

Teaching Philosophy

I am an artist because I process and communicate complex thoughts and ideas through various materials and I am an art educator because I believe that art is limitless. No matter their race, religion, gender, neurodiversity, class, or difference, I firmly believe that every person has the ability to use art as a vehicle to explain their unique understanding of the world. By slowly exploring various materials and art concepts in a guided lesson, I can create a safe environment for material understanding, self expression, and analytical thinking.

Art begins with understanding the individual properties of different media. When beginning a lesson sequence with a new material, I start with a series of explorations then gradually introduce new information, until students are able to successfully accomplish a more complex outcome.

For example, when I introduce students to clay, the objective of the first class is to find different ways of changing the clay with their hands. Sequentially processing through the lessons, time is allowed for individual exploration with guidance. Slow exploration is closer to the way that children discover naturally, and allows different learners to become familiar with the process of working with the material. Students can freely explore the material with creativity under my training that provides a consistent and organized environment.

At the start of each lesson, I prompt discussion through open-ended questions. Inquiry based guidance and clear objectives will promote a wide range of repertoire and encourage independent thinking. This kind of questioning will inspire students to think about an idea from multiple angles and participate without the fear of a wrong answer.

I determine future lessons by evaluating the accomplishments of previous activities. In my experience, students respond well to a strategy called "scaffolding", which can be utilized in lesson sequences to assist a variety of learners in attaining competency levels. Slow exploration, open-ended dialogues, and scaffolding allows for a more developmentally appropriate teaching technique.

I believe that students should become art appreciators as well as creators. Inspired by my work in museums, I add lessons based on observing the art of notable artists who worked or work in the same material. As John Berger wrote, "Seeing comes before words." I encourage students to actively look at objects, comprehend, and describe. Using facts of what they see, they graduate to the level of synthesizing information. Through this process, students independently realize complex contemporary and art historical concepts, and become familiarized with important artistic movements and people. This prepares students for sophisticated thinking.

My goal in teaching art is to facilitate student's ability to explain, analyze, and imagine in their everyday surroundings and lives. With each subsequent lesson that utilizes clear objectives, repetition, and new challenges, new vistas are opened to students to expand their repertoire with the materials. Through this instruction students will learn that art is a medium for self-examination, self-expression, and critical thinking.