Community Engaged Scholarship & Literature as Art

NCTE 2012 Annual Convention

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Room 105, Level One, MGM Grand
Saturday 11/17 1:15 PM - 2:30 PM
What is Arts Integration?

Art Integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form with another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both.

Kennedy Center Arts Edge website

What is Community Engaged Scholarship?

Engaged scholarship is defined by the collaboration between academics and individuals (communities) outside the university. For the mutual beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in the context of a reciprocal partnership.

New England Resource Center for Higher Education
http://www.nerche.org

This project treats literature as art with music, movement, drama and the visual arts. It is designed to encourage a love of literature and the arts among participants and to open doors for teachers to explore their own inner artist. It also explores the role of the arts in the teaching of language arts.
Overview:

As part of a community engaged scholarship project teachers enrolled in the Department of Reading and Language Arts Masters Degree Program at CCSU worked with children who reside at a local center housing families of domestic violence. Teachers participated in this community engagement fieldwork while taking RDG 589 Creative Language Arts, a curriculum-based course that is a program requirement. The project spanned over four semesters.

The project integrates the arts into the teaching of reading and writing and holds benefits for the teachers enrolled at the university and the stakeholders (children and families) at the Center. Teachers have the opportunity to collaborate with each other and develop and implement mini-curriculum which integrates linguistic, dramatic, visual, musical, and technological arts. Working with the children at this center brings the class to life, in that it brings theory into practice.

Project Objectives

Teachers work:
1. Collaboratively develop, implement, and reflect on a language arts curriculum using an Arts Integration approach, and
2. To develop curriculum aligned with the Common Core State Standards and IRA program standards on which the course was based.

Professor works:
3. To improve university teaching and student learning by conducting teacher research in the context of fieldwork setting, and
4. To develop a mutually beneficial project for children at the Center and for students in class.
Online Discussion on Selected Readings from:


- Kennedy Center website on Arts Integration [http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org](http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org)

Related Assignments:

- Teams collaboratively develop, implement and reflect on Arts Integration curriculum for children residing at Center.

- Teams collaboratively develop OR revamp an existing unit so that it aligns with an Arts Integration approach and Common Core State Standards. (more formal application)

- Develop a personal sketch book aimed at highlighting concepts in the visual arts and at discovering one’s inner artist.
**Questions:**

1. In what ways did the program inform the professor’s instruction in using the arts to inform arts integration into the language arts?

2. What were benefits and drawbacks for teachers and children who participated?

**Data Sources:**

Teacher Artifacts
Online Discussions
Written Reflections
Focus Groups
Fieldnotes

Children’s Artifacts
Children’s Surveys
Community Feedback from Child Advocate and Center
Developed a unified curriculum across **three rotating groups of teachers- one session each per team spanning 3 weeks**

**Energizer/Warm Up- Whole Class Arts Integration-Closure**

**Team Themes**
1. *You are Not Alone* (literature read aloud and visual arts) personal pennants
2. *Overcoming Challenges* (drama) Arts based dramatic interactive read aloud
3. *Everyone Counts* (music and visual arts) read aloud & personal puzzle pieces, singing and parade

**4. OPEN HOUSE SHARE**- Dramatic Teacher Introduction of Project to families and community
   - Project Share for Each Teacher Team
   - Pennant parade and museum walk.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Round 1 Spring 2012 regular semester</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Grouping</th>
<th>Teacher configuration</th>
<th>Special events</th>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At Center</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 consecutive weeks after school</td>
<td>Whole group Warm up-activity - closure</td>
<td>One group of teachers at a time rotating in for one week across r weeks</td>
<td>Open House with family and community for</td>
<td>1. Not enough time to get to know students 2. Erratic attendance with different children 3. Room set up and pick up time 4. Does not work well as a hybrid class 5. Older children indicated that they did not want to be with younger children</td>
<td>1. Positive response from children and community 2. Opportunity to reflect and revise 3. Whole group share was affirming to children 4. Teachers teaching teachers across grade levels 5. OPEN HOUSE: well-received: celebration of children</td>
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Little differentiation
All began with literature- read aloud of some sort
Open House was well-received by families (Celebration of Children)
Teaching WITH the arts as a response to literature
Sample Warm Up:
Crumpled Paper Energizer
One student had “Who is your favorite person in the whole world?”
She answered: Caspin, her little brother

Sample Activity: Read Aloud and Personal Puzzle Pieces

Sample Closure and Farewell
Celebrating who we are:
Singing and enjoying their maracas
**Round 2: Summer 1 2012**

Developed a unified curriculum ALL teachers (three teams) for 4 consecutive days

**Whole Class Warm Up** - **Differentiated Break Out Sessions** - **Whole Group Closure**

**Themes**
1. Meet and Greet- Get to Know You- Ideas for planning
2. Fantastical Character Creation- 3 D from recycled materials, Dressing up as Fantastical Characters (youngest students)
3. Fantastic Settings
4. Problems and Solutions in fantastical settings

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<tr>
<th>summer session one- Round 2</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Grouping</th>
<th>Teacher configuration</th>
<th>Special events</th>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Fantasy Characters</td>
<td>At Center</td>
<td>• 4 consecutive days pm 4-6:30 pm</td>
<td>• Whole class- Small groups Whole class • Differentiate by grade</td>
<td>• All teachers for span of 4 days working with same age group during small group time</td>
<td>Meet and Greet</td>
<td>1. Erratic attendance- different children one session in conflict with summer program 2. Meet and Greet disorganized</td>
<td>1. Positive response from children and community 2. Opportunity to reflect and revise 3. Whole group share was affirming to children 4. Teachers teaching teachers across grade levels 5. Differentiated groups 6. Written language was not always central to Arts Integration</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Fantastical settings</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Solving problems</td>
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**Planned differentiation sessions**

Began with visual arts and/ or drama:

Moved beyond comfort level of using a read aloud

Teaching WITH the Arts and moving towards inquiry THROUGH the arts
Warm up:

Character Card Pantomime Game

Break Out - Oldest:

Create 3-D fantastical character with recycled materials
Discuss characters fantastic traits including physical characteristics, relationships (enemies/ allies/ personal), and history.
Brainstorm adjectives to describe characters
Create a poetic piece to describe characters

Break Out- Middle Grades 4-5:

Plan characters with graphic organizer discussion realistic characters versus fantastical characters
Discuss character traits, physical attributes, super powers and weaknesses
Create 3-D fantastical characters with recycled materials
I Am formula poem from perspective of characters

Break Out- Youngest K-3

Teachers will facilitate a conversation about characters. We will discuss what makes a character “fantastical” and have children name fantastical characters they are familiar with.
Students will assemble a costume with the various materials available.
Students will create masks.
Students will dress up in costumes and introduce themselves to the small group

Closure

“Character Voices” activity- take on the voice of the character you made/ are and say something that character would say.
Round 3: Summer 2 - Jamaican Cohorts

Developed a unified curriculum’ All Teachers each of 3 consecutive days for two separate cohorts of Jamaican teachers
Differentiated one-on-one activity
Teachers shared own movies in front of class Day 1 and children shared Day 3

Themes
About me/ Jamaica cultural theme/folktales and stories

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<th>Round 3</th>
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| Second summer session-Jamaican Cohorts | University Computer Lab | Week 1: 3 consecutive days-(first cohort) | • Whole class one-on one whole class • Differentiated | • All teachers cohort 1 teachers for 3 days • All teachers cohort 2 teachers for 3 days | Special lunch at university with parents and teachers | • Somewhat erratic attendance | 1. Positive response from children and community  
2. Opportunity to reflect and revise  
3. Whole group share was affirming to children  
4. Teachers teaching teachers across grade levels  
5. Students teaching teachers  
6. Enriched cultural experience with Jamaican students  
7. Opportunity to see themselves as part of a university campus |
| Folktales, stories, About Me Movies |                     | Week 3 : 3 consecutive days (second cohort) | 9:30-11:30 am             |                                               |                                                   |                                           |                                                                           |

Planned differentiation sessions-one on one
Movie making and the visual arts
Final lunch on university campus- some parents in attendance
Round 3- Summer Session-Jamaican Cohort

Sample teacher movie
Sample movie made by child
**Round 4: Fall 2012**

Developed a unified curriculum. Meet and Greet and All Teachers each of 3 weeks
Whole Group - Small group differentiated in the class & one-on-one movie making activity-
Theme: My life line, and free choice, self portraits

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<th>Fall Semester Round 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My life line movie</td>
<td>University Classroom and Computer Lab</td>
<td>• Meet and Greet at Center Week Span for planning 3 consecutive weeks lesson 1: in university classroom lesson 2 and 3 in computer lab at university</td>
<td>Lesson 1: Whole group • Small group differentiated • Whole group Lesson 2 AND 3 one-on-one</td>
<td>• All teachers for span of 5 weeks-working with same age group or student during small group time</td>
<td>Meet and Greet</td>
<td>1. Change in Child Advocate 2. Transportation 3. Erratic participation</td>
<td>1. Positive response from children and community 2. Opportunity to reflect and revise 3. Whole group share was affirming to children 4. Teachers teaching teachers across grade levels 5. Meet and Greet organized- one group taking the lead for transitions &amp; real opportunity to inform teachers about students interests and strengths 6. Opportunity for children to visit a college campus and be part of it</td>
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Planned differentiation sessions
Erratic attendance- transportation
Movie makings and the visual arts
Questions 1.

In what ways did the program inform the professor’s instruction in using the arts integration into the language arts?

Teachers need more than one session with children to make a difference in their learning and to have a sense of satisfaction.

The class format impacted the success of the project. Semester vs. Summer Session

Team building among teachers prior to work with children would be helpful.

Most highly successful when class met teachers and students met on consecutive days.

Meet and Greet a key ingredient. Must be organized – designated team leaders- with goal to inform upcoming focus and inform teachers of setting where children reside.

Attendance was always a variable: Unified focus across sessions but with multiple entry points so newcomer children can enter at any session and those children who are returning can have a meaningful experience

Project can be successful at Center and on a university campus. Hands-on arts integration is key. Age and individual differentiation is key.

Teachers wanted more direct instruction in arts integration during semesters-face to face session during semester to discuss readings and model strategies- eliminate hybrid format.
. What were benefits and drawbacks for teachers and children who participated?

**Benefits to Teachers:**
Teachers benefited from **collaborative work**. There were many teachers in the class. Teachers who taught young children helped teachers with comfort levels and vice versa. **Teachers teaching Teachers was empowering.**

The project **invited a reflective stance** as demonstrated by online conversations regarding revamping and what might work better next time.

Teachers cared about the project and children. The **shared focus on real children** especially those in crisis appeared to invite investment.

Teachers had an **immediate need to learn** about Arts Integration. They read about and tried out warm up strategies, closure strategies and Arts Integration projects in a practice venue.

Project shares especially movies **were highly affirming** to teachers (Jamaican students) and children. Jamaican students shared their culture- children shared about their lives and concerns.
Benefits to Children

Children were highly engaged at sessions as demonstrated by surveys, by parent input, unsolicited write-up of project in the Center’s newsletter, input from child advocate.

Technology/movies component on campus sometimes involved children teaching teachers. Empowering to children.

Movies children made and shared were highly affirming.

Children were comfortable on college campus in computer labs and in classrooms. Setting the stage for valuing ongoing learning and promoting their identity as learners. Had many positive experiences that honoring them and their lives.
Challenges

- Erratic attendance (chaotic lives of participants)
- Transportation to university
- Change in child advocate

Need to do:
Set things up carefully with administration to lay the groundwork.

Involve the families in some way. Open House at the beginning paved the way with families and helped spread the word that future activities will benefit their children.

Nurture relationship with a key contact person such as the child advocate. The contact person (child advocate)
  Paved the way with families,
  Arranged for a room and set up and scheduling
  Arranged for volunteer drivers for children to be on campus