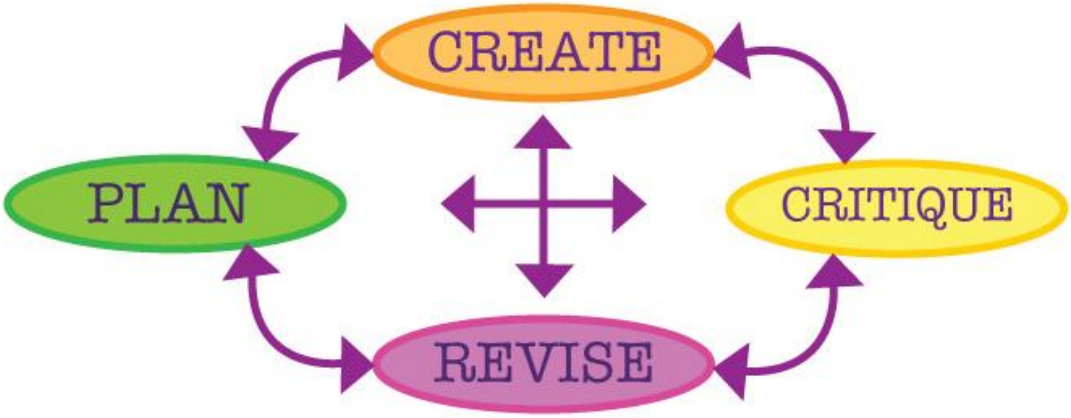



**Figure 1- Artistic Creative Process**


**Figure 2- Critique Sandwich**

**Table 3- Feldman (1994) Model**

| The Feldman Critique Model (variation) | Description | Questions you might ask |
|---|---|---|
| **Describe** | This stage is like taking inventory. You want to describe everything you see. Stick to the facts. | What do I see?<br><br>What is obvious in this artwork? |
| **Analyze** | Try to figure out what the artist has done to achieve certain effects and why they may have done so. | How are the elements of art and principles of design used in this work?<br><br>What do you notice about the choice of materials?<br><br>What grabs your attention? Why?<br><br>Is there a relationship with anything listed in the description phase? |
| **Interpret** | Try to figure out what the work is about using your own perspective and evidence of content within the artwork. | What is the theme or subject of the artwork? What gives you that impression?<br><br>What is the work about?<br><br>Do you feel an emotion or mood is expressed?<br><br>Why do you think the artist created this? |
| **Judge/ Evaluate** | This is a culminating and reflective opportunity where you will combine findings from the above categories. | What are your thoughts on the artwork based on what you have recorded?<br><br>What do you like or dislike? Why?<br><br>What have you seen or learned from this work you might like to apply to your own artwork? |

### Curricular Guide, Lesson 1: Begin With Planning

The first lesson begins with the planning stage, as students have likely planned in one form or another in other classes (especially when participating in the writing process) therefore, they will have some confidence in this stage. I also feel students might need a jumpstart when being introduced to this creative process, so I have suggested showing works of a contemporary artist before asking students to plan.

#### Goal(s)

The goal of this lesson is to introduce students to creating a 3-D work of art inspired by a contemporary artist that will require planning to be a priority for a successful work.

#### Works

Students should first be introduced to artist Duane Michals, and his works including *Necessary Things for Writing Fairy Tunes*(1989) and *Necessary things for Making Magic*(1989). Due to the narrative nature of Michals's work, these works will prompt students to plan a story to communicate through a visual work of art using existing objects and a shadowbox to encase their work. Teachers should begin by viewing the works of Duane Michals with their class, noting that aside from objects, Michals includes language with his works to aid in the viewers understanding

Duane Michals
*Necessary Things for Making Magic* (1989)


Duane Michals
*Necessary Things for Writing Fairy Tunes* (1989)

**Figure 3- Works for Lesson**

### Plan

Students should begin by planning the story they wish to communicate. It would be wise to advise that students take inspiration from Michals, by incorporating 'Necessary Things' into their title. Students should be prompted to brainstorm ideas they would like to communicate using listing and word webs. Teachers should encourage students to come up with several ideas that they might like to use to elaborate on. In my own experience, I created a shadowbox titled *Necessary Things for Making Peace*, in which case I depicted items that are commonly associated with war or peace and illustrated them on paper that suggested the antithesis.

**Critique/Review**

Once students have several ideas, the teacher should look them over by conducting individual critique with the student to help determine strengths and areas for improvement in narrative ideas.

**Plan**

Students should create a list of materials or objects they might like to use to create their work. Students should be encouraged to research topics associated with their idea and write down what they believe they would like to include in their work. This is a great homework assignment and can consist of simple lists, facts, or quick sketches. Students should then be prompted to create planning sketches that illustrate the juxtaposition and composition of elements the student would like to include. This is the student's chance to experiment with their ideas on paper. Teachers should ask that students come up with at least a few different plans for their final product. This lesson will likely introduce many new vocabulary words and concepts to students that should be regularly reviewed for student success.

**Critique**

After planning several sketches, students should work together in groups and with their teacher presenting their concepts for critique so revisions can be made. It is important that critique be constructive, therefore I suggest using a critique sandwich, where a strength is identified, and area for improvement, followed by another strength in the idea or art work. This process requires some training to use, and it is advised that the teacher practice critiquing with

students using the critique sandwich (fig. 2), and the Feldman (1994) Model of art criticism which includes describing, analyzing, interpreting, and judging (table 3).

**Revise/ Critique**

Following the critique, students should feel free to make revisions to their planning drawings based upon suggestions from their peers and their teacher. After revising, students can work with their teacher and in small groups to critique once more before moving on to the creation phase. The second critique will likely prompt students to make further revisions that aid in aesthetics appearance or narrative communication.

**Create**

Once students are ready, they should begin by assembling the piece that will contain their objects. Students will need a variety of adhesives, cardboard, colored paper, fabrics, scissors, and assorted drawing materials. After assembling their "shadowbox" or table-top surface, students can build objects for their piece and arrange their items in a way that is both aesthetically pleasing and aids to the narrative quality of their work.

**Critique/Revise**

Students should be prompted to self-critique, peer critique, and revise during the creation phase of this work. Teachers may need to prompt this thinking by asking students individually why they are placing objects where they are and how this helps tell their story. Students should be encouraged to add language as Duane Michals did in his works in order to communicate their story.

### Create

Upon completion of works, students should create an artist statement that explains the title, medium, along with an explanation of the story and compositional elements.

### Critique

Students should then participate in a class critique where each student shares their work with the class for critique. If time is of the essence, students can do a final critique in small groups by critiquing on small slips of paper that the presenter can read after their group has presented. This also ensures that all students participate in critique while following the critique sandwich format.

This is simply a framework for this lesson; it is left somewhat bare bones so each teacher can feel free to modify according to their liking. The main idea is that students are encouraged and supported through each stage. I do suggest utilizing a contemporary artist's work as inspiration (as the NCAS 2014 suggest).

## Curricular Guide, Lesson 2: Begin With Creating

The framework for this lesson was inspired by methods used in Design Thinking exercises (Kelley, 2009), where individuals are prompted to solve a problem, or create something with a certain number of materials (often placed in a brown paper bag). It has been my experience and observation that students can build creative confidence when limitations are as few as possible on the creative process. By beginning a lesson with objects students can simply

create with expands the opportunity to experience materials that an artist might use, however unconventional the materials may be.

**Goal(s)**

The goal of this lesson is to promote student's creative confidence by first introducing them to like materials that they will work with for their final product. This lesson will also incorporate some questions for students to answer along with tracking critiques and revisions as they move through the process.

**Works**

For this lesson, I suggest using the photographic works of artist eco artist, Vik Muniz, along with showing the trailer for his famous documentary titled *WasteLand* (2010). However, these images should not be introduced at the beginning of the lesson.


**Figure 4- Works for Lesson 2**

### Create

Before the artist is introduced, students should be given a brown bag with different small materials like bottle caps, sand, wire, and various small odds and ends. This limits the student to similar materials to those of Muniz before they are introduced to an artist for inspiration. This is the student's creative challenge; as it proves their unique creative potential given limited objects with no expected or specific outcome. After students have created something with their brown bag materials, they should be given a chance to share as a class or in small groups to discuss their creations. Students should also write (in sketchbooks if possible) what they created and where

the idea came from. This should be an introduction to the lesson, though each teacher should feel free to include a time limit if necessary.

**Critique**

Following this activity, the teacher should introduce artist Vik Muniz's photography and the trailer to his documentary, *WasteLand* (2010). The teacher should critique one of Muniz's works with the class, and ask students to critique at least one other work on their own using the Feldman (1994) model of art criticism. These critiques can be written and collected to test student comprehension of the critique process.

**Plan**

Following critique, students should be prompted to begin planning a work using found objects to create a work of art using found objects. Students should have the option to have their final piece be a photograph like Vik Muniz's work. Teacher's should limit their suggestions during planning, allowing students to use their own creativity. It is wise to use questions to get students thinking, like, 'What does the use of material mean to you?' 'Do think people produce a lot of trash?' and 'Can that trash really be art?'. Questions that students have to answer can really promote the use of the planning process, and students will start to use this questioning on their own to solve artistic problems.

**Critique/Revise**

After planning at least three ideas, students should have a group critique to determine the strongest idea with circulating help from their teacher. Students should make use of peer critique

and revise ideas accordingly. Students should write down (in a sketchbook if possible) the critique they received from their peers, and any revisions made to ideas, this helps track progress and also aids in assessment. After an idea is revised and selected the creation phase can begin.

**Create**

Students should gather necessary objects, students could even collect recyclable items at school and in the cafeteria. While creating students should be asked to pause at a 'midpoint' to critique the work in progress while revisions can be easily made.

**Critique**

This mid-point critique should help students eventually self-critique or ask for peer critique while in the creation phase in the future, as many practicing artists do. This critique can take the form of small group, whole class, and teacher questioning to keep students thinking in increasingly creative ways. Suggested changes and critiques should be included in the student's sketchbook or project folder to aid in assessment and monitoring.

**Revise/Create**

Next, students should take time to make revisions (if they wish) from the results of the critique. These revisions should be written down (in a sketchbook or project folder) to document their flexibility in the creative process. Students should continue creating while revising until their piece is complete.

### Create

Upon completion of artworks, students should create an artist statement and grade themselves according to their teacher's predetermined rubric. This rubric should include a student grade column, as well as a teacher grade column and students should grade themselves according to the strength of their final work.

### Critique

This critique is a final presentation of artworks where students can share their work, it's meaning, and the revisions they made based on critiques throughout the process. Students should also be encouraged to state how they problem-solved throughout the process, as this knowledge could help other students in the future. The student should also provide the teacher with their completed rubric so the teacher can also the student's work based on their rubric during this critique.

### Curricular Guide, Lesson 3: Critique Lesson

This lesson is designed to help students realize how they can gain inspiration from the artwork around them, without recreating another's work exactly. This is meant to teach student's to focus on a message from a work or artist to develop their own unique idea. Learning the message of an artist's work, and the critical reviews is important for artists to consider as they create.

**Goal(s)**

This lesson seeks to promote student understanding of the importance of the critic in the art world. Students should be able to identify what critics look for in works of art, and how these elements might be incorporated into their own unique works of art.

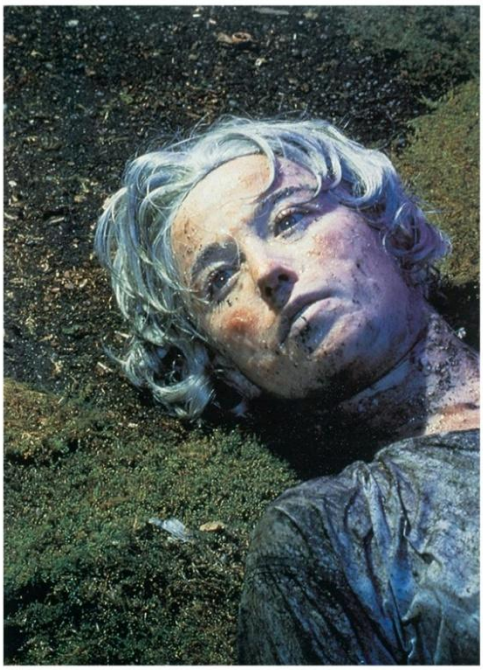
**Works**

For this critique lesson, I suggest using works from contemporary artists, Kehinde Wiley and Cindy Sherman. Both artists use human identity, costumes, and classical representation in their works. The teacher should feel free to select images that would best appeal to their students.

Kehinde Wiley *The Tribute Money* (2012)

Kehinde Wiley *Duke of Arenberg* (2011)

**Figure 5- Wiley's Works for Lesson 3**



Cindy Sherman *Untitled #153* (1985)

Cindy Sherman *Untitled #396* (2000)

**Figure 6- Sherman's Works for Lesson 3**

### Critique

For purposes of this critique, several images should be selected from each artist to be critiqued. The teacher should find existing critic reviews on these two artists to share with the class (as many are in circulation) this also allows the teacher to find what would be most applicable to the works selected. The teacher should share these images and critiques with the class, asking them to write down key words that relate to what the critic is looking for in terms of excellence. The teacher should then critique a work for the class, using the Feldman (1994) model of describe, analyze, interpret, and judge. One work from each artist should then be critiqued as a class, allowing students to participate in a critique of the works with the teacher. Following the class critique of the works, students should individually critique one work from

each artist (this can be done in class or for homework) by writing their responses in a sketchbook or on paper to be collected so the teacher can evaluate understanding.

**Plan**

To begin planning works inspired by the works of these artists, students should be prompted to list some of the keywords and what critics look for on their planning page (or in sketchbooks). With these in mind, students should begin planning how they might incorporate the use of human identity, classical inspiration, and/or costumes into their work. They should be guided with questions such as, 'Who do you want to picture in your work?'. 'What or how do you think they feel?'. 'Is there something they struggle with or want to convey?'. Students can use themselves, just as Cindy Sherman uses herself, or another individual they select as a part of their work to tell a human story. Students should sketch and list what they might include to tell the story and how their image will be arranged.

**Critique**

Students can critique in small groups or as a class, based on their planning ideas. This critique should prompt students to look for the same things professional critics look for when viewing art. As students are critiquing a plan, they will have to imagine the finished product, as opposed to seeing it complete.

**Revise**

Following critique, students should make revisions to help clarify their story and add to aesthetic representation. Students should write down what revisions they make and why in sketchbooks, or on paper to be collected.

**Create**

Once plans are revised, students should begin creating their images by taking photographs, finding images of a person, or by drawing the person they wish to represent. Both artists use photographs in one way or another to complete their works, therefore asking students to include a photograph in their final work would be a great inspiration to take from these artists that removes the fear of poorly drawing a person. Some students might even collage to get their final piece, the options really should be left with little restriction, aside from telling the story of a person (that should be pictured in some way). Students should prepare an artist statement discussing their work, including why they chose to tell the story the way they did, and how they incorporated thinking about the critic in their work.

**Critique**

The teacher and peers may critique throughout the creation process, and a final critique should be held once works are complete (teachers may set deadlines). Students should discuss the story of the person they used in their image and how they attempted to use visual elements to tell this story. The class should write a short criticism of each student's work to turn in to the teacher at the end of critiques (or could be placed in project folders or sketchbooks). These short

critiques allow students to act as critic, and allows the teacher to assess how much they learned about critics and the critical process.

### Curricular Guide, Lesson 4: Begin with Revision

I can recall many art classes that required me to recreate the work of a famous artist, but change something about it to make it unique. This is not the form of revision suggested with this lesson. Students should select a planning idea from one of the previous lessons, or a work that was unsuccessful to revise and elaborate on.

### Goal(s)

This lesson can help students further develop understanding of the creative artistic process, while learning to rework their own ideas into successful works of art. This lesson should help students apply much of the material they have learned to this point including, the critic's point of view, the importance of the narrative quality of a work, and the importance of arrangement or juxtaposition.

### Works

Students will use their own works or previous plans, with encouragement to look to other contemporary artists for inspiration.

### Revise

Students should select an idea(s) or past work they wish to revise into a new work of art. This will require students to assess the strengths and areas for improvement through a written self-critique on the work(s) or plan(s) they wish to change.

**Plan**

Students should then plan how they might revise the work by sketching ideas and listing what they might add or change about their chosen work. Students should be asked to come up with several ideas for improvement, and might with to use Davis's (1985) 7 aids for physical change: (1) add and/or subtract something, (2) change color, (3) change the materials, (4) change by rearranging the parts, (5) change shape, (6) change size, and (7) change the design or style.

**Critique**

After developing the revised plan, students should critique (in small groups or with the teacher) the effectiveness of their revision based on information a critic might use to review their work. Any suggested changes should be written on the student's planning page (or sketchbook) so it is not forgotten.

**Create**

Once students have a strengthened revised idea, they should begin creating their revised work or plan into a complete work of art. This will likely require a variety of materials being used by students at any given time, in true studio format. Students can be given a time limit for revision, and should prepare a statement about their work along with revisions they made and why.

**Critique**

A full class critique should take place once students have created their revised works. Students might have a rubric to hand in to the teacher with a self-assessment filled out to aid in

the grading process. Students should discuss their original idea, how and why they revised it, and whether or not they feel it was successful. The class can write mini-critiques, or share how they might have handled the problem differently to yield a different result.

# CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In an effort to aid secondary art educators in incorporating the artistic creative process, a curricular guide in the form of a series of lesson plans (presented in Chapter Four) was created addressing the planning, creating, critiquing, and revising stages found to exist naturally among practicing artists. The guide was a product of observed processes and has yet to be tested for effectiveness among secondary art students. Based on the research and on my observations that this creative process can be taught and will improve student success with accessing creativity.

## Summary

The need for creative access is becoming increasingly evident among secondary visual art students. As they prepare to select careers, it is important to consider the number of positions in the workforce that require an ability to think creatively. The newly developed National Core Art Standards support the inclusion of technology, contemporary art, and applying creative reasoning to a variety of situations. Along with the need to develop creativity, visual arts education as a whole should be increasing student ability to produce works of art, and is failing to raise creatively cultured individuals as seen in NAEP visual art test scores.

Many have theorized creative processing improvement, as Letsoiu (2014) suggested the use of creative inquiry (Wallas) in arts education with the preparation, incubation, illumination and verification stages. Davis and Rimm's (1985) 19 skills for creativity were an original gateway to proposing teaching habits for creative success, along with Feldheusen's (1995) expanded comparative research on the topic. The use of the writing process (Murray, 1982; Graves, 1983) suggests that using a simple, direct, teachable format, students can succeed at

creating a written work when the right stages or categories are used. This information is certainly applicable when teaching visual art, as procedure, creativity, and cognition are valued in the same manner that they are in the creative writing process.

The stages that artists recursively move through that I have observed recently and over time, have the ability to be taught through repeated exposure and encouragement. The curricular guide seeks to aid in applying this information to the secondary visual arts classroom in a format that is not step-by-step, but rather stage-by stage. The movement back and forth through these stages is meant to aid each student in participating in a creative artistic process similarly to practicing artists. It is my hope that this research and these stages will benefit the development of student creative processing in secondary art education and beyond.

**Educational Implications**

After conducting this research and creating this guide, it has become evident that the use of a process like the Creative Artistic Process will benefit art teachers and students on a number of levels, but especially in the art classroom. As a result of my findings I plan to share this research with other educators, especially in the art field, in order to benefit student's creative development. This will be best achieved through sharing in research journals and at educational conferences.

I find it imperative that this information be shared and applied as often as possible in order to develop creative thinking and problem-solving. With that in mind, I plan to expand the curricular guide to include a wider variety of lessons with an array of studio components. I am

also working on developing an assessment to test the efficiency of student's creative ideation as a result of using the Creative Artistic Process.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

This research did not include a study on secondary art students and their improvement or lack thereof with the application of this Creative Artistic Process. I feel it is an important consideration for future research, though teachers will likely see creative competency improve by using this framework. Even with a lack of testing, the four recursive stages of the Creative Artistic Process are supported by research across disciplines. Further, the curricular guide offered within this thesis offers the ability to teach this process using simple stages. I would also recommend that teachers revise the included plans in the curricular guide to fit the individual needs of their classroom. I attempted to use existing objects, keeping students with varying disabilities in mind with this inclusive feature of the lesson plans.

Visual art teachers should be looking to help those students who are lost when asked to create visual works of art, as this is likely also a problem in areas outside of the art classroom. Students are not often taught how or where to begin, with this in mind I am lead to believe that the plan, create, critique, and revise stages will transfer into other disciplines, especially for students that process in a different way. I am convinced that directly teaching the Creative Artistic Process in secondary art classrooms will benefit the field of art education, while preparing students for 21$^{st}$ century careers because of the need to think creatively, critically, cognitively, and to ask important questions in the search for creative solutions.

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