

Integrated Curriculum: Possibilities for the Arts

"Are you asking me to teach art? Why not leave it to the art teacher?"

This article is a reflection on our involvement in a 5-year effort to help reform some public schools in Ohio by integrating the arts into the curriculum.

In March 1997 the National Arts Education Consortium (NAEC)² selected 35 Partner Schools, 5 of which are located in Ohio, to take part in the Transforming Education Through the Arts Challenge

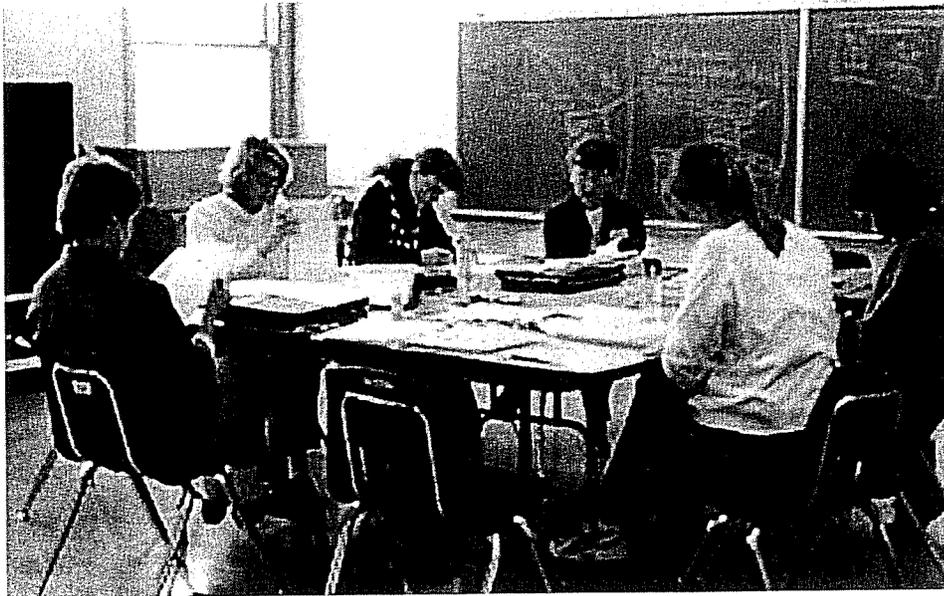
(TETAC).³ These 35 schools, in eight states across the nation, accepted the challenge to demonstrate that comprehensive arts education promotes student achievement in the arts and can serve as a viable focal point for school reform.⁴ The five Ohio schools are working to achieve an integrated curriculum by using the arts as an engine of change and to achieve whole school reform.

This article was written, after considerable discussion, by the faculty and graduate students at The Ohio State University who worked together on the project. It does not necessarily reflect the views of the teachers we worked with. We have tried to stay close to practice and to make suggestions that others might be able to apply to their own situations.

When we began, our notions about school change and what it might look like were unclear. Evans (1996) advises that school reform efforts are unlikely to succeed "without all key participants knowing its 'why, what and how'—why the reform is being pursued, what it actually consists of, and how it is to be implemented—and how it ranks relative to other projects in which they may be involved" (p. 75). In our case, we did not know these things with any clarity. This may have made our task more difficult, but in retrospect we think it also helped us bring the practice and the theory into a beneficial relation. It meant that we could learn more easily from practice and adjust our theories in light of practice, and vice versa. We feel that the close interaction between theory and practice is a major reason for the strength of our conclusions.

BY THE

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY TETAC MENTORS¹



Group of TETAC teachers in discussion.

We began by supposing that school reform efforts must have a number of different dimensions on which we should take action, including professional development, the use of technology, community connections, alternative assessment, and integrated curriculum. All of these remain desirable goals for us, but we now think that integrating the curriculum in small collaborative groups is the key. It implicates all the others. We have found that when teachers talk in small groups to plan an integrated curriculum, not under immediate practical pressures, that is the best form of professional development. Professional development is the repeated reflection, with peers, on what one is doing in teaching, the purposes of the curriculum, its content, the way it is delivered, and the response of the students. In short, the thoughtful development of integrated curriculum has become for us the focus of school reform efforts.

Curriculum Foundations

In the beginning we shared a set of attitudes and beliefs about education, but we knew of no established models that promoted them. We knew we wanted to promote inquiry-based learning that engaged students with meaningful issues. We knew we wanted a curriculum

structured around important ideas, one that called for the construction of knowledge across subject areas. And we knew that we wanted the arts to figure prominently in the integration of this curriculum. We also felt strongly that teachers should work collaboratively in devising the curriculum. This left lots of room for uncertainty. It has not been our tradition in art education to focus teaching on broad themes or to integrate the whole curriculum through art. We have been pre-occupied as a profession with the autonomy of art, with its importance as a separate discipline, or set of disciplines, and we have not well conceptualized art in an integrated curriculum.

So we faced two major questions. One was how to design curriculum to promote inquiry-based learning, focused on life-centered issues⁵ and integrated across several subject areas. The other was how to use the arts in such a curriculum. As a result of our work on the TETAC project, we have arrived at some answers to these questions. We will explain them in general terms in this section, with these headings: focus through key ideas; teachers' roles and student involvement; interdisciplinary connections; and collaboration. Our second section will give concrete examples.

Focus Through Key Ideas

We have found that a good way to achieve a clear focus in an integrated curriculum is to structure it around a key idea. "Key ideas" can be thought of at two levels. At a general level, they represent significant aspects of life, such as identity or social codes of conduct, and they reflect the complexities, ambiguities, and contradictions of our culture. They are characterized by complexity, ambiguity, contradiction, paradox, and multiple perspectives. They also combine elements of both concrete and abstract in a provocative way. They invite inquiry rather than suggesting ready answers. They get students to ask questions about the world and about themselves, and they call for an understanding of more than one point of view.

At a more topical level, key ideas are items that students will see as capturing their interest and needs. For example, the ideas of heroes or violence are likely to appeal to students and to suggest relations with their lived world than are identity or social codes of conduct. All students have heroes that help structure their identity and emotional life, and the potential for violence is constantly present for most of them. We cast our key ideas at this topical level because they are more readily understood by students and help them secure the focus we are after.

A key idea is usually accompanied by "essential questions." The essential questions serve to reveal the connections of the key idea. A key idea can be turned into essential questions by re-phrasing it as a series of questions. Heroes might readily become: Who are our heroes? Why do we have heroes? What does our choice of heroes say about us? Violence might become: Are the sources of violence individual or collective? Is violence natural? Can we imagine a world without violence? Essential questions give conceptual direction and invite students to generalize the cases they study.

The choice of key idea and essential questions is critical. One important consideration is that they should be connected with the existing curriculum. They might serve as a framework that structures the existing curriculum, or they might be seen as elements that are already embedded within it. In either case, they should be relevant to the general course of study required in the different subjects. They should also reflect the knowledge and interests of the teachers who will work with them, as well as the interests of the students.

One goal of these discussions is to help students understand their own cultures and to encourage them to participate in intelligent and socially responsible ways in their communities.

Teachers' Roles and Student Involvement

Structuring the curriculum around key ideas changes the traditional roles of teacher and students. A key idea is something to investigate. It invites inquiry but has no simple answers. Students become more like researchers, as they investigate ideas, trying to answer questions. Teachers become more like co-inquirers, advisors, research assistants.

We like to begin by consulting students in a brainstorming session about which key idea to study. This makes them more responsible for what they study. It is also a step toward constructing a community of learners (Cahan & Kocur, 1996). After brainstorming a topic, and perhaps some concept webbing, teacher and students together can determine what the key idea and essential questions will be. Among other things, this ensures that students understand why the ideas are important and that they engage their interests.

Continuing discussions about what to study are needed because the social and cultural conditions that affect our lives are constantly changing (Burns, 1995; Jacobs, 1989). One goal of these discussions is to help students understand their own cultures and to encourage them to participate in intelligent and socially responsible ways in their communities. And because teachers and students are responsible together for the what they study, they need to be able to give administrators and parents a clear rationale for their choices.

Interdisciplinary Connections

The major argument for integrating the curriculum is that our social and personal problems do not respect the boundaries of school subjects. Environmental problems, for example, require constructive interaction of elements of most of the school curriculum, including the sciences. Neither academic disciplines nor school subjects fit the way we need to organize knowledge to understand our major problems in today's world. Note that this rationale does not mean we must abandon the disciplines; it means that we should integrate them for a significant time.

Nor do academic disciplines fit well with the way people construct meaning. Information becomes meaningful when we relate it to our interests and prior knowledge. This is the central thought of constructivist teaching. It means that when educators shift from a discipline-based orientation to a focus on "real life" issues, students are more likely to find their learning meaningful and to be active participants in it.

What about the role of art in an integrated curriculum? Art/visual⁶ culture provides powerful ways to investigate and to express an understanding of our social and cultural life, and it is intimately connected with all other school subject areas. Artworks often stand at the center of cultural struggles or express complex understandings of vital issues. This means both that artworks should be studied in their contexts and in light of their cultural connections and also that students can make artworks to express their best understanding of key ideas. For these reasons, art/visual culture should not be taught as an isolated school subject but can play a significant and central role in an integrated curriculum.

Collaboration

The first step in developing curriculum is for teachers to discuss which concepts and skills they feel are most important for students to learn. This needs to be an ongoing discussion, revisited repeatedly throughout the year. Continuing discussions help to maintain a good relationship between different teachers and ensure that they each understand the key ideas in the same way. Faculty discussions can also bring about further understanding of key ideas, and this can be a significant reward for teachers engaging in collaborative curriculum construction.

After discussions of this kind, teachers can plan an integrated curriculum, focusing on those topics, ideas, issues, and questions that can be shared between disciplines. This does not replace the similar discussions with students we have already suggested. It means that teachers need time to reflect on their curriculum with each other, in small collaborative groups. We have found that planning of and continued reflection on the key ideas, by teachers in small groups, are the most important need in an integrated curriculum. Without them, the key ideas tend to lack depth and real connections; lessons tend to remain at the level of activities that do not focus on ideas; and assessment tends to focus on relatively unimportant items. Critical discussions in small groups help teachers examine how their teaching reflects the key ideas and reinforce interdisciplinary connections. We have found that the typical structure of the school day makes it difficult to find sufficient time for such discussions. Finding that time was a major problem throughout the project.

The Practice and The Theory

Surveying the Territory

Initially, we visited the project schools, listened to teachers, and gathered impressions about the current curriculum, attitudes, and perceptions of the project. It was a time of searching for markers to map our work. We learned that there was considerable variation in approaches to teaching and learning, awareness of integrated curriculum, perceptions of the role of the arts in school, and understandings of the TETAC project. We also learned about a number of important structural difficulties, including schedules that limit teacher planning time, proficiency testing, and frequent changes of personnel.

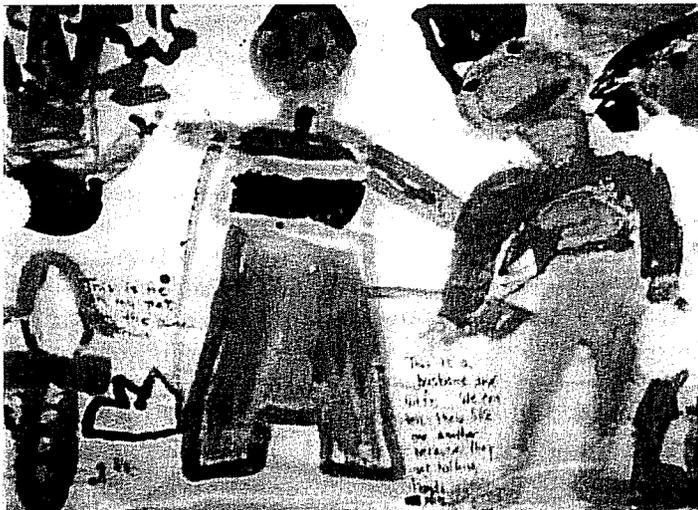
Defining the role of art/visual culture in the school curriculum has been a particularly challenging task. Our belief in the arts as basic ways of making sense of the world and as "powerful engines of curriculum integration" cast the project in terms larger than just including more arts in the curriculum. But the latter was how many teachers perceived the project's purposes. They saw the arts more as an add-on than as a way to raise the conceptual level of the curriculum as a whole. Some found art unrelated to their subject matter. They asked: "Are you asking me to teach art? Why not leave it to the art teacher?" Others were reluctant to add yet another project to their already full agendas.

The role of art/visual culture in the curriculum has evolved differently in the different schools. The fact that two of the elementary schools are arts magnet schools made a difference. Teachers in those schools were already expected to integrate the arts with other subjects. But they had often not had

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time or encouragement to think through ways to do this and how to shape the integration in a conceptual way. Early in the project, a mentor in one of these schools commented:

Teachers sent me their lesson plans for the schoolwide theme "Asian Landscapes." The idea was I would help them improve their plans. Although their plans were in a web format to indicate the curriculum connections of the theme, their plans primarily reflected a set of things to do, activities such as kite construction, rice growing, and calligraphy. Concepts, such as the difference between Eastern and Western attitudes toward the natural world, were absent. I was concerned that, although the activities could be engaging for the students, without a conceptual framework they would not challenge the students to understand significant ideas in Asian culture.



The *Grande Jatte* unit at Fair Elementary School.

Gaining Perspective

It took the first year to attain an overall perspective of the project. We questioned our own role as mentors. What could we do to make a difference? A faculty mentor, Vesta Daniel, conducted a survey about how we practiced the role. She found that we performed multiple tasks, including:

- helping teachers explore conceptual and practical issues of integrated curriculum;
- observing and discussing teaching practices;
- offering workshops on specific topics;
- assisting leadership teams and arts teams to implement projects schoolwide;
- developing a better understanding of the school culture.

The mentoring experience has been the opportunity to work separately with our assigned schools and also to work collaboratively on common goals. We have met biweekly to discuss project initiatives, problems, future strategies, and together we have conducted teacher workshops on various themes. We have developed two sets of guidelines: *The Ohio TETAC Goals and Benchmarks*, *Guidelines for Interdisciplinary Units*, and *Guidelines for Designing Assessment of Student Learning*. These documents were the basis for graduate courses taught in three of the schools. The process of hammering out these ideas in discussion has been helpful in enriching our understandings of integrated curriculum and in developing a common base for the undergraduate program in art education at Ohio State.

Implementing Change

Initially we considered implementing one curriculum theme across all the schools but quickly abandoned this notion. It became apparent that the curriculum would need to reflect teachers' understandings and the context of the school and would need to evolve as these understandings and contexts changed. Our first attempt to develop curriculum occurred in a 2-day workshop in the local museum. The workshop was for a leadership team from each school, and it focused on creating an integrated curriculum around key ideas. This was the first of many similar occasions. We asked the leadership teams to select a key idea and to web it with connecting links to the various school subjects. For 2 days the teachers worked at this, constructing plans they were to take back to their schools.

It took time for the key ideas really to deepen the curriculum, sometimes several years. For example, the study of various cultures across the globe, or of the five continents, is a common approach to thematic study in elementary schools. Two of the TETAC schools select a different conti-

ment each year for school-wide study. One year students might study the culture and geography of Asia, and the next of Africa. But the teachers did not focus this study conceptually, by using ideas or important questions to guide inquiry. The result was a series of activities that were neither oriented to disciplines nor well connected with each other. It was in the third year of the project that the leadership team of one of these schools developed a key idea and some essential questions that deepened and integrated the content of their global theme. The key idea was:

All cultures have objects, artifacts, performances that express their history, values, beliefs, and ways of life.

The essential questions were:

What does this object, artwork, artifact, or performance tell about the past or present of this society?

What does this object, artwork, artifact, or performance tell about the social ways of life (rituals, norms, behaviors) values and beliefs of this society?

What has caused change in the objects, artworks, artifacts, or performances of this society?

The leadership team recommended these ideas and questions to the faculty as guides for curriculum units around the school-wide theme. It was encouraging to witness both classroom and art teachers apply these questions to African cultures during a workshop at the beginning of a school year. The questions gave them a structure to keep on track toward an integrated and meaningful curriculum.

Another example is from an elementary school in which, in the third year of the project, an art teacher and a classroom teacher created a unit based on the key idea of multiple

perspectives. The subject matter came from a fifth-grade study of the Civil War. In their regular classroom, students learned about the Civil War and took different perspectives on it, such as those of a Union leader, a farmer, a plantation owner, Johnny Reb, a slave, and a Glory Rider. They assumed one of these roles and wrote letters home from the front lines. The art teacher had them create a narrative, in small groups, of their war experiences and design a quilt that incorporated their narrative. They studied the coded quilts used by the underground railroad and the story quilts of Faith Ringgold. This approach to the Civil War turned what might have been an informational unit into an appreciation of the multiple points of view about it, an appreciation that may have application in other contexts.

In these and other examples that could be cited, there is a strong relation between theory and practice. This is difficult to achieve. In the following section we illustrate some of the difficulties we encountered in seeking this relation.

Some Challenges

One of the difficulties had to do with how key ideas are conceived. A single idea might be interpreted in several ways, or, put differently, a single word might cover several different ideas. For example, environment was chosen as a key idea by various groups of teachers within the project. It was taught in various ways: as information about a set of facts; as a theme that covers concepts about natural surroundings, habitats, and controlling forces; as a problem area that includes social and political factors as well as natural ones; as whatever a person interacts with or is influenced by (including family environment, the media, the school); and as a life-centered issue that



Fifth grade Civil War unit at Windermere Elementary School.

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Several key ideas were popular but could not easily be dealt with in every subject matter, no matter how ingenious the teachers. Our conclusion is that some ideas lend themselves better to some subjects than others, and it is not profitable to force the connections.

affects students' present and future lives. These versions range from relatively factual to conceptually complex, there being several versions of the latter. We discovered that it is important to spend considerable time in discussion to reach common understandings of key ideas. This is one reason we advocate repeating successful key ideas for a few years, rather than switching every year to a new one.

A related difficulty is terminology. What one person calls a theme another may call a topic, or perhaps a concept; and the literature also variously advocates key ideas, big ideas, essential questions. We have concluded that reaching clear definitions of such terms is unimportant and draws attention away from what is important: the discussion of ideas for study and their incorporation into curriculum in an integrated way. We want to focus on the questions that students are to investigate and the kinds of learning outcomes to be sought. Debating whether to speak of themes or ideas can be distracting.

Another difficulty has been the creation of meaningful links between key ideas and school subjects. At times we felt impelled to integrate all the major school subjects together into one curriculum unit, and this was difficult. Sometimes it has produced artificial connections. We now think of academic disciplines as instruments to be used for investigating topics, to answer a question. This is how Rogers (1997), drawing upon Kliebard, describes them: "true disciplines, or disciplinary ways of knowing, are the 'modes of thinking, the conceptual tools, the methods and validation criteria that knowledgeable people (or experts) put into play when addressing complex problems from the point of view of their domains'" (p. 686). But not all ideas are easily addressed from the point of view of all disciplines; some ideas are better connected with particular subjects than with others.

An example of this is the unit on heroes. The heroes unit was originally designed by a group of high school teachers teaching art, English, math, science, and social studies to the freshman class. The art teacher originally suggested the theme, sparking considerable interest, unanimous support, and much brainstorming among the teachers. It has also proved popular with students. The unit was taught for 2 years. One reason was that the repeat allowed the teachers to reflect on the theme and on what worked and did not work with the students. The second year was not an exact repeat but an improvement based on group reflection on the essential questions and how well the unit addressed them. This illustrates our general consensus that the opportunity to pursue the same ideas over an extended period of time is helpful for deepening understanding and aligning the elements of curriculum with the key idea. Curriculum development is an ongoing process that ideally includes sustained and continual group reflection.

The unit focused on two essential questions:

What makes a hero?

Why do we have heroes?

The first of these focused attention on the heroes, the second on those who admire them. The first led to subordinate questions such as: Are heroes different from celebrities? The second to questions such as: What does a society's choice of heroes say about the society?

The heroes unit was both a successful and a troublesome example of linking a key idea with the various subject areas. Each subject teacher tried to develop curriculum materials that connected their subject with the idea and to articulate the connection with their own more specific questions. For the art teacher, it was easy. Her specific version of the general essential questions were:

How have heroes been portrayed in art?

How can we portray our heroes?

The English teacher developed these two questions:

How have heroes been portrayed in literature?

Can heroes be fictional people?

In social studies, there was an equally natural fit. The questions were:

What kinds of heroes are found in different cultures?

Do governments create and/or promote heroes?

These questions allowed the teachers to pursue activities of three main kinds. One was discussion of what a hero is, who the students' heroes were, who were the community heroes (they did a survey), who were the heroes of different cultures.

Another was research into particular heroes, each student choosing one. A third was looking at ways heroes are treated, in art, literature, in the media, and in society, and what the different treatments said about them. These activities spread over two thirds of the school year and were very meaningful to students.

The connection with science was less easy. After much discussion, the teachers and mentors settled on the essential question:

Does science have heroes?

This question suggested that students should study individual scientists, perhaps Galileo, Einstein, Edison, or John Glenn (a local figure). Some students did study such figures, but this study did not coincide with the expected science curriculum, which in the end was the over-riding consideration. Science in U.S. schools is rarely treated historically, and we found no easy way to link the required science curriculum with heroes.

The connection with math was equally difficult. We had many discussions about how to connect math with the idea of heroes. One suggestion was to study heroes in math, but this was even less promising than heroes in science. The math teacher was frustrated. His students had to meet regular achievement tests in math, and he knew they would be compared with other students. He greatly wanted to be a part of the integrated curriculum, but it seemed not to fit expectations. In spite of these difficulties, the group valued his presence throughout the year. One way in which the students used math in this curriculum was to create scale models of an area of the school grounds. This area became an art park, in which the students placed an artwork expressing their sense of heroes. The scale model was important for the students' development of a design for an outdoor art piece, but it did not respond to an essential question.

These sorts of problems occurred regularly during the project. Several key ideas were popular but could not easily be



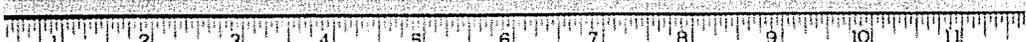
The Heroes unit at Elida High School.

dealt with in every subject matter, no matter how ingenious the teachers. Our conclusion is that some ideas lend themselves better to some subjects than others, and it is not profitable to force the connections. If one wants to include particular subjects in a curriculum, one must choose a key idea that has real connections with them. In our case, the heroes curriculum was exchanged for an environment curriculum. There was little conceptual difficulty connecting math and science with the environment (though there was still the problem of connecting it with the proficiency tests). We also initiated an integrated unit on the idea of order, which found a natural connection in every subject. We conclude that it is not desirable to suppose that every subject area must be connected in every integrated curriculum unit.

Structural Problems: Proficiency Tests and Planning Time

In Ohio proficiency tests are required in most subjects (but not in the arts). As the project proceeded, we became acutely aware of the influence these tests exert on the school curriculum. In Ohio, they are perhaps the central determining factor in determining school curricula, especially in math, science, and social studies. The pressure for successful student performance on standardized tests greatly affects teachers' willingness to work with key ideas. Our response has been to suggest that the content of the state proficiency exams can be taught in the context of key ideas, if those key ideas are well chosen. So far, this idea has been only partially accepted by teachers. One successful case grew out of a proficiency requirement having to do with measurement.

The measurement curriculum was created at the middle school in connection with the proficiency outcome: *The student will estimate and use measurements*. This was turned



Malabar Measures Up!

The Measurement unit at Malabar Middle School.



into a key idea in conversations between the teachers of various subjects, who constructed these essential questions:

How does measurement order our lives?

How do you measure up?

What are society's tape measures?

The theme caught the imagination of teachers from all the major subjects, though there was a wide range in the conceptual depth with which it was explored. The social studies teachers had their students investigate change in history using the essential question: *What are society's tape measures?* Students studied changes in fashion, money, and human behavior based on the social values of the time. A science teacher used measurement in relation to cooking; the English

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teacher introduced stories about measurement; and the science and math teachers engaged students in self-assessment with a computer program, creating charts of how they measured up on various scales. The teacher of family and life skills had students go through the commercial planning process of designing a product (a multi-pocketed apron), figuring material and labor costs, buying materials, producing/sewing, marketing, and calculating the profits. In a language arts unit, a student teacher brought to class an immense albino boa constrictor, and the students measured its weight and length. Everyone held the snake and had a photo taken with it. Students wrote poems about it, emphasizing its size. Later, when the snake shed its skin, the student teacher brought the skin to class, and the students measured it in many ways. They compared the size of the skin with the size of the snake and hung it on the wall. An art teacher engaged the students in an examination of the aesthetic effects of size, as in the monumental sculptures of Claes Oldenburg that increase the scale of everyday objects by 30 or 40 times.

A major problem in this unit was that the middle school schedule did not allow schoolwide time for teachers to plan collaboratively. Particularly, it did not allow the art teachers to meet with other teachers in their planning times. We have found that regular teacher discussions are essential for developing essential questions and curriculum units based on them. The effect of these discussions is to deepen everyone's

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understanding of the central theme and to orient units to concepts that the students can profit from. Without such regular planning time, including the arts teachers, the conceptual glue that holds an integrated curriculum together and offers meaning to students tends to be missing.

Conclusions

Focus Through Key Ideas

As a result of this project, we have come to a common agreement about how art should be taught. We now think art should be part of a concept-based curriculum that addresses life-centered themes. We have found that a good way to do this is to develop *key ideas* with small groups of teachers and what we have called *essential questions*. The function of these key ideas and essential questions is to maintain focus and depth of meaning. Moreover, the choice and development of these ideas and questions with groups of teachers are an excellent form of professional development, so long as the curriculum is continually revisited and reflected on. These processes are not quick but create considerable depth of meaning and buy-in by teachers and students.

We also believe that, taught this way, the arts hold various school subjects together. Different key ideas promote the integration of school subjects in different groupings and should be chosen with the interests of the various teachers in mind. Most life-centered issues can be understood from the perspective of several different subjects and can be taught by teachers in collaboration (Krug, 1997; Krug & Cohen-Evron, 2000, p. 272). When this happens, art can provide the glue because it can serve as an alternative mode of expression of complex understandings reached through inquiry in the various subject areas. It can also serve, of course, as a mode of inquiry into the complex meanings of others, including adult artists. This alternative mode of expression and inquiry

carries considerable natural motivation for many students and can energize collaborative groups of both students and teachers.

The integration of curriculum units in this way can be the focus of whole school reform, carrying with it potentially powerful links with professional development, alternative assessment, constructivist teaching, and community connections. These processes take a long time to develop in their natural connectedness, which is a way of saying that school reform is always a lengthy process. The chief obstacles we found to this process were the scheduling difficulties of arranging regular time for the right groups of teachers to plan curriculum together, the constraints on the curriculum imposed by State-required proficiency testing, and the teachers' need for more in-depth knowledge about the arts.

We do not claim to have a model for teaching the arts in an integrated curriculum. We are profoundly impressed by the importance of the context of each school, including the teachers, the students, the school as a whole, and the community it serves. All of these affect the content and character of an integrated curriculum and the role of the arts within it. We do not see curriculum as primarily a product that can be passed on to others. We see it more as a continuing process, requiring continual review and reflection, and heavily dependent on contexts. But we hope that our conclusions will be of service to others as they think through their own situations.

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FOOTNOTES

¹ The mentors who worked together on the Ohio TETAC project and wrote this article are:

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² The National Arts Education Consortium was established to advance comprehensive approaches to arts education linked with whole-school reform. The Consortium's member organizations include:

The California Consortium for Arts Education at the Sacramento County Office of Education in Sacramento, California;
The Florida Institute for Art Education at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida;
Prairie Visions: The Nebraska Consortium for Arts Education at the Nebraska Arts Council in Omaha, Nebraska;

The Ohio Partnership for the Visual Arts at the Department of Art Education, The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio;
The Southeast Institute for Education in the Visual Arts at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga in Chattanooga, Tennessee; and
The North Texas Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts at the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas.

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⁴ The five Ohio schools were: Newton D. Baker Elementary School of Arts in northeastern Ohio, Elida High School in northwestern Ohio, Fair Arts IMPACT Alternative Elementary School in Central Ohio, Malabar Middle School in northeastern Ohio, Windermere Elementary School in Central Ohio. A sixth school, the Mohawk Africentric School, began the project but underwent significant changes that made it difficult to continue.

⁵ See, for example, Krug, 1997 and Krug and Cohen-Evron, 2000, p. 258.

⁶ "The increasing pervasiveness of visual culture, and the freedom with which these forms cross traditional borders, can be seen in the use of fine art in advertising, realistic computer-generated characters in films, and the inclusion of rap videos in museum exhibitions. The visual arts are part of this larger visual culture including fine art, advertising, popular film and video, folk art, television and other performance arts, housing and apparel design, mall and amusement park design, and other forms of visual production and communication. Visual culture is the totality of humanly-designed images and artifacts that shape our existence" (Freedman & Stuhr, 2001, p. 2). To make the point that we do not want to make a sharp distinction between the visual arts and visual culture, and that we want study to study both, we will habitually use the phrase "art/visual culture" in this report.

