

**The Art of Assemblage: A Narrative Description of High School Art Teachers as  
Curriculum Makers**

by  
Jenny L. Lucas

A dissertation submitted to the Curriculum and Instruction Department,  
College of Education  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

in Social and Art Education

Chair of Committee: Dr. Cameron White

Committee Member: Dr. Sheng K. Chung

Committee Member: Dr. Miao Li

Committee Member: Dr. Robert Horton

University of Houston  
November 2020

Copyright 2020, Jenny Lee Lucas

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this dissertation to my Grammie Grace and my husband Ryan. Once upon a time, Grammie asked me, "What's next?" And years later, Ryan followed up with "Why not?" May we all realize the power of questions to activate and inspire.

And, I dedicate this dissertation to my daughters: I love you. What's next? Why not?

## **Acknowledgments**

This work was only possible through the help and support of many others. I would like to take this moment to thank them:

I am grateful to the teachers who willingly shared their time, experiences, and knowledge with me for this study. They took the time to help me even during that most onerous period as they transitioned back into their art classrooms during the Covid-19 pandemic. Their stories and insights have helped me become a better teacher.

Thank you to Dr. Susan Day for your coaching, advice, and critiques. Your willingness to give your time and expertise to me, even without being a part of my committee, was incredibly generous. Special thanks to each of my Dissertation Committee members who have given so much of their time to this process. You have given me both direction and encouragement. Dr. Sheng Chung, thank you for expanding my perspectives on art education and introducing me to so many essential texts in the field. Dr. Miao Li, thank you for helping me reign in my artist-brain and attend to the detail required of scholarly research methods. I would especially like to thank Dr. Cameron White, the chair of my committee. Your patience astounds me. And my deepest gratitude to Dr. Robert Horton: your professional mentorship and friendship have been a matchless gift.

I would also like to thank the many steady women in my world who provide constant support. To those traveling with me through this process at the University of Houston, thank you for your advice and commiseration. And, to those who remain steadfast despite my neglect, thank you for always understanding. Dr. Carrie Markello and Dr. Kathy Brown, thank you for sharing your knowledge and wise voices with me.

You inspire me to think more broadly, discern more clearly, and remain hopeful in the potential of art and scholarship to catalyze positive change.

Finally, no one has been more essential to me through this season than my family. Mom and Dad, thank you for your constant love and support. Dad, I wish you could have been here to see me complete this degree. My girls, thank you for always being proud of me and supporting me, even when this work stole time and attention from you. Ryan, you already know that I wouldn't be writing these words if it weren't for you. Thank you for your unwavering belief in me.

## Abstract

**Background:** Discourse in art education research positions teachers as navigators of contradictory pedagogical philosophies resulting in ostensible binaries: skill-building vs. meaning-making, connoisseurship vs. cultural literacy, formalist principles vs. postmodern principles, etc. The *Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)* is a policy document intended to help Texas teachers make these decisions. However, art teachers bring their passionate attachments to the TEKS, producing unique iterations of curriculum as a result. **Purpose:** This narrative inquiry of teachers' lived experiences developing their curriculum for Art I seeks to answer two questions: How do the teachers in my study navigate the varied and competing discourses in art education while developing the day-to-day curriculum for use in their classrooms? And, in what ways do the teachers in my study make use of the TEKS in developing their classroom curriculum?

Underpinned by rhizomatic analysis of how their stories travel across/through/toward the TEKS, this study describes the teachers' linkages to the various discourses—especially those seemingly at odds—in art education and the TEKS and discerns how these linkages guide the assemblage of their daily curriculum. **Methods:** Data was gathered from teacher-participants who represent a purposeful sample of five high school Art I teachers from school districts in Texas whose teaching is guided by the High School Level 1 Art TEKS. No two teacher-participants, including the researcher, teach in the same school district. Due to constraints imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the teachers participated in a semi-structured interview (1 hour) and one focus group

discussion (1 hour) using video conferencing. The one-on-one interviews explored stories of how each participant came to teach Art I and why. The focus group, guided by the selection of a classroom artifact (a slide presentation of the lesson or a student's completed work), shared their most effective Art I lessons. Participant checks of the data were conducted through email. Coding was mostly manual but was supported by qualitative data analysis software. Coding focused on identifying components that guided teachers' curriculum decisions and mapping them across the TEKS. **Results:** Teacher-participants' narratives reveal consideration of seven curriculum components: teacher, student, context, purpose, subject matter, activities, and outcomes. In addition, teacher-participants' passionate attachments formed the basis of their curriculum decisions, the TEKS being a secondary consideration. A study of the narratives revealed associative thinking by the teacher-participants and their attempts to gain acceptance of their lessons' propositional content from their peers. **Conclusions:** Art teachers have much autonomy in their curricular choices but seek validation of those choices from other art educators. The TEKS's breadth allows for coverage of all the crucial points of art education (including the incompatible dichotomies apparent in the literature) and multiple access points for teachers. Those seeking to engender change in art education would be better served establishing new understandings among art educators rather than mandating change via policy or entirely disaffecting their current values or practices.

## Table of Contents

Chapter	Page
I. Introduction.....	1
Notes and Marginalia.....	1
The Emerging Problem of Practice.....	1
Teaching Art in Texas Public Schools.....	7
Curriculum.....	8
Rhizotextual Analysis.....	9
Key Components of Rhizomatic Study.....	9
rhizome:.....	9
becoming:.....	10
rupture/lines of flight:.....	10
nomadism:.....	11
assemblage:.....	11
Questions and Rupture.....	11
Methodological Framework.....	12
II. Review of Literature.....	17
form-centered or life-centered.....	19
form-centered.....	19
life-centered.....	23
Synthesis of the Literature.....	30
Binaries present in the literature.....	30
III. Methodology.....	31
The Art Teacher as Curriculum Maker.....	31
Sampling.....	36
Participants.....	37
Naomi.....	38
Helen.....	38
Wes.....	39
Ethan.....	40
Julia.....	40
me.....	41
Human Participants and Ethics Precautions.....	41
Research Procedures.....	42
Data Analysis.....	47
The Coding Process.....	49
IV. Findings.....	53
Initial Considerations.....	53
The art teacher as curriculum maker.....	54
Naomi.....	54
Helen.....	58
Wes.....	61
Ethan.....	61
Julia.....	64



Stories of purpose .....	65
Naomi.....	66
Helen.....	68
Wes .....	70
Ethan .....	71
Julia .....	74
Stories of lessons.....	75
Naomi.....	76
Helen.....	80
Wes .....	87
Ethan .....	90
Julia .....	95
Binary tensions and the power of “and” .....	98
Naomi.....	100
Helen.....	100
Wes .....	101
Ethan .....	101
Julia .....	102
Navigating the TEKS.....	103
Mapping the TEKS in the Teachers’ stories of purpose and lessons.....	112
Naomi.....	113
Helen.....	116
Wes .....	118
Ethan .....	120
Julia.....	123
“You know” .....	126
Becomings and the creative process .....	127
Naomi:.....	128
Helen:.....	129
Wes .....	129
Ethan .....	130
Julia .....	131
Summary of findings.....	131
V. Discussion and Recommendations for Future Research.....	132
Making the researcher.....	132
Binaries and Becomings .....	134
The TEKS and art education policy.....	135
Potential pitfalls .....	137
Recommendations for future study .....	140
References.....	142
Appendix A Study Approval Letter.....	153
Appendix B Schedule of Questions for Individual Interviews .....	155
Appendix C Text of Email that Followed the Group Interview .....	156
Appendix D Figures Used in Chapter III .....	157
Appendix E Figures Used in Chapter IV .....	164
Appendix F TEKS for High School Art Level I Numbered by Line .....	167

## List of Tables

1. The TEKS from Table F1 mapped through Naomi's narrative.....	113
2. The TEKS from Table F1 mapped through Helen's narrative.....	116
3. The TEKS from Table F1 mapped through Wes's narrative.....	118
4. The TEKS from Table F1 mapped through Ethan's narrative.....	120
5. The TEKS from Table F1 mapped through Julia's narrative.....	123

## List of Figures

1. Utopia.....	1
2. Lankford.....	1
3. Lanier.....	4
4. “YES! Finally someone gets it.”.....	5
5. Chart.....	30
6. Notes on <i>Roots</i> by Stankiewicz.....	99
7. Naomi—Color Map.....	115
8. Helen—Color Map.....	117
9. Wes—Color Map.....	119
10. Ethan—Color Map.....	122
11. Julia—Color Map.....	124

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### Notes and Marginalia

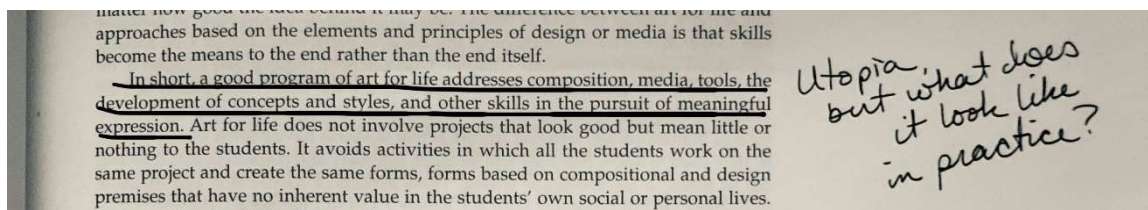


Figure 1. Utopia. Picture of researcher's annotations in a textbook read for a graduate school class.

(Anderson & Milbrandt, Art for life: Authentic instruction in art, 2005)

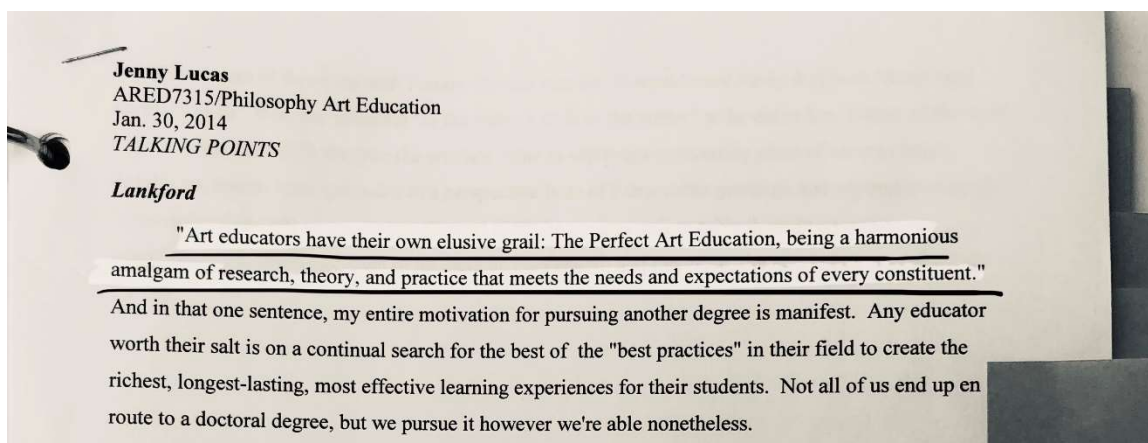


Figure 2. Lankford. Picture of researcher's annotations of a journal entry written for a class in a binder.

(Lankford, 1992, p.195)

#### The Emerging Problem of Practice

I taught art for nine years with no formal training in art education. Formal training in art, yes. Formal training in education and pedagogy, yes. One might think that a person in my position could meld the two areas together, and...voila!..., an effective art teacher would emerge from the union. That, however, was not my experience. I would undertake a lesson or unit and be pleased with my mastery of one aspect—or strand, if you will—of the job, only to realize in reflection that I had not attended effectively or at all to another.

The more experience I accumulated teaching art, the more the scope of the necessary skills and expertise to be a master art educator seemed to expand. I enrolled in graduate school with the goal of finally, definitively, mastering the job. One of my first courses in my first semester was the History of Art Education. Our first text, the seminal *A History of Art Education* by Arthur Efland, showed me just how complex and disunified a field it is. Take, for instance, this excerpt from a reading journal entry in response to chapters from that text from the first semester of my doctoral program:

"...I found these chapters to be very interesting reading, prompting further study on numerous historical threads as I worked my way through them. Of particular interest to me were the philosophical underpinnings of each phase of art education and how much those philosophies were a product of sociological, cultural, and historical factors because our current conception of art education is an amalgamation of hundreds of years and all of those incongruent philosophies. I recognize tenets as old as Aristotelian notions of 'universals' combined with the lofty intellectual ambitions of Leonardo's academy conjoined to sequencing of direct observational drawing taken from the French Academy of the 17<sup>th</sup> century overlaid with a Franklinian notion of the necessity of a design-capable workforce in my own approach to art education. And, perhaps most remarkable of all is how commonplace and necessary each disparate component seems to me and how ineluctably fused such originally incongruent ideas have become."

On this topic, Efland himself writes,

“This book is about the teaching of the visual arts throughout the history of education, before and after public education came upon the scene. These background developments enable us to understand the social currents that eventually led to the introduction of the arts as standard subjects within the school...The ways the visual arts are taught today were conditioned by the beliefs and values regarding art held by those who advocated its teaching in the past” (1).

As Efland’s book goes on to describe in detail, teaching art is a complex web of disparate ideologies, motivations, and approaches that leaves an enormous tangle of ideas for teachers in today’s classroom to sort out. And often, as the review of literature will show, a teacher pulling on two different threads of the jumbled mass can come away with two very different approaches to the curriculum, both justifiable in the social and historical context of art education. At the end of his book, Efland writes,

“The dominance of these streams changed from time to time in response to the prevailing social climate, to social circumstances, and to socially powerful groups. As each stream moved into a position of dominance, its value orientation was heralded as having universal validity...And although these major streams come and go, their historical effects may linger long after the movement itself has become history...In this century, the conflict in art education has been between those intent upon teaching the content of art and those seeing it as self-expression...It remains to be seen how the drama of art education’s future will be acted out” (262-263).

Efland's concluding thoughts highlight one of several binaries lurking within the ideological tangle that is the field of art education due to its ill-defined aims and inconsistent history. Others will be explored in more detail later in this inquiry.

Throughout my first year of graduate studies, I was continually perplexed by texts and articles that would position ideas in either-or, all-or-nothing dichotomies:

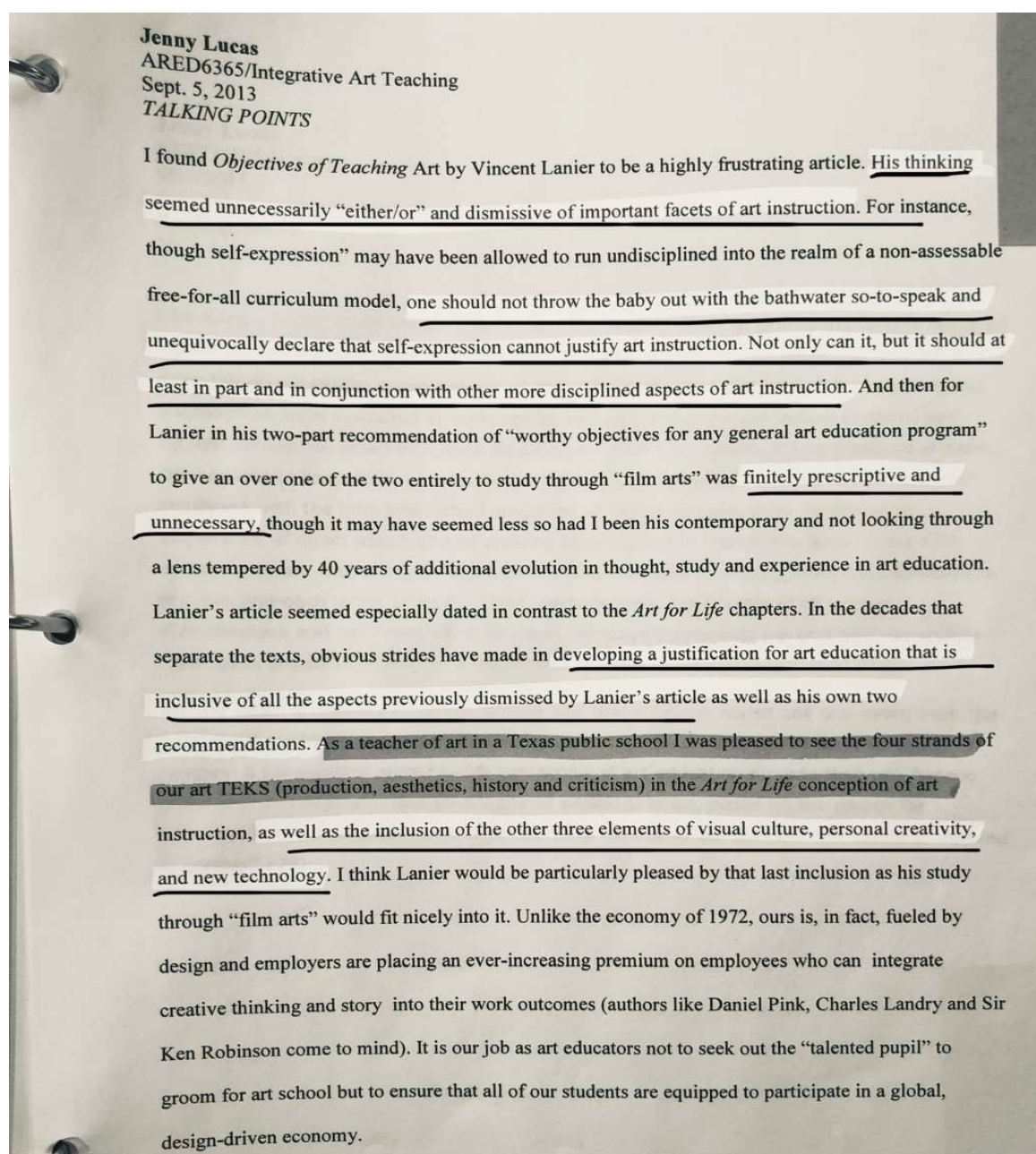


Figure 3. Lanier. Picture of researcher's annotations of a journal entry written for a class in a binder.

And, exceedingly pleased when I would find a reading that was not so:

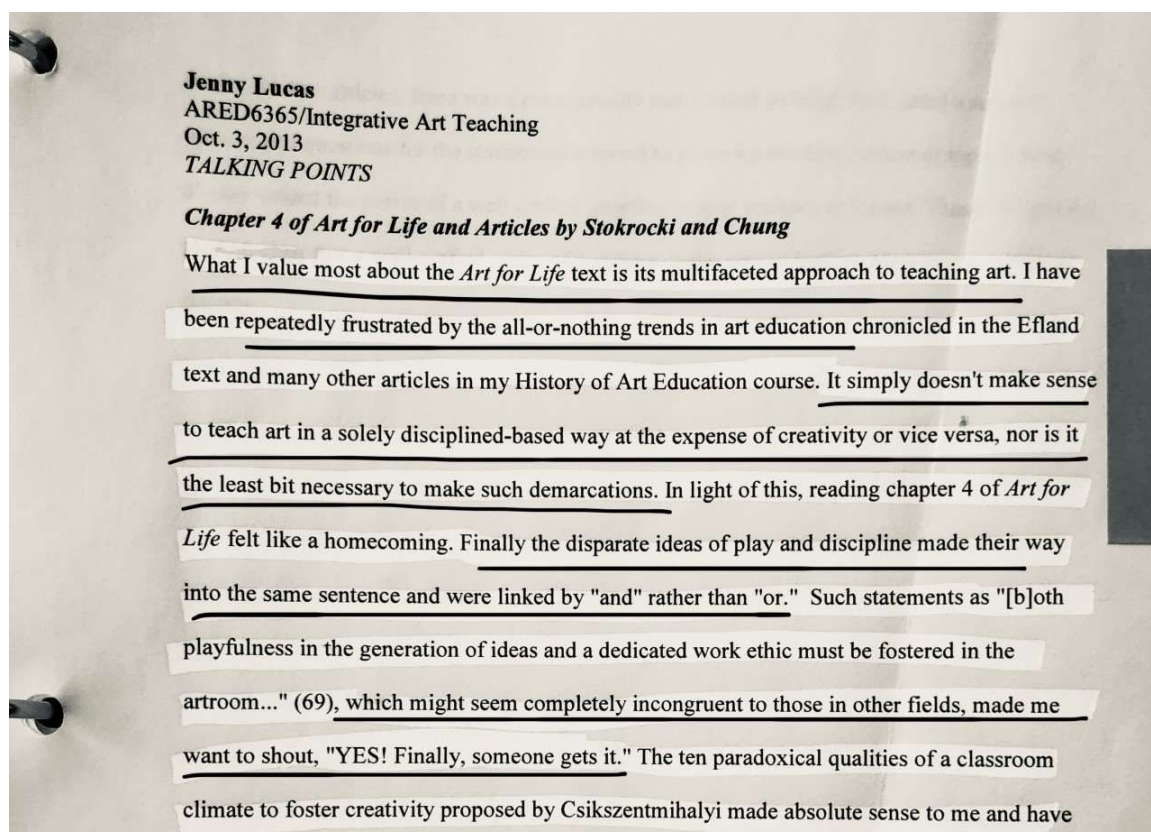


Figure 4. "YES! Finally, someone gets it." Picture of researcher's annotations of a journal entry written for a class in a binder.

Granted, these are dated texts now. But even beyond these first few readings from year one of my grad school experience, a literature review revealed that binary oppositions like the either/or, all-or-nothing approaches I described in Figure 3 are rampant in art education journals and texts. What is less visible in the literature are studies of how art teachers handle those ideological oppositions in practice, or if they engage in reconciling them at all. In this inquiry that began with my own narrative, I came to understand my own processes of becoming-teacher. A large part of that journey has been spent as a quester for that "elusive grail: The Perfect Art Education," and my disposition on my quest (not unexpectedly) has not been that of the intrepid knight but rather of the perpetual gatherer, the do-it-yourself artist of an assemblage, a bricoleur.



This insight made critical pedagogical theory fundamental to the construction of this study. Beginning with my undergraduate training as a studio artist and my development as an educator during my master's studies, I became aware of the way studio art practice and public school structure and policy do not neatly interlace with one another. My doctoral studies have further revealed the complex and unwieldy history of art education and why such tension was ever-present in my classroom experiences. Through a critical reflexive understanding of my practice, I am led to wonder how others in my field wrestle with and through these tensions in their practice, which produced the development of my research questions, the construction of my study, and my interpretation of the literature and data that form it.

This chapter will serve to develop the context of my research and explain the gap it is intended to fill. To that end, it will include a discussion of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Visual Art and the purpose the document serves for art educators in Texas. In addition, this chapter will also begin to outline the study's theoretical framework, including a brief introduction to rhizotextual analysis, which is derived from the work of French thinkers Deleuze and Guattari. With these explanations in place, an initial look at the research questions will be presented, as well as an overview of the methodological framework of narrative inquiry and self-study that will guide how the data for the study is collected and the findings determined. As with all research studies, boundaries and limitations result from the selected methodology, which will also be acknowledged and discussed.

## Teaching Art in Texas Public Schools

In response to the nation-wide standards-based reform (SBR) movement of the late 1990s and early 2000s and the enactment of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in 2001, Texas adopted a four-part accountability system for public schools. Several parts of this system have undergone revisions and name changes in recent years; however, the four components essentially remain the same: 1) a standards-defining document for all subject areas, 2) an assessment procedure, 3) an evaluative system for teachers and principals, and 4) a complex school district and campus rating system. The standards-defining document is known as the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

It is an understanding of the purpose that the TEKS serve that will inform later aspects of this research study. According to the Texas Education Agency, the “Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills...are the state standards for what students should know and be able to do” (Texas Education Agency, 2020). Adequate time to provide instruction in all the TEKS for each subject area is required of school districts by the state (Texas Education Code), though there are no requirements about what that instruction looks like. There is a section in the Texas Education Code (TEC) dedicated to the provision that school districts can adopt a recommended or designated scope and sequence to ensure adequate instructional time for each of the TEKS in a subject area; however, no other specifications are made about this type of instructional framework including any contingency or sanction for a district that does not provide one, except that a teacher may choose not to follow it based on that teacher’s assessment of the instructional needs of his or her students. The Center for Educator Development in Fine Arts (CEDFA), who crafted a document called *Art Curriculum Framework* with the funding and support of

the Texas Education Agency, states in the Foreword to that document that “[n]either the TEKS nor this curriculum framework should be taken as curriculum. Adoption of the TEKS presents an opportunity for Texas schools to examine and modify existing curricula. For students to achieve at high levels, districts must develop local curricula, instruction, and assessment that are aligned with the TEKS for fine arts” (p. 5). Like the phrasing in the TEC, here the onus is on the districts and schools to develop a local curriculum, but it is not required to do so. The purpose of this discussion is to illustrate that in Texas a large space exists between what students “should know and be able to do” and how a teacher decides to achieve those ends.

### **Curriculum**

Day to day in the classroom, what content is presented to students and how that content is presented and assessed is all within the domain of the teacher (Dillon, 2009; Sinnema et al., 2017). Teachers are also responsive to the wider educational context they are situated in (Dillon, 2009; Sinnema et al., 2017). Because this study is concerned with the space between what the state has decided students should know and be able to do and the classroom teacher's decisions to achieve those ends, I will be situating my study in relation to the components of curriculum described by J.T. Dillon. Building on the work of curriculum researcher Joseph Schwab, Dillon proposes seven “components of curriculum,” which are “the things educators have to think and act about in doing curriculum” (2009, p. 345). Dillon’s components include Teacher, Student, Subject Matter, Milieu, Aim, Activity, and Result, and will be looked at more closely in subsequent chapters of this study. And though it is outside the scope of my research with its focus on art education, interesting work has been done relating to the synergy of the

standards and curriculum more broadly in education (see Sinnema et al., 2017).

Curriculum study is a complex and dynamic mutable topic (Niculescu, 2015) that warrants

### **Rhizotextual Analysis**

To examine how teachers, including myself, navigate the space described above, I will take a rhizotextual approach. In particular, I'm interested in how rhizotextual analysis "can assist educators to develop new understandings of the ways in which policy documents are used by teachers in their daily practices" (Honan, 2007, p. 531). Based on the philosophical writings of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, rhizomatic study has the potential to dissolve binary thinking. It insists that one "ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles" (1987, p. 7). Because this study endeavors to map how art educators link their classroom practice to the TEKS through the conditions and circumstances revealed in their narratives as artist/teacher/colleague/friend/researcher, familiarity with Deleuzoguattarian concepts is necessary.

### **Key Components of Rhizomatic Study**

***rhizome:*** Rhizome is a botanical term. Sometimes also called 'creeping root stalks,' a rhizomatic plant sends out lateral roots, and new shoots are generated out of nodes in those horizontal root systems. "A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things...proceeding from the middle, through the middle, coming and going rather than starting and finishing. This is the conjunctive 'fabric of the rhizome', the 'and...and...and...' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 25). Due to its

conjunctive nature, rhizomatic thinking/inquiry “emphasizes connections rather than separations” (Strom & Martin, 2013, p. 220).

***becoming:*** People are not static. When conscious and awake, they are always experiencing, always thinking, continually assimilating, evaluating, and deciding. In that vein, the Deleuzoguattarian concept of becoming “is constituted of a dynamic processing of constantly remaking ourselves through/with/in ongoing connecting with people, things, events and circumstances” (Sellers, 2015, p. 7).

***rupture/lines of flight:*** “Molar lines are rigid/fixed and often refer to ways of being of institutions. When a molar line ruptures, it emits line(s) of flight (becoming)... can be considered a rhizome consisting of multiple, heterogeneous, non-hierarchical trajectories of experiences, some that rupture unpredictably and others that don’t and, nevertheless, connect with each other” (Sellers, 2015, p. 4). However, lines of flight also contain the potential to again become molar lines with time. Lines of flight are “open to possibilities for constantly digressing and transgressing, diverging and converging, in ways that free up things incipiently different to (e)merge” (Sellers, 2015, p. 9); however neither is that disruption inevitable.

***molecular lines:*** While molar lines are often rigid, dualistic, institutional lines, a molecular line is “flexible” and “carries out the work of the molar” (Strom & Martin, 2017, p. 9). And while molecular lines have the potential to and often do support the molar lines of an institution, they can also allow for the lines of flight mentioned above. Describing this phenomenon in more detail, Strom and Martin write:

“By nature, however, lines of flight are temporal. They will be recaptured by the molar line...In the classroom, the teacher will eventually have to

return to her original objective or give the test, and students will have to take it. The bell will ring and students will leave class and go out into the world where they encounter heteronormative language at every turn. But in the recapture of lines of flight, the molar lines of the system are shuffled, and social change is possible” (p. 10).

***nomadism:*** “Nomad thinking works with/through interrelationships of text, topic and writer” (Richards quoted in Sellers, 2015, p. 25). As nomads are not bound to any particular territory in life, nomadic thinkers are not bound to traditional interpretations of semiotics and signifiers. This deterritorialization of thought likely puts the nomadic thinker in conflict with the delimited territories of thought found in institutions, not because the nomadic thinker seeks such conflict but because it naturally arises from the inherent, perceived boundary-crossing that takes place. “Nomadic thinking can thus be seen as the free space of creative thinking, a mode of creativity that is equally a mode of struggle and resistance” (Leung, 2010, para. 7).

***assemblage:*** From the French word “agencement,” assemblage in the Deleuzoguattarian sense is not the product of that which is assembled, but rather the “process of arranging, organizing, fitting together” (Macgregor, 2011, p. 91). An assemblage is neither “predetermined” nor “random”; there is a “contingency” to the collected elements (Macgregor, 2011, p. 91).

### **Questions and Rupture**

There is no one “right” way to do rhizoanalysis, no hierarchy of information, or expected linearity of thought (Honan, 2015; Masny, 2015). Many researchers endeavoring to use Deleuzoguattarian philosophy to frame their work suggest that

experimental and post-structuralist approaches to writing are best to manifest inquiry pursued through this lens (Hanely, 2019; Honan, 2015; Sellers, 2015; Strom & Martin, 2013). To communicate with clarity and facility in this research process, I will maintain a more conventional approach to my writing. However, for the sake of remaining open to “movement, difference, singularity, emergence, and the entanglements of matter and language” (MacLure, 2013)—or in Deleuzoguattarian terms, ruptures and lines of flight—I will not present my research questions in the traditional scheme of a primary research question followed by sub-questions. Instead, this inquiry’s heuristic nature will involve mapping the linkages between/through/with/in each question, the text of the TEKS, the narratives of the teacher participants, and the fascinations and experiences of the researcher. The questions will include:

- How do the teachers in my study navigate the varied and competing discourses in art education while developing the day-to-day curriculum for use in their classrooms?
- In what ways do the teachers in my study make use of the TEKS in developing their classroom curriculum?

### **Methodological Framework**

Ultimately, though I am now the researcher, I also cannot escape my proclivity to create as an artist creates. Rhizomatic study appeals to me because of its uncanny familiarity. It feels like what first John Dewey and later Elliot Eisner referred to as “flexible purposing”: “the improvisational side of intelligence as it is employed in the arts...the ability to shift direction, even to redefine one’s aims when better options emerge in the course of one’s work” (Eisner, 2002, p. 77). Eisner goes on to write, “[t]he

implementation of means might lead to unanticipated effects that may be more interesting, promising, or problematic than the ones originally sought” (p. 78).

Rhizoanalysis promises the same kind of flexibility and open space that allows for creativity and wonder. As an artist, I need a medium, so text/narrative will serve as my artistic material in this inquiry. Narrative is “an essential strategy of human expression” (Kim, 2016, p. 6) and also intrinsically rhizomatic.<sup>1</sup>

The roots of narrative inquiry are described in rhizomatic ways by Clandinin. First, Clandinin metaphorically portrays narrative inquiry as “a changing stream that is characterized by continuous interaction of human thought with our personal, social, and material environment” (2013, p. 14). Reminiscent of the Deleuzoguattarian notion of becoming, narrative inquiry as Clandinin conceives of it envisages all the people involved in the process—researcher and participants alike—as in a state of ongoing change: “As we retell or inquire into stories, we may begin to relive the retold stories. We restory ourselves and perhaps begin to shift the institutional, social, and cultural narratives in which we are embedded” (2013, p. 34). Corollary to this idea of becoming in narrative inquiry are the rhizomatic ideas of “middles” and “assemblage.”

Clandinin uses the phrase “in the midst” rather than the word “middles,” but the essence is the same:

“We begin in the midst, and end in the midst, of experience...Narrative inquirers always enter into research relationships in the midst. We mean this in several ways: in the midst of researchers’ ongoing personal and professional lives; in the midst of researchers’ lives enacted within

---

<sup>1</sup> “I am part of [other’s stories], as they are part of mine. The narrative of any life is part of an interlocking set of narratives.” Alasdair MacIntyre as quoted in *Understanding Narrative Inquiry* (Kim, 2016, p. 6).



particular institutional narratives such as funded projects, graduate student research, and other research; in the midst of institutional narratives such as university or other organizational narratives; in the midst of social, political, and cultural narratives. Our participants are also always in the midst of their lives” (2013, p. 43).

It is the relational portion of being in the midst or the middle that lends itself to the becoming: “When our lives come together in an inquiry relationship, we are in the midst. Their lives and ours are also shaped by attending to past, present, and future unfolding social, cultural, institutional, linguistic, and familial narratives” (p. 43). It is these “spaces where we come together and negotiate ways of being together and ways of giving accounts of our work together” (p. 44) that can/will influence the process of becoming for both the participants and the researcher.

In a similar way, the idea of assemblage is embedded in the ontology that underpins narrative inquiry and the becomings of those involved in its processes. In *Engaging in Narrative Inquiry*, Clandinin describes the transactional nature of the Deweyan philosophy of experience that is the ideological basis for narrative inquiry methodology. Within these descriptions is the assumption that the choices people make during their various experiences will result in something new. For instance, one can see this assumption made clear in a passage she cites from her work with Rosiek in 2007: “We used Dewey to argue ‘against obscuring the selection process, thus naturalizing the objects of our inquiry and treating them as if they are given’...in this way we argued for showing inquiries ‘as a series of choices, inspired by purposes that are shaped by past experience, undertaken through time, and [that] trace the consequences of these choices

in the whole of an individual or community's lived experience'" (2013, p. 15). In this way, Clandinin and Rosiek support a "view of experience as composed" (p. 15). In recalling the Deleuzoguattarian use of the agencement/assemblage, it is important to note here that the French term has a slightly different meaning from its English translation. Buchanan reminds us that "the former is a process of composition whereas the latter is one of compilation; the difference being that one works with a pre-existing set of entities and gives it a different order, whereas the latter starts from scratch and builds up to something that may or may not have order" (2017, p. 458). Assemblage, then, within this inquiry is understood as a composition of choices made by a person in the midst of their milieu. Further, milieu is understood as "the conditions under which people's experiences and events are unfolding" and "are understood, in part, in terms of cultural, social, institutional, familial, and linguistic narratives" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 40). As the TEKS are a corporate document, in this study, they too are conceived of as the result of narrative assemblage.

The research questions were conceived of in my wandering through past journal entries and reflections written during my grad school experiences. In looking for a problem of practice (Belzer & Ryan, 2013), I found several passages in my writing in which I struggled to reconcile gaps in my pedagogy and a desire to create an art curriculum that could balance what felt like two competing approaches to teaching art well.

Data for the research questions came from teacher-participants who represent a convenience sample of five high school Art I teachers from various school districts in Texas whose teaching is presumably guided by the High School Level I Art TEKS. To

seek a diverse collection of voices, no two teacher-participants in the study teach in the same school district. Due to the constraints imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the teachers participated in a semi-structured interview and one focus group discussion via Zoom. The participants also engaged in on-going email correspondence to provide clarifications of the interview data. The first interview was one-on-one, exploring the story of how they came to teach art and why. The next stage of data collection was a group interview, guided by their selection and discussion of a classroom artifact representing their most effective Art I lesson. Participant checks of the data collected in the first interviews were conducted via email. Qualitative analysis of data employs rhizomatic methods of content analysis (e.g., mapping and identifying linkages). Coding focuses on the pedagogical/philosophical strands that emerge that guide the teachers' curriculum decisions and their individual readings of the TEKS for Visual Art as they are revealed by/through/with/in their narratives.

This study is unquestionably interpretive in methodology and design. As such, it has not yielded the definitive empirical results valued by a positivist academic tradition. However, the goal was to accumulate a rich description (Sukumar & Metoyer, 2019) of this particular actuality through the process of narrative inquiry and the analysis that followed. Neither is the study be replicable in a positivist sense. Nonetheless, to allow others to “assess [its] rigor and usefulness, and learn from and replicate [it]” (Sukumar & Metoyer, 2019, p. 6), I have explained the context, methods, and rationales of the study as thoroughly as possible. In addition, I endeavored to avoid other pitfalls of narrative inquiry, which include attempts at inquiry devolving into merely storytelling or navel-gazing on the part of the researcher (Kim, 2016; Shuman, 2006). Though this study

includes several teachers' narratives, I recognize that it is still a small and idiosyncratic sample, and some will find it limited in its generalizability. Be that as it may, I hope that others will discover points of transferability through the comprehensive description of context (Sukumar & Metoyer, 2019) and will recognize that similar teachers exist across the state of Texas.

## **Chapter II**

### **Review of Literature**

In Chapter 1, I noted Feldman's observations about the convoluted ideological history of art education and how "although these major streams come and go, their historical effects may linger long after the movement itself has become history" (1990, p. 262). He went on to explain how those lingering streams in art education have resulted in a rift "between those intent upon teaching the content of art and those seeing it as self-expression" (p. 263). He is not the only historian of art education to make such an observation. In the introduction to the text *Roots of Art Education Practice*, Stewart notes,

"In the culture of art education, conventions and traditions are tied to beliefs about art and its societal role, children, curriculum, pedagogy, and schooling. As ideas shift, new traditions are established and are often practiced in parallel relationship with those that reflect older, and sometimes no longer viable, ideas. The result is a set of conventions that may reflect several incompatible ideas" (Stankiewicz, 2001, p. v).

Later in the same text, Stankiewicz suggests, "[c]ertain issues seem to generate perennial debate in art education. Questions examined by art educators today—as in the past—

include the relationships of art to life, of mind to emotions in art, and of innate artistic abilities to opportunities to learn in art” (p. 122). These are the “competing discourses” I am referring to in my research questions.

In her in-depth study of rhetoric in educational and social research, MacLure writes about the “complicity between texts and realities,” stating that this complicity “is generally held to be some kind of deviation from a more innocent and pure relation between word and world, something practised by politicians, journalists, novelists or script writers, for venal or frivolous aesthetic purposes,” and that “[t]here is still a widespread conviction that serious enterprises such as education, research, science and scholarship are, or should be, free from this kind of entanglement with rhetoric” (2003, pp. 6–7). However, MacLure readily demonstrates that is often not the case. All texts—even research texts—are “articulated” and “[o]ne of the most general and commonplace ways in which this articulation is done is through the setting up of binary oppositions” (p. 7).

The crux of this research study is built on the supposition these binary oppositions are rampant in art education literature—from why we teach art in schools to how we teach and what we should be teaching. This literature review does reveal that the study of art education is rife with problems stemming from dichotomous thinking and a lack of clarity about the purposes, functions, and goals of art curriculum in schools.

In his preface to *Education and Experience*, John Dewey wrote,

“It is in this context that I have suggested at the close of this little volume that those who are looking ahead to a new movement in education, adapted to the existing need for a new social order, should think in terms

of Education itself rather than in terms of some 'ism about education, even such an 'ism as 'progressivism.' For in spite of itself any movement that thinks and acts in terms of an 'ism becomes so involved in reaction against other 'isms that it is unwittingly controlled by them. For it then forms its principles by reaction against them instead of by a comprehensive, constructive survey of actual needs, problems, and possibilities" (p. 3)

While not all binaries in the field of art education are "isms," one of the largest divides—and perhaps greatest ironies, in light of the passage above—derives from Deweyan thought. "According to Dewey," writes researchers Peppler and Davis, "the activity of artmaking is important because it engages learners in the process of building, designing, and constructing artifacts and provides a tool by which we search for meaning" (2010, p. 1000). Exactly what that meaning is and how it is constructed through artmaking is widely debated.

### **form-centered or life-centered**

An area of great contention surrounds questions of the authenticity of artmaking tasks in educational contexts. Earlier in the chapter, this dichotomy was described by Efland as a tension "between those intent upon teaching the content of art and those seeing it as self-expression." To further explore the arguments that make up this issue, I borrow the more succinct terms "form-centered" and "life-centered" from Anderson and Milbrandt (1998, p. 17).

#### ***form-centered***

There is one concept in art education that those in the field are familiar with and most understand without hesitation: "School art." School art existing as it does here in

quotation marks brings almost immediately to mind Efland's 1976 article entitled *The School Art Style: A Functional Analysis*. One does not have to take a very deep dive into art education literature to find a reference to this paradigm-defining paper. But just what is school art?

Noting a dearth of studies in art education “concerned specifically with the curriculum content of secondary school art,” Downing and Watson conducted a study of 18 schools across England to fill in that gap (2004, p. 2). What they found were the following characteristics: artwork primarily created with painting or drawing materials; a prevalence of artist exemplars from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century who were predominantly male, European painters; an emphasis on the development of art form skills, “including the use of art materials, the development of specific techniques and observational drawing skills” (p. viii); the “teaching of the formal elements of art;” “limited opportunities for using art to explore issues;” and limited requirement of pupils to engage in creative thinking processes” (p. 49-50). Before one decides that this is exclusively a British occurrence or a secondary education occurrence based on the location or focus of this particular study, consider that Haanstra “identified the school art style as an international phenomenon that remains highly influential in the 21<sup>st</sup> century art curriculum, especially in primary education” (as reported in Heijnen, 2015, p. 16). Freedman and Stuhr recognize the phenomenon school art in their research as well, but describe it as “an unstated aesthetic policy...developed through the educational application of an aesthetic canon that underlies all of what we do” (2004, p. 821).

According to Hamblen, who uses the familiar term school art in her work, this underlying aesthetic canon results in art activities in classrooms throughout the U.S. “in

which technical skills and art content consisting of formal qualities are emphasized” (2003, p. 115). She lists such activity examples as color wheels, value charts, shading techniques, ways to show perspective, etc. Confirming the consensus on school art and its origins, she goes on to explain that “[a]ssumptions that the content of art resides in its material substance and formal qualities have a long and embedded history in formalist art theory and modernist values” (p. 115). And, as Hamblen names the exercises, Gude explains the roots of formalist art theory and modernist values expressed in the vocabulary that underpins them: the elements of art and principles of design or the “7 + 7” as she refers to them (2004, p. 6). Citing National Art Education Association (NAEA) survey results as reported in a 2001 *School Arts* magazine, Gude identifies the elements and principles as “the major curriculum goal for art teachers at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century” (p. 6).

School art serves several purposes in schools. It enlivens the hallways with colorful artifacts that demonstrate the creative aspects of school life (Anderson & Milbrandt, 1998; Efland, 1976). It is a positive, therapeutic moment in a child’s day at school (Anderson & Milbrandt, 1998; Efland, 1976). And, school art projects fit within the time constraints of the school day as well as the domain of the teacher’s expertise (Efland, 1976; Hathaway, 2013; Thompson, 2014). In addition, form-centered art education is also discipline-centered art education—it has its own vocabulary, catalog of skills and processes, history, and canon (Efland, 1976, Hamblen, 2003; Hathaway, 2013). The value of emphasizing the form-centered, disciplinary character of art is that it validates the study of art “in-and-of-itself, without the usual instrumental rationales of personality development, socialization skills, or academic achievement” (Hamblen, 1997,



p. 99). If the marginalization of the arts in schools is worse now than ever before in this age of post-NLCB accountability (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2013; Thompson, 2015), then form-centered art education positions itself if not firmly at the core of education, then at least not in service to the other school disciplines (Thompson, 2014). Though widely criticized after its inception, the Disciplined-Based Art Education curriculum endorsed by the Getty Center for Education in the Arts in the 1980s was well-suited to standards-based reform efforts (Hamblen, 1997; Greer, 1984). In fact, “the four parent disciplines” of DBAE—aesthetics, studio art, art history, and art criticism (Greer, 1984)—are present as the “strands” of the TEKS, though the nomenclature has been altered—foundations: observation and perception; creative expression; historical and cultural relevance; and critical evaluation and response (Sec. 117.202.(b).(2)).

Form-centered art education has been subject to critiques, the most strident of which is that it is outmoded. Many scholars of art education assert that classroom practices based in formalist art theory and modernist values are an antiquated approach and must be replaced by a new paradigm reflecting contemporary artmaking practice (Atkinson, 2006; Freedman and Stuhr, 2004; Gude, 2004/2013; Haanstra, 2010; Hamblen, 2003; Heijnen, 2015; Walker, 2001). It is worth noting that the work of many of these scholars will be discussed in the section reviewing life-centered art education. Form-centered art has also been critiqued as disingenuous (Hamblen, 2003, Hathaway, 2013) and inauthentic (Anderson & Milbrandt, 1998; Atkinson, 2006; Downing & Watson, 2004; Efland, 1976; Gude, 2013; Thompson, 2014; Walker S. R., 2001). Other criticisms of form-centered art education cluster around the colorful, “quaint,” “in the style of” art products that “address an adult aesthetic” (Hathaway, 2013). School art is not

child art (Efland, 1976; Hamblen, 2003; Hathaway, 2013; Thompson, 2014). As a result, teaching form-centered art projects often creates inequities of power within the classroom, wherein “learning is subordinate to teaching” (Cattegno as quoted in Atkinson, 2006, p. 19). In these classrooms, the teacher is positioned variously as the “magician” with all the tricks (Hathaway, 2013), or at best a “patron” who knows how to get the required results from the “clients,” and worst, the enforcer of an oppressive system (Efland, 1976). Another consequence of the inequity in power is due to the amount of control the teacher exercises in all aspects of form-centered design—choosing the exemplars, media, processes, and products, and so on—the students are often engaged in manual activity but seldom creative or cognitive activity (Anderson & Milbrandt, 1998; Efland, 1976; Hathaway, 2013). Additionally, critics of form-centered art education view it as inherently exclusive and resulting in inequitable access. Sometimes this exclusion is a result of notions of “connoisseurship” inherent in a discipline-centered understanding of art that involves a “canon” of acceptable exemplars and the formation of distinctions between “fine art” and “craft” and “popular culture” (Duncum, 2002; Fehr, 1994). Other times, it results from gearing instruction to the gifted few instead of all students (Akuno, et al., 2015).

### ***life-centered***

As stated earlier in this review, many scholars in the field of art education would have art educators disavow a form-centered approach in favor of something other. Although myriad in iteration, the ‘something other’ is generally related to the idea that “a primary historic function of art has been to tell our human stories, to help us know who we are and how and what we believe through aesthetic form;” therefore, “the organizing

principles for authentic instruction in art are not form-centered but life-centered”

(Anderson & Milbrandt, 1998, p. 17). In his paper *Art Education for Life*, Anderson writes,

“Art’s reason, I think, is as it always has been, the survival and flowering of the individual soul and spirit, thus of the collective human soul on planet Earth. As always the key to survival and success is communal understandings and collective/cooperative effort toward integrating those understandings for the common good. Art’s role is to help us understand ourselves and others and to engage with one another in the process of making, receiving, and embracing meanings that count carried by the elegance of aesthetic form. The survival value of art lies in its community-making function. The difference, now, is that sense of community must be global rather than tribal, unified to include all people rather than just people who look like us or who live close to us. This enlarged concept of community necessarily enfolds the traditional sense of bonding through shared beliefs with the modernist idea of rising above our own immediate cultures as well as the post structural idea of embracing multiple narratives thus by extension multiple cultural perspectives, using visual means” (2003, p. 63).

This conception of life-centeredness encompasses the instrumental value of art on both a social and personal level, and in doing so, provides the footing for champions of each. However, there are few clear demarcations in the literature where the personal value of art ends and the social value begins or vice versa. The relationship between the two is

symbiotic and so rather difficult to sort out neatly for the purposes of this review.

However, to capitalize on either, art experiences must have a degree of authenticity that form-centered approaches are thought not to provide.

John Dewey in *Art as Experience* describes a problem with the discussion of art and aesthetics—form-centered art instruction if you will—noting that by the time a piece is canonized by "experts" as worthy of aesthetic discussion, it has become set apart from the exigencies of the culture that created it. To really understand and completely appreciate a work of art, one somehow has to dissolve that separateness and put it back in its cultural context (1934). From this viewpoint, the impetus of art education is to create situations for students to authentically "experience" art. For many art education scholars, this means replicating contemporary studio practice as closely as possible for students (Anderson & Milbrandt, 1998/2005; Atkinson, 2006; Downing & Watson, 2004; Gude, 2013; Heijnen, 2015; Walker, 2014). Art instruction approached in this way often begins with the exploration of a theme or idea arising from life experience and questions about how best to convey one's understanding of it (Stewart & Walker, 2005). The nature of art activity then becomes inquiry (Anderson & Milbrandt, 1998; Eisner, 2002; Gude, 2013; Stewart & Walker, 2005). Research, discussion, and creative responses are used in the study of art to expand students' perceptions of themselves and the world. In this way, students develop a fuller, more positive sense of self (Catterall & Peppler, 2007; Gude, 2009; Peppler & Davis, 2010; Stevenson & Deasy, 2005; Thompson, 2015). In her seminal work *Releasing the Imagination*, Greene emphasizes the reverse condition: the difficulty of students who are not engaged in these kinds of imaginative acts to develop a complete sense of self or determine their role in the broader community (1995). Some

scholars expand this understanding of self to include development in the areas of self-efficacy (Eisner, 2002; Peppler & Davis, 2010; Stevenson & Deasy, 2005), agency (Gude, 2009), and mattering (Stevenson & Deasy, 2005). The ability to manage risk and explore resilience throughout the artmaking experience contributes to developing these other characteristics (Katwyk & Seko, 2018).

Other characteristics deemed to be positively affected by life-centered art education are empathy (Anderson, 2003; Gude, 2009), the ability to shift perspective and think flexibly (Anderson, 2003; Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 1999; Eisner, 2002; Gude, 2009), and self-regulation and resilience ((Katwyk & Seko, 2018; Oreck, Baum, & McCartney, 1999). Scholars also point to the general sense of well-being and “flow” that results from authentic art experiences (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Oreck, Baum, & McCartney, 1999). Life-centered art education also underpin the formation of seven dispositions touted as the “studio habits of mind” (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2013) and several of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills such as creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, and communication and collaboration (NAEA, 2016).

Some proponents of life-centered approaches to art education extend these enhanced personal attributes to social spheres as well, where they can effect positive systemic change in communities at the local, national and global levels (Anderson, 2003; Freedman & Stuhr, 2004; Gude, 2009; Hunter-Doniger, 2018; Leake, 2014; Stevenson & Deasy, 2005; Rolling Jr., 2013). For example, Gude writes, “[b]y making and experiencing art that engages the complexities, contradictions, ambiguities, and ironies of lived experienced, people internalize a significant lesson for democratic life...[t]his wide

range of vivid lived and vicarious experience gives people the materials with which to form values of care, equality and justice” (2009, p. 11). She goes on to explain, “[p]eople who have participated in quality arts education experiences identify the importance of free expression for themselves and for others” (p. 11). Leake emphasizes the role of contemporary art as a tool for opening up avenues of social engagement and connecting personal experiences with real-world concerns (2014), while other art educators move beyond social engagement to leveraging contemporary art practice into a vehicle for social justice (Hunter-Doniger, 2018; Duncum, 2011) and “altruistic sociocultural interventions” (Rolling Jr., 2013).

Some life-centered art education approaches are also thought to redress power imbalances in the art classroom. As mentioned briefly earlier in this section, Stevenson and Deasy support the idea that a “work of art is expected to be original and expressive, a personal statement in an art form and not just a work that shows a teacher a student’s skill with the form’s materials and processes” (2005, 18). Citing the example of an art classroom wherein “research is the starting point for the assignment,” the authors note that “[w]hen students participate in this kind of arts learning experience, their imaginations and personal backgrounds are part of the content of their work, part of the meaning that they are making...They allow students to be valued in schools in new ways and for learning to be more relevant to them” (p. 19). Through this type of instruction, a “third space” is “opened where students draw on their ‘lived world’ (a first space) and what they have learned from their teachers (a second space) to create and express something...no one else could have made” (2005, 18). The notion of third space aligns with the body of research forming under the umbrella of culturally relevant and culturally

sustaining pedagogy (see Hammond, 2015 and Ladson-Billings, 2014 for more information). The body of literature on culturally relevant pedagogy is extensive, and a full review of it is outside the scope of this research. However, underpinning both the concept of “third space” and culturally relevant pedagogy is the philosophy of liberatory practice and moving the learner from the place of object in a learning transaction to a place of subject where the learner’s experiences matter as a necessary part of the learning process (Atkinson, 2006; Freire, 2013; hooks, 1994). This connection between life-centered art education approaches and culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) is explored more extensively by other scholars (Catterall & Peppler, 2007; Davenport, 2000; Hunter-Doniger, 2018; Knight, 2015). However, it is essential to note that there is a distinction between using art education to engage in CRP and more superficial effort truly—a “heroes and holidays program” (Acuff, 2015/2016). Efforts to engage in CRP must move beyond a “Contribution Approach” to at least a “Transformational Approach,” if not a “Social Action Approach” (Knight, 2015, p. 79).

Like form-centered approaches to art education, life-centered approaches are subject to critique as well. These criticisms fall into roughly three categories: definitions, agendas, and pedagogical concerns. Regarding definitions, some scholars do not concur with the life-centered group's willingness to embrace postmodern conceptions of boundary-less art genres and artmaking media, the fluidity or erosion of the canon, and reconceptualizing of artmaking principles (Kamhi, 2010; Kamhi & Torres, 2008).

While Gude notes that “[i]t is useful to remember that as educators we create citizens of a democratic society, not so much by filling students with ideas or facts about democracy, as by creating the conditions through which youth experience the pleasures,

anxieties, and responsibilities of democratic life” (2009, p. 8), Kahmi calls into question the boundaries of what is implied in the gray space indicated by Gude’s “not so much.” She cautions against teaching agenda instead of art. Among the most vocal opponents to using art in schools as a catalyst for social justice, Kahmi writes, “advocates of ‘social justice’ resist acknowledging individual differences in talents, abilities, and sheer hard work (not to mention in what Martin Luther King, Jr., referred to as ‘the content of [one’s] character’), and seem to ignore that such differences naturally result in different levels of achievement. They also fail to recognize that diverse cultural and religious traditions may differ in the degree and quality of their contribution to humanity” (2010, p. 5). Though controversial, she is among those who warn against the “political indoctrination” by social justice approaches in art education (Heybach, 2009). However, other critics of socially-engaged art practices fear that these practices might have the unintended effect of hindering the public in giving their attention to the full scale of the issue (Davis, 2013).

The final critiques of life-centered approaches to art education fall into discussions of pedagogy. Most of the life-centered methods use pedagogical strategies that are best described as student-centered, constructivist, and Deweyan in origin (Thompson, 2015). As such, they are subject to the critiques of constructivism. For instance, “[t]eachers may find that the aesthetic quality of children’s work is inferior to that of the work produced when teachers are more directly involved in defining problems and guiding technical and formal decisions. They may believe that constructivist learning lacks rigor and defies the wisdom of sequential learning, that it may work best for mature students who have mastered the basics of craft and technique” (Thompson, 2015, p. 125).



Additionally, students are generally not familiar with constructivism, which adds ancillary skills for kids to learn outside the content and skills of the discipline (Thompson, 2015). Proponents of a form-centered approach attest to the artistic freedom that comes from the mastery of discipline-based skills (Kamhi & Torres, 2008). Constructivist methods can also be unwieldy in practical terms of instructional time and teacher preparation and expertise (Downing & Watson, 2004; Thompson, 2014).

### **Synthesis of the Literature**

Examining the literature in the course of my graduate school research experiences and through this literature review makes plain the tensions found therein. Though presented in this literature review as one overarching schism in educational philosophy and impetus, a number of other binary oppositions can be found within this split that teachers must resolve in their daily curriculum choices.

#### ***Binaries present in the literature***

<b>form-centered</b>	<b>← →</b>	<b>life-centered</b>
product-based	← →	process-based/inquiry-based
“School Art”	← →	“authentic” artmaking
formalist principles	← →	postmodern principles
craft/skill/technique	← →	meaning making/thematic exploration
discipline	← →	play/self-expression
connoisseurship	← →	access
art for art’s sake	← →	art’s instrumental value
school constraints (time, materials, space, accountability)	← →	contemporary practices
the canon	← →	postmodern artmaking

accountability	← →	freedom from systems of oppression
political indoctrination	← →	social justice

Figure 5. Chart. Binary choices presented in a study of the literature in the field of art education.

The binaries presented in Figure 5 fall within the broader discourse in art education of “form-centered” and “life-centered” as we’ve seen, but they can also be placed in the even larger context of the discourse of educational reform noted in Chapter 1. Summarizing this context more concisely, Stankiewicz writes, “[s]chools today face criticism for traditional values as well as from those who espouse critical pedagogy at the other end of the political spectrum” (2001, p. 26). In her text, Stankiewicz used “history for critical reflection and reconstruction—raising questions to be asked of present theory and practice” (p. 129). My goals with this narrative inquiry are much the same.

### Chapter III

#### Methodology

##### The Art Teacher as Curriculum Maker

Art teachers determine how the curriculum is deployed day-to-day with little to no guidance or oversight at the school level. And, often, the choices they make are largely determined by what they know and are comfortable teaching (Downing & Watson, 2004; La Porte, Speirs, & Young, 2008; Stankiewicz, 2001). Additionally, teachers make decisions based on what they believe about their work's purpose (Lanier, 1990). In the field of art education, these decisions are complicated by competing ideas of its purpose. These disagreements were outlined in the literature review and summarized well by James Haywood Rollings, Jr. in a recent article of *Art Education*:

For some, the purpose of the arts is to render beautiful forms. For others, the purpose of the arts is to communicate life-affirming personal and cultural information. For others, the purpose of the arts is to ask questions and instigate urgent transformation. For still others, the purpose of the arts is improvisations—generating inventions, expressions, and questions that lead to new social innovation. This is why there will never be a single definition of art—art has always been a set of diverse making practices interconnected to produce a wide spectrum of outcomes and byproducts that render us ever more human and communal” (2020, p. 8)

It was these cross-purposes I grappled with within the journal entries and reflections written during my first two years of my doctoral studies. However, I did not want to study myself alone. While I find a critical reflexive practice valuable in improving my teaching practice (Hickson, 2011), I was curious to see how my colleagues contend with these ideas in their teaching practice as well.

Dillon proposes seven “components” of curriculum, “each with a constitutive or categorial question. Together these are the questions of curriculum. They are the things educators have to think and act about in doing curriculum” (2009, p. 345) and include:

“*Teacher—Who?* Who should be the teacher or educator? *Who?*

would comprehend all possible questions about the teacher, his or her personality, background, training, qualifications, characteristics, traits, personality, role, and the like—save for actions, which forms a separate category...

*Student—Whom? ...* Characteristics, dispositions, qualities of student or pupil. What makes a person a student, and what makes a student a learner? How does a student learn? Which things about a student should one take into educational account?

*Subject matter—What?* Characteristics of subject-matter, its nature and content, materials and format include the standard ‘What should be taught?’, the hoary ‘What knowledge is of most worth?’, and the enduring ‘Who should be taught what?’...

*Milieu—Where and when?* All questions of time/timing and place, circumstance, surrounding conditions, contexts, environments, eras, successively larger circles—classroom, school, community, society—surrounding the curricular activity...

*Aim—Why? To what end?* All questions of educational purposes, goals, objectives, aspirations, intents, ends in view, and the like...

*Activity—How?* This question of means, methods, and actions urgently divides into student action and teacher action...However, in addition it is a question of complementary action— that is to say, interaction: How should a student act? What must a student do, be, have, in order to learn that which is set to be learned? How should a teacher act? What must a teacher do so that a student can do that which a student must do in order to learn what is set to be learned? How should teacher and student interact? How should a teacher teach this subject-matter to this student in this circumstance with this end in view?

*Result—What comes of it? Who learns what? Something necessarily comes of the interaction of student and teacher over subject-matter in circumstance with this intention; but what?—and how to tell, exactly? When the student will have accomplished the intents of the curriculum, what will the student look like? How will the accomplished person be seen to act, feel, think, and live (behavioural, affective, cognitive, lifestyle changes)? In general, who is the educated person?”* (346-347).

I speculate that though teachers are enacting curricular decisions that touch in some degree on all seven components of curriculum, they are not fully aware of doing so. Teachers, I suspect, have a solid point of view on some of the components and only transitorily consider others and how they impact their curriculum choices. And we know from previous discussions in this study that the components of subject matter, aims, and results are anything but settled in art education, so how teachers conceptualize those facets of curriculum is of particular interest to me.

Ultimately, this research seeks to understand how art teachers undertake to alleviate the tensions that arise from several sources—namely, the gap that exists between the state visual art standards in Texas and their practice, as well as the various binaries in the field of art education that are likely embedded in those standards and their philosophies of art education. Freedman tells us, “[t]he ways in which people conceptualize their professional domain are important because they shape the theories that influence practice” (2003). Thornton describes it like this: “If individuals adopt titles or enter professions in which titles and roles are applied to them, then these identifications are likely to affect each person’s sense

of self as a whole. Individuals' personal identities or public roles are often significant in relationship to their philosophies or life, or ways of being and therefore capacities to develop personally and professionally" (2012, p. 23). Understanding the art teachers involved in this study "conceptualize their professional domain" will be revealed through their stories: stories about why and how they came to art education, stories about what they hope to accomplish through their practice, and stories about the triumphs and failures in their classrooms and the standards against which they measure them. For this reason, narrative inquiry is the methodology that guided data collection.

Analysis of the data borrowed heavily from the Deleuzoguattarian approach of rhizoanalysis. The teacher narratives became assemblages of text that could be mapped for linkages of thought and experience that allow teachers to answer the curriculum questions and resolve the tensions of the apparent binaries of the professional discourses. My understanding of "provisional linkages" as presented in rhizotextual analysis (Honan, 2015) is similar to what Atkinson presents as "passionate attachments" (2006, p. 19). Atkinson writes,

"Downing and Watson indicate clearly that many art teachers in the schools surveyed identify art education and by implication themselves as art educators and their pupils as learners within quite specific discourses and practices....They recognise who they are and what they do within such discursive practices and their limitations. For these teachers, these discourses and practices form what Butler calls 'passionate attachments' through which identification is desired, achieved and stabilized" (p. 19).

At the outset of the research process, there was no way to know if any linkages or attachments would emerge from the data, but I was deeply curious to see and formed my research questions from my wondering:

- How do the teachers in my study navigate the varied and competing discourses in art education while developing the day-to-day curriculum for use in their classrooms?
- In what ways do the teachers in my study make use of the TEKS in developing their classroom curriculum?

### **Sampling**

The data for the research questions came from the narratives of teacher participants representing a purposive, homogenous, convenience sample of five high school Art I teachers from public school districts around Texas. I selected the teachers based on the similarity of their curricular concerns to my own. To compare and contrast the experiences of the other teachers to each other and to mine, I strove to find teachers who met particular criteria: they had experience teaching Art I in a public high school in the state of Texas. This sample was convenient because each of the participants is known to me in my professional circle. While I am satisfied that my participant sample yielded rich data for study, the challenging circumstances created for teachers by the Covid-19 pandemic made finding five participants who followed through with the interview process very difficult. Of the first five people I approached as potential participants, all agreed, and four completed and returned the consent form within 24 hours of sending it to them. Despite her enthusiastic agreement to participate, one of the teachers I contacted never completed the consent process nor engaged in setting up the initial one-on-one

interview. After my second attempt to follow up with her, she expressed regret that she could not follow through with participating in the research because the demands on her time in trying to prepare for the fall semester in Covid-19 conditions were too great. Another one of the teachers, who did complete and send back the research participation consent form within 24 hours of receiving it, never engaged in setting up the initial interview. Despite two attempts to contact him after receiving his consent form, I received no response from him and, therefore, could not determine the cause of his unwillingness or inability to follow through with the research process.

The contexts in which the teachers in this sample are “known to me” (Clough & Nutbrown, 2012, p. 86) are as follows: I have worked with some of them as teacher-leader collaborators on a curriculum project for a museum. Another I know from our state’s professional organization for art educators. Still, others I know because they have worked closely with colleagues of mine in current or past positions. I hoped that because a level of familiarity already existed between us, the possibility of “focused conversation” also existed (Clough & Nutbrown, 2012, p. 92).

To whatever extent they were comfortable with the inquiry process and their time allowed, I involved these teachers in the co-construction of the data collection and analyses. However, due to the circumstances created by the Covid-19 pandemic, teaching at the time of my data collection was an unfamiliar and demanding task that left my participants little time or energy to compound their arduous professional duties with additional intellectual work.

## **Participants**



The sample of teacher-participants is convenient because each of the participants is a colleague I have encountered in various settings within my professional circle. No matter how brief or slight, this previous acquaintance provided some increased potential for those who were approached to consent to participating in this study. However, as I noted above, acquaintance and even friendship alone was no guarantee that the participants would be willing or able to participate. The conditions created by the Covid-19 pandemic were exceptionally challenging for teachers as well as unforeseeable at the outset of my research planning. I could not have predicted how ill-timed my requests for the help of others would be when they finally came to pass. What follows are the general descriptions of my acquaintances with and the teaching contexts of my five teacher-participants who finally consented to and engaged in the research process. I list them in the order that I conducted the one-on-one interviews:

### *Naomi*

I met Naomi as part of a curriculum writing committee for a local museum. She currently teaches in a high school in a large urban setting. The high school where Naomi teaches has a Title I designation and houses an engineering magnet program for the district. According to the most recent Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) for the 2018-2019 school year, the student demographics are roughly 47% African American, 49% Hispanic, 2% White, 1% American Indian, and 1% of the students indicating two or more races. The school serves 758 students, 94.6% of whom qualify for free or reduced lunch, and 75% of whom are categorized as At-Risk by the Texas Education Agency report. Naomi has been teaching art for eight years.

### *Helen*

Helen also serves on the curriculum writing committee with Naomi and me. We are the three art teachers in our group; the rest of the committee represents the core academic disciplines. Helen's school is larger than Naomi's, serving 2,576 students, and is situated on the outer edges of a large urban area. Like Naomi's school, Helen's school has a Title I designation, with 91.4% of the students qualifying for free or reduced lunch and 82% categorized as At-Risk by the TEA. The student demographics are roughly 3% African American, 93% Hispanic, 3% White, >1% American Indian, >1% Asian, and >1% of the students indicating two or more races. Helen's school concurrently houses a public charter school. Helen has been teaching art for four years.

### *Wes*

I met Wes as an artist first and learned later that he was also a teacher. My school has a collection of artworks created by and purchased from Texas artists. Each year, a student committee organizes a call for artwork and selects several artworks to be voted on by the student body for inclusion in the collection. Wes has two artworks in the collection, and we met at the annual reception to see the new artworks after they have been framed and displayed in the school's hallways. It was at this reception that I learned he was also an art teacher. Later, I also learned he was a former colleague of another art teacher in my district.

Wes currently teaches at a high school in a "Town-Distant," meaning it is located in a city that is "more than 10 miles and less than or equal to 35 miles from an Urbanized Area" (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 2020). Wes's high school is smaller than Helen's but larger than Naomi's, having 1705 students. Roughly half of the student population at Wes's school qualifies for free or reduced lunch, and 67% are categorized

as At-Risk by the TEA. The student demographics are approximately 26% African American, 34% Hispanic, 36% White, >1% American Indian, >1% Pacific Islander, 1% Asian, and 2% of the students indicating two or more races. Wes has been teaching art for 17 years.

### ***Ethan***

Before my research, I had not been acquainted with Ethan personally. I had once attended a session he led at a Texas Art Education Association Conference. Impressed with the information he shared, I subsequently followed his professional account on Twitter. Ethan teaches in a large suburban high school. There are 2,684 students, 17% of whom qualify for free or reduced lunch, and roughly 35% of whom are categorized as At-Risk by the TEA. The student demographics are approximately 7% African American, 17% Hispanic, 67% White, 1% American Indian, >1% Pacific Islander, 3% Asian, and 4% of the students indicating two or more races. Ethan has been teaching art for 19 years.

### ***Julia***

Julia is the only one of my participants with whom I was not acquainted in any way before our first interview. After contacting two other teachers in my professional circle but not successfully scheduling interviews with them, I reached out to a retired friend in a neighboring district. Before her retirement, my friend had served as the Visual Art Director for that district, and I hoped she would be able to put me in touch with one of the teachers she had known while in that role who might be willing to participate in my study. Julia was the teacher to whom she introduced me.

Julia also teaches at a large suburban high school like Ethan's, though its student population is larger. At Julia's school, there are 3,456 students, 35% of whom qualify for

free or reduced lunch, and roughly 32% of whom are categorized as At-Risk by the TEA. The student demographics are approximately 16% African American, 36% Hispanic, 36% White, >1% American Indian, >1% Pacific Islander, 8% Asian, and 3% of the students indicating two or more races. Julia has been teaching art for ten years.

*me*

The school where I teach can also be characterized as a large suburban high school. Unlike the rest of the schools I have described so far, my school is divided into two campuses: one housing all 9th graders, and the other with the rest of the 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade. According to the TAPR data, however, the two campuses fall under a single designation. The total number of students on both campuses according to the TAPR is 5,416, 7% of whom qualify for free or reduced lunch, and roughly 17% of whom are categorized as At-Risk by the TEA. The student demographics are approximately 3% African American, 25% Hispanic, 62% White, >1% American Indian, >1% Pacific Islander, 7% Asian, and 3% of the students indicating two or more races. I have been teaching art for 17 years.

### **Human Participants and Ethics Precautions**

To protect my study participants' physical and psychological well-being, I submitted my study for approval to the Institutional Review Board of the University of Houston before embarking on any data collection involving human subjects. The study was approved, and the approval document is included in this study as Appendix A.

Interviews were audio-recorded and sent for professional transcription using NVivo. Once the interviews were transcribed, de-identified, and pseudonyms were assigned to the transcribed data, the original recordings were erased. The key to the

assignment of said pseudonyms has been stored separately from both the consent forms and the transcribed data. The pseudonym key will be destroyed upon the acceptance of my dissertation by my committee. No one has any access to the identifiers other than me.

All possible steps were taken to ensure privacy. The interview procedures were thoroughly explained to participants to understand the privacy precautions in place before being asked to sign the consent document. Interview data will be collected, coded, and disseminated as trends seen across the interviews. Any direct references or quotes utilize pseudonyms.

### **Research Procedures**

This project was my first foray into narrative inquiry for research purposes. The only other experience I have with interviewing as part of my graduate school journey was interviewing artist Dario Robleto to write a biographical article. Therefore, for the design of this section, I leaned heavily on three texts to coach me through the process of data collection: *A Student's Guide to Methodology* by Peter Clough and Cathy Nutbrown, *Understanding Narrative Inquiry* by Jeong-Hee Kim, and *Mastering the Semi-Structured Interview* by Anne Galletta. Another article geared toward novice researchers called *Conducting Research Interviews* by Jennifer Rowley was helpful.

The teachers participated in a semi-structured interview to generate their stories of teaching with the High School Level 1 TEKS in their classrooms. These interviews were conducted using a video conferencing application called Zoom, licensed through the University of Houston. Although my initial intention had been to seek clarifications and verify the accuracy of my interpretations of their stories in a second interview, the unique circumstances created by the Covid-19 pandemic caused me to reconsider that plan. My

data collection interviews coincided with my teacher-participants' back-to-school in-service training and first days of school teaching, which were also happening through Zoom or similar video-conferencing applications. Weary myself of virtual meetings, I was reluctant to ask my participants to add additional video calls with me to their schedules. For this reason, we conducted necessary clarifications via email correspondence.

Following the advice of Rowley, for the individual interviews, I chose "six to 12...questions to be delivered mostly in a set order, but with some flexibility in the questions asked, the extent of probing, and question order" (2012, p. 262). The initial interview schedule for my study is included in Appendix B. I had intended to attend to each interviewee's emotional responses within their stories of experience but found it difficult to interpose these checks into the narratives of my participants, especially on a video call because of the limited ability to use non-verbal cues to alert the teacher-participants of my desire to ask an unscripted question.

I did conduct a pilot interview of the scripted questions with another colleague who serves as a critical friend in my practice as an educator. She answered the question set using her own experience teaching high school Art 1. Conducting the pilot interview and eliciting feedback helped me determine if any of the questions were leading, too vague, or intrusive in any way (Rowley, 2012). We agreed they were adequate for my data collection.

Following the one-on-one interviews, the second stage of data collection was conducted using a group interview through Zoom. I asked the teacher-participants to come to the meeting prepared to share their favorite Art 1 lesson/unit with the group.

Three teachers shared slide presentations or videos they had designed for students with our group to illustrate the lesson they described. Two of the teachers shared student products with the group to demonstrate the outcome of the lesson they described. These artifacts seemed to be useful to “trigger the telling of stories” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 45), prompting the group to begin “a candid, normal conversation that addresses, in depth, the selected topic” (Vaughn, Schumm, and Sunagub as quoted in Clough & Nutbrown, 2012, p. 93). Following the group interview, I had planned a third interview for cross-checking and seeking clarification of the data as I had for the initial one-on-one interviews. Instead, I undertook this process using email for the same reason as stated above. Having each teacher share their lessons in the group interview took just over an hour. Though I still had two other questions I wanted to ask the teachers, I was concerned about Zoom fatigue (Lee, 2020) and suggested that I email those questions to be answered at their convenience. The group agreed. I sent that email on the same day as the group interview while our conversations were still fresh in my participants' minds. The text of the email is documented in Appendix C. At the time I sent the email, I did not feel I had been successful at gathering information from the teacher-participants about philosophical tensions in their work. However, subsequent coding and the findings have rendered that data unnecessary, and I have not included it in my analysis or results.

Following the group interview, I began my coding process, which will be discussed in more detail in a later section. After my initial round of coding the interview transcripts, I emailed each teacher their portion of the coded texts, as well as a copy of the research questions guiding the study and a copy of Dillon’s seven components of

curriculum (including the categorical questions) to aid in understanding the codes I had used. After greeting my teacher-participant, the body of my email read,

“Here is my first round of data analysis as promised. It is part of my research process to share with you how I interpret your interview responses to fit within my research framework. If you feel that I misinterpreted your words, please feel free to make the necessary clarifications. For instance, perhaps I have included a segment of your response under a theme that you don't think applies to what you intended. If you find parts of the interview data that you would like me to remove from the record, you can bring those to my attention too. Please express any concerns you may have. If you make clarifications or want to suggest changes, simply type in a red font so I can easily recognize the changes.

A few things to keep in mind as you read through:

- Your identity will be kept private through the removal of identifiers of all kinds. I have assigned you a pseudonym in my paper and will not include anything that could specifically reveal your school or your district.
- There are still several typos in the transcripts that will be corrected by the final draft of my paper. Right now, the transcripts are just being read in broad strokes for the themes they reveal.
- You might see some repeated excerpts from the transcripts because those segments reveal information about more than one coded theme.



Thanks again for your participation in my research process!”

The responses I received from the teacher-participants could be summarized by a general fascination with the unfamiliarity created by seeing “spoken word converted into the written word” (Wes, personal communication). Julia put it like this, “I read through my interview, there were some parts where I had no clue what I was talking about, noticed I say ‘you know’ a lot, and have scattered thoughts like crazy! I’m sure you have a little better idea of what I am talking about in a few paragraphs. Everything looks great.”

Recapping the work of Kvale and Brinkmann, Rowley writes,

“an interview is a conversation, and it is very important to remember this, both during the interview, and later when you are analyzing the interview data. Both participants will experience and interpret the conversation differently depending on their previous experience and background, personality, and purpose in participating in the interview. On the positive side, the interviewee may welcome the opportunity to reflect on and talk about a topic in which they are interested, and they may recognize that they will learn something useful from this process” (Rowley, 2012, p. 266).

This insight necessitates the kind of “radical listening” advocated by Clough and Nutbrown that is characterized by “faithful interpretation” and involves reflexivity and careful attention to ethical treatment of the participants and their stories (2012). I have done my best throughout the analysis of the interview data to render the responses of the teacher-participants faithfully as possible to the original transcript. Where more than minor edits were necessary for readability, I double-checked those passages with my

participants to ensure their meaning and voice were still present. Additionally, allowing adequate time to pass between the first interviews and the interviews for clarification is of the utmost importance to make “space for [the researcher] and [the] participant to think more deeply about responses to interview questions, to revisit points from a previous session, with ample time to construct meaning” (Galletta, 2013, p. 78). Given the constraints of my research timeline, I was able to wait a week before sending the coded transcripts to the teacher-participants and hope it was ample enough to allow them to process their thoughts in that way.

### **Data Analysis**

Due to the large volume of data requiring transcription and deidentification that resulted from the various participant interviews, I intended to use the NVivo software application to expedite the coding process. However, using NVivo for the initial coding of the data was not as fruitful as I’d hoped, and I did a good deal of manual coding. However, the initial autocoding of the transcript data with NVivo did reveal that an art teacher’s perspective on Dillon’s seven components of curriculum was present within the data. Themes of teacher, student, subject matter, milieu, aims, activities, and results were referred to in the teachers’ narratives, albeit with a distinctly art-ed spin.

The remainder of the qualitative analysis of data relied heavily on the work done by other rhizomatic researchers to guide my efforts. After the initial coding, I aimed to employ rhizomatic methods of content analysis, especially mapping as it is described in the work of Donna Alvermann and identifying linkages as described in the work of Eileen Honan. Though there continue to be questions posed about the dangers of isolating some Deleuzoguattarian concepts from the complexities of their original contexts (Robinson & Maguire, 2010), I

endeavored to stay as close to the original spirit of the terms as I could while creating tracings of molecular lines and mappings of lines of flight in/among/between/around the assemblages of texts. Coding to identify the molecular lines and lines of flight focused on recognizing current discourses in art education and discovering the pedagogical/philosophical strands that emerge that guide the teachers' curriculum decisions and their individual readings of the TEKS for Visual Art as they are revealed by/through/with/in their narratives. Though at the outset of the process I did not yet know what form these mappings of linkages and tracings of discourse would take as the analysis progressed, I found it important to heed the guidance of scholars like Alvermann who preceded me:

“To avoid the kind of dualistic thinking that rhizomatous images are meant to counter—that is good maps, bad tracings—Deleuze and Guattari recommend that once we have drawn a map, it is important to put the tracing back on the map. By inspecting the breaks and ruptures that become visible when the more stable tracing is laid upon the always becoming map, we are in a position to construct new knowledge, rather than merely propagate the old” (2000, p. 117).

The mapping process is explored in more detail in the next chapter. I felt member checks of this section of data analysis was particularly important, so I sent a copy of the numbered TEKS, the tables of the mapped purposes and lessons, and the color-mapped results to each participant to review the work and make revisions. It was important to me that the teacher-participants felt these data maps represented their narratives accurately.

There was a lot about this process that I could not foresee and therefore not describe in this section before undertaking the research activities in earnest. Clandinin warns that

“[m]oving from field texts to interim and final research texts is a complicated and iterative process, full of twist and turns” (2013, p. 49), and that precisely describes my research experience. I kept notes throughout the process to track my thinking and stay aware—to the extent possible—of the vicissitudes of my own becoming. After all, “[r]esearch which changes nothing—not even the researcher—is not research at all” (Clough & Nutbrown, 2012, p. 14).

### **The Coding Process**

After transcribing and de-identifying the interviews, I autocoded all the text using NVivo. The initial coding references revealed evidence of all seven of Dillon’s components of curriculum—teacher, student, subject matter, milieu, aims, activities, and results—albeit with a distinct art education positionality (see Appendix D, Figure D1). However, the references were not nuanced enough to provide any information beyond the superficial.

Since I could see evidence of Dillon’s seven components of curriculum in the chart of coding references, I decided to manually code the interview transcripts using the seven components on the chance that manually coding for those themes would reveal sub-themes with deeper implications than what I was finding in the query functions within NVivo. For ease of my understanding and the understanding of my teacher-participants, I changed “milieu” to “context,” “aims” to “purposes,” and “results” to “outcomes.”

For the manual coding process, I assigned a color to each of the seven components: teacher, student, subject matter, context, purposes, activities, and outcomes. I also added three additional codes: references to the TEKS, references to the National Core Art Standards, and mentions of district supports. I read through the interview transcripts, color coding for those ten themes as I went. When I finished the color-coding process, I digitally pulled the

information specific to each theme from each participant's interview transcript, compiling pieces of the transcripts under each of the ten headings. I copied some transcripts into more themes when the interview responses were color-coded for more than one theme within a single response. I sent these coded chunks of interview transcripts back to my participants via email for any corrections clarifications they wanted to make. I did not send back the two responses from the emailed questions—in part because the teacher-participants were able to write out and edit those before sending them to me, and also because I had decided by that point in time that the data from those two questions were not useful.

After hearing back from my teacher-participants, I moved forward with the next step of the analysis. I compiled all the parsed interview transcripts into single documents per each of the ten themes. These I uploaded separately into NVivo and autocoded them again, hoping for more nuanced sub-themes to appear within each larger category. Appendix D includes examples of my results from the Subject Matter document, the longest of the ten compilations.

I was encouraged because these charts (Appendix D, Figures D2 and D3) showed that my hand-coding had a level of accuracy in that several of the words with the most coded references did refer to subject matter that is prevalent in most Art I classrooms. However, in both the word cloud and the summary chart, I noticed several inconsequential words. Carefully studying these images, I made a list of words that did not lend insight into the teachers' construction of subject matter. I added these words to the "Stop List" for the project in NVivo: actually, also, cool, fine, get, gonna, got, guys, hey, it'll, just, kind, kinda, like, literally, lot, might, okay, put, really, something, stuff, sure, truly, well, whatever, yeah, yes. I deliberated over the word "still" since it could have been included in the Subject Matter data set as part of the phrase "still life." After reading through the parsed transcripts, I finally

included it in the stop list as it didn't seem to be showing up in the data frequently as part of "still life" and rather was occurring on its own as an adverb. After updating the stop list, I ran a new word cloud for exact matches (see Appendix D, Figure D4). After looking through this word cloud (Figure D4), I was satisfied that most of the words were substantive to the theme of Subject Matter. At that point, I decided to run the rest of the word cloud query settings to see those results as well. I changed the word cloud setting to "stemmed words" and ran another analysis (see Appendix D, Figure D5). The results of the word cloud analysis using stemmed words indicated that the words "art," "one," and "things" were also occurring frequently and offered no information of significance and so added them to the stop list for the project as well. Then, I ran a second query on the stemmed words setting (see Appendix D, Figure D6). Again, there were other words I considered adding to the stop list at this point but decided first to look at the word cloud analyses of Synonyms and Generalizations, looking at the summaries and the tree maps for both settings (Appendix D, Figures D7, D8, D9, and D10). After looking carefully through the information generated through these analyses, I added "thing," "even," and "going" to the stop list. And finally, I ran a word cloud analysis on the setting of specializations (see Appendix D, Figure D11).

After fine-tuning my stop list for the project with the Subject Matter data set, I moved onto similar analyses of the rest of the themed data sets. For each of the remaining nine themes, I ran the "Autocode for themes" command and saved the "Compared by number of coding references" chart and the word clouds on all five settings—exact matches, stemmed words, synonyms, generalizations, and specializations. Inspection of the Activities-themed data revealed that I also needed to add my participants' pseudonyms to the project stop list because much of the elaboration about specific lessons and activities occurred during the

group interview when the teacher-participants called on one another by name during that conversation. Adding the participants' pseudonyms and my name to the stop list were the last changes I made to the project stop list.

Generating these charts had the unanticipated benefit of validating that the information I pulled from the interview transcripts for each of the ten themes was accurately referencing them. I pored over this data for each of the themes, looking for emerging themes within each of the broader ones. Ultimately, I felt they were taking me too far away from the peculiarities of each teacher's circumstance, positioning me "at arm's length" (MacLure, 2013, p. 167) from the data. After reviewing my research questions and reminding myself of the focus of my study and that I was interested in the unique ways each teacher came to make decisions about curriculum and where they positioned the standards in those decisions; it seemed to me it was necessary to move closer to the language in the teachers' stories, rather than farther away from it. MacLure reminds us that language "is inextricably implicated in the fabric of realities" (2013, p. 167) and that "[i]t is imperative to slow down the facile machinery of interpretation so that it catches on the snags, the 'lucky finds', the marginalia and the odd details that fascinate the researcher and draw her into the weave of discourse, instead of allowing her to rise above it" (p. 174. ) For the remainder of the study, I focused on locating the "passionate attachments" of the teacher-participants because those ideas speak to my research questions and how they make decisions regarding curriculum. I was counting on MacLure's assertion that "[d]uring the process of [manual] coding, some things gradually grow, or glow, into greater significance than others, and become the preoccupations around which thought and writing cluster" (2013, p. 175). Because "the 'grammar' always pre-exists the phenomena under investigation" (MacLure, 2003, p. 168), I

imagined there could be insights of consequence in the ‘little’ words I had so methodically removed from my word frequency analyses during the processes I described above. I was counting on a discursive analysis of particular segments of the interview transcripts to lay bare an essence that the tree diagrams and word clusters could not. Supposing Lanier was correct, and teachers make decisions based on what they believe about the purpose of their work is (1990). In that case, a discursive look at the data sets of Purpose and Activities should manifest those linkages/attachments, so I began with those.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Findings**

#### **Initial Considerations**

As stated in earlier chapters, the heuristic nature of this inquiry involved mapping the linkages between/through/with/in each question, the text of the TEKS, the narratives of the teacher-participants, and the experiences and fascinations of the researcher. The questions include:

- How do the teachers in my study navigate the varied and competing discourses in art education while developing the day-to-day curriculum for use in their classrooms?
- In what ways do the teachers in my study make use of the TEKS in developing their classroom curriculum?

The narratives for analysis were provided by a convenience sample of five high school Art I teachers from various public school districts in Texas whose teaching is presumably guided by the High School Level 1 Art TEKS. The bulk of my own



experience in art education has been teaching high school Art I in a public school in Texas. When I read literature in art education or attend workshops, seminars, or classes for further training in art education, I tend to relate the information to teaching Art I unless those experiences specifically focus on more advanced art or specific art classes or students. For this reason, I chose participants who could also talk specifically about teaching Art I in a public school in Texas.

### **The art teacher as curriculum maker**

Each of the study participants had a story to tell about creating the curriculum for their Art I course (and sometimes additional courses they teach). In all five cases, the teachers have made most, if not all, of the curriculum decisions for the students they serve. Even if curriculum materials were made available by the district or their peers, some of the teachers—Naomi and Helen, specifically—spoke of “tweaking” those materials or rejecting them altogether in favor of creating their own “from scratch.” Others—Wes and Ethan—were placed in positions of creating those materials for others. And finally, Julia talked about having a supportive administrative team who supported the decisions she and her team made for their students.

#### ***Naomi***

“Like right now, our Visual Art Directors for the district have developed this whole curriculum for art like that really wasn't in place before Covid-19. So we were making it up as we're going along...I had those things I was adapting on the fly...I'd have a lesson plan, and then they'd be like, ‘Oh, Miss \_\_\_\_, you know, we need a globe with a rocket coming out of it.’ You know, just random stuff...

They literally just created something over the summer that we're supposed to have access to. When I looked at it on Friday, it hadn't even populated yet... Then we have other things, like our campus is also focused on being a 'Leader in Me' school, a 'Lighthouse School'...the seven habits of highly effective people...Stephen Covey. So in the fine arts, we're having to work that into our curriculum as well. So, when [the district's] curriculum pops up, then I will start with that, and then tweak it for what I need. They tell you, 'Hey, this is what it is. Copy and paste, rebuild it, restructure it...' But one of the good things they've done is they've put TEKS in there. They've, you know, given you a scope and sequence. But a lot of our kids don't have anything, so for me to say that we're going to do a whole project with colored pencils and they don't have any color pencils, then, you know, reality is happening real fast."

*[Jenny speaking: "Thinking of a normal, non-Covid year, does your district provide a day-to-day curriculum like that?"]*

No, this was the first year...This was the first year that they started to kind of put...I wanna say that the position that [the Visual Art Directors] have didn't even exist until maybe three years ago...Yeah. Before, we had a fine arts person who was over all of the fine arts, and I don't know how that gentleman did what he did. You know, after he retired, they had to hire somebody in every content area. And, in a couple of those, more than

one person...Before in the arts, there weren't even specific TEKS, you know? I think as people are fighting for the arts, and they're trying to increase its importance, significance, its integration into the campus curriculum as a whole. You know...they're making a case for it. Then, they're trying to formulate a more clear plan, which sounds good on paper. I think it is stressful a little bit because you're trying to make art be like every other class. And the kids come to art, and they're like, 'Miss \_\_, this is not writing class. Like, you know, this is art class.' And I love writing, so I can flip the script on them, but I think it stresses them out. Because it stresses me out sometimes, you know? You're trying to check all these boxes. Like right now...you know...with the lesson plan, and I'm looking at the ELPS, career and college readiness...did I put a sentence stem in there? I'm like, Lord, are we done?

And actually, we have a textbook. So I go by the textbook and what the topics are, and then I have to formulate my projects based on what's going on on campus or what supplies we have...We use Davis Digital. So, I do use that Davis Digital book. You know, I start there.”

In Naomi's story, several factors are evident that contribute to the “tweaks” she makes to the resources being provided by the district, such as school-specific initiatives and (lack of) available resources. It is also important to note that she speaks of the district-provided materials as a new resource for her, with all except for the textbook having been provided to her within the last year. Further clarification with Naomi revealed that the Davis Digital materials have been available for her to use since the most

recent state adoption of art textbooks in 2014. However, it is also important to note that while she acknowledges that she will “start” with the textbook, her lessons are “tweaked” or further developed by her. The textbook is a source of information for her lesson planning, but not the sole one: “I go by the textbook and what the topics are, and then I have to formulate my projects based on what's going on on campus or what supplies we have.” The textbook may provide the seed for the topic she brings to her students, but how it’s presented to the students and how the students will respond to it are determined by her.

Here she describes how her lessons are developed:

“We have an image, and I always start...our day with an inspirational quote, and I make them respond. So there is the sketchbook, but there's also a journal. It can be, you know, the little composition book, and I make them respond to the journal. And this year, I'm going to be doing more like a WIG book. We went to the ‘Leader in Me’ conference, and they talk about a WIG, which is a ‘wildly important goal.’ So, I was like that, ‘Let's take that.’...I’m trying to show you how I put these together...So the ‘Leader in Me’ was a conference that I went to. We're having to look at Stephen Covey and the seven habits of highly effective people have to integrate this part of this curriculum. So, I'm looking at art. I'm looking at leadership. But, I'm also looking at their social-emotional learning...because of the population of the kids...we have to build them up, and so I use art as a lens or a conduit to help them...build up their inner man, so to speak. So, that is where I start. That's really the key point. So

the other things I pull those in...so if it's from the book...like, here's a sketchbook. This is my sketchbook. While I was sitting in the meeting, I cut out a piece of cardboard. We had to build a sketchbook in one of our trainings. I cut this out of cardboard. I painted this, glued this on. But in this sketchbook...the Wildly Important Goal, it's the equivalent of taking ...you know, how when you make a vision board? So what I've done is I've taken the vision board idea and concept and put it in a book. So it'll be their WIG book. And then the premise is that you'll look at something like this...I love the Klimt...you know...*The Tree of Life*...so that. And then, you know, trying to teach them it's a repository for your ideas. How can you write your ideas down, do your brainstorming? So when we did The Day of the Dead, we have a huge Hispanic population..."

It is evident from this description that there are several sources Naomi is considering as her lessons take form but that she is the architect of what and how the curriculum unfolds in her classroom.

### ***Helen***

"I'm from scratch. Okay, I could have copied my mentor teacher. I'm sure if I asked her for every single thing, I'm sure she would have given it to me. But I didn't want it. I didn't want to do it. I didn't like...Yeah, I've mostly built my curriculum from scratch by myself. My first year of teaching, I used her first project. That Zentangle Narrative was her first project. I took it...you know...I've done my own thing with it since. You know, I think I've made it cooler. And then, we both do a self-

portrait, but everybody does a self-portrait. But other than that, I didn't want to do everything she did. And I don't even know if I remember why. I don't know. I think it was a combination of that I didn't really like it, and I wanted it to be my own. I wanted it to feel like mine... Yeah. We have a new teacher this year because our other one retired early because he was like, 'I'm not doing [Covid-19 teaching conditions].' And this guy, I look at him, and he's so chill. He's doing everything she's doing. She's just giving him her entire Art I curriculum, and he's implementing it, and he's fine with that. And I watch him, and he looks so relaxed... It's her curriculum.

But I will say that because of Covid, she volunteered with a group of teachers to create the first nine weeks for this year. Right? And anyway, I could have volunteered. Anybody could have volunteered. I said, 'no, I'm not doing it.' But, she volunteered, so she helped create what is our first nine weeks for the entire district... But anyway, so everything that she's creating to follow, I mean, we still have to make it. All they did was create a guideline, like 'you need to teach this in the first nine weeks.' He's using all of her stuff, so he's not building anything. Right? And I did. And it was, it was... Wow, wow, wow. It was crazy. You know, I worked every day. Saturday. Sunday. So, I mean, the information... I did so much research."

*[Jenny speaking: "Do you have a textbook?"]*

“No, I had nothing. So I was trying to make [classroom examples for the printmaking project]...Oh, yes. I remember the first example that I made because it was my first year teaching. I had nothing. I was trying to make it...so, I remember my first example. I didn't do the text backwards, and I made my first print. And, I was looking at it and was like, ‘oh, this looks...’ Something was wrong. ‘Oh, my God. It's ‘adopt, don't shop’ backwards.’ And I had to redo the whole fucking thing. And then, I told my kids that. I told them...Yeah, I told them that. I said, ‘So guys, here's my first one. This. I did it wrong. Here's mine.’ Because that's like the worst thing. Like, ‘OK, you're gonna use text, which you don't have to use. You don't have to use text. It's possible to send messages without text. You can just do it with images. But if you're going to use text, go to the light table, and you have to flip your sketch backwards, or...you know...upside down and trace it that way.’ Yeah, I mean, that's what my first year was like. It was excruciating. But, I built that shit from scratch.”

Like Naomi, Helen’s district did create a scope and sequence type of document this year in response to the demands created by the Covid-19 pandemic, but it was new and not available for teachers before now. Additionally, while the document served as a “guideline” for the order of the subject matter to be presented to students, Helen, like Naomi, has a great deal of control over how that subject matter will be presented and responded to. In Helen’s story, there is also a sense of pride derived from rejecting existing resources, such as those provided by her mentor teacher, and developing her own curriculum despite the extra time and effort doing so resulted in.

**Wes**

“I have four years of curriculum development as a district-like person. And I did that at \_\_\_\_ ISD. I did the actual curriculum day in-service. And then last year...I'll tell it like it is: The day before [the curriculum in-service] day, I got an e-mail from our secondary lead curriculum development person...verbatim: ‘Mr. \_\_\_\_, you're the only teacher within \_\_\_\_ ISD who has any teaching experience. How would you like to give the...,’ right? So I said, ‘You know what? You've got the right guy. I did this in \_\_\_\_ ISD. I'm going to do the same thing.’ Right? So [the curriculum] is pretty much the same thing that I did at \_\_\_\_ ISD, but I tweaked it. And...you know...I make them my own...you know...The systems that we've put in place at my former high school, I've done it at this high school...We have TEKS in Eduphoria. My responsibility was the scope and sequence, which I then gave to the director of curriculum, who we now know...obviously this is Covid, but I don't even know if we have that anymore. So, I'm kind of the head honcho, and I'm going to probably have to start kind of talking to other teachers about, ‘hey, how are you doing?’”

In Wes's case, not only is he determining the daily curriculum in his Art I classroom, but he is also translating the curriculum he has created into a scope and sequence document for his district to be made available for other teachers.

**Ethan**



“I teach in a small district and have for the last ten years. The first three years of teaching, you're trying to figure out which way is up. Apparently, they had a binder of art education guidance, but I never received it. And so you're just kind of dropped in with three or four preps, as I remember, and no lesson plans. And so we just kind of you know, in that situation, you just get...”

*[Jenny speaking: “To clarify: a clear scope and sequence type of document did exist, but you didn't ever get it?”]*

“It did exist. But no one told me it existed. You know, there were maybe a bunch of binders that had been handed out. I'm sure it was in a filing cabinet somewhere. And...you know...where that binder ended up in between it being made and me being hired, who knows?...So I don't know how you're doing it if you're four preps and you're the only art teacher in the middle of nowhere...”

And so last year, they tasked us to write a full, structured curriculum. And so, I got to lead the secondary team on that, which was really, actually, a lot of... again, that nerd fun of ‘how do you how do you put this all together in a really cohesive way?’ And so, we decided the best thing to do for where we were at is to have the first three terms out of four be divided into thirds. And, in those thirds, pair up two matching subjects that we offer further follow-up courses on...if that makes sense? For

instance, our first semester was drawing and painting, or I mean, the first term was drawing and painting blended. Then, we had our second term...it was design and printmaking blended. Then, our third term was sculpture and ceramics blended. But, those were not...it didn't matter...we had designed them so they could be taught in any order. And that was because...like obviously...you can't have all six teachers trying to use the kiln at the same time. You know? That's just not feasible. What we did to make design easy...we had our teachers in those topics actually design the art one term that was their teaching subject so that they knew the kids that were coming into their second-year class would have this material. And, they taught that first, so they could field test it and make sure that it worked. And then, it was handed off to another team who then kind of tweaked it and moved it around a little bit. Then by the end of the year, we had three really good terms. We left the fourth term open for more independent, student-driven type work where they were given more problems to solve or ideas to investigate. They were allowed to choose more what they wanted to, or we left it open also for opportunity. You know? When something comes up, and you really want to do it because it fits with where you're at in the world or anything else. So, kind of a flex thing. And that was kind of how we geared that.”

Like the other teacher-participants, Ethan had minimal guidance from the district when he began teaching art and was the primary creator of the curriculum he used in his

classroom during the first part of his story. More recently<sup>2</sup> like Wes, Ethan was asked to help design a shared curriculum for the district. In Ethan's district, however, this work was done by a team rather than an individual. Still, the theme of art-teacher-as-curriculum-maker persists.

### *Julia*

“With my Art I and drawing classes, I have a fantastic file cabinet from my junior high and my high school teacher. OK, so my high school teacher was Cheryl Evans, who is a past president of TAEA. Yes, so I've got lots and lots of stuff and sources from her that I go and dig in. And then...you know...from previous years, I kind of figure out what worked and what didn't work. And the things that work, I duplicate them, but I kind of change them up a little bit so they're not the exact same, right? And with my ceramics and sculpture class, ...Pinterest is my best friend.

...I think now being at the school I'm at, not only are we supported by our team, but we're supported by the principals and our superintendent. The parents, you know. So having that support kind of helps a lot, because if we say...you know...we need twenty-four color set of [Prismacolor colored pencils] for every kid so they can learn color blending, then we usually get it. So, there's really not too many limits to our curriculum because we are blessed to have the support to get what we need. But, I'd say the biggest drawback is just the numbers, I guess, of kids...With the lessons and stuff, I feel like I have that pretty much down now. But trying

---

<sup>2</sup> As is the case in the districts where Naomi, Helen, and Wes teach as well, these more organized efforts in curriculum design are occurring within the last one or two years.

to teach 32 kids...it is just a challenge, I guess. You can't really reach all of them. And when you have that senior that's just in there because he needs a fine art credit....the counselor put him in there because she couldn't put him in choir, right? That's the biggest hurdle that we can't really jump over.

... It's kind of that, you know, you do what you do because that's what you do. We were saying something the other day, and I was like, "well, if you're a good teacher, don't you do that already?"

And finally, Julia talks about having supportive stakeholders who support the decisions she and her team make for their students. Nonetheless, those decisions are made by her using resources she has accumulated over time. Some of these resources represent a legacy of teaching art in Texas and have a pedigree of credibility, so to speak. In addition, there is evidence of reflexive practice as a factor of her decision-making: "And then...you know...from previous years, I kind of figure out what worked and what didn't work. And the things that work, I duplicate them, but I kind of change them up a little bit so they're not the exact same, right?"

Regardless of their context, each of these teacher-participants tells stories that reveal a high level of involvement in determining and making the curriculum they use day-to-day in their classrooms.

### **Stories of purpose**

If the teachers are making these decisions for their students, it is important to understand what drives those decisions. When trying to identify the passionate attachments of the teachers, I looked primarily to the purposes and outcomes they

imagine for their practice. During the interviews, one of the question sets I asked was designed to elicit responses that would reveal the teacher-participants' viewpoints on the purposes of art education: "What do you perceive to be the impact or outcomes of the art curriculum as you teach it? What do the students who take the class come away with? How do you know?" These are the stories they told in response to those questions.

### *Naomi*

"I'm looking at the art. I'm looking at, you know, the leadership and some of their competence as a human, know what I mean? And...because I am very much an artist. When they see me drawing—or sometimes I'll draw them—and they're like, 'Oh, you're like a real artist?' Oh, so...a fake artist? I could have been a fake artist?"

*[Jenny speaking: "Isn't that funny? That always surprises them. Like, 'oh, you can actually draw?!'"]*

"Well...I think, yes. And I think that there are some ways that you can maybe be an art teacher, and you're just doing crafty stuff like in elementary school, you know? Like you don't have to really draw, but you can glue some popsicle sticks together and do some finger paint. They're like, 'Mrs. \_\_\_\_, you're like a whole artist. You're a real artist, Mrs. \_\_\_\_.' Like, 'Yes.'

What I got growing up was: 'You are so smart...why are you doing art? You're so smart.'...like art wasn't a smart thing to do. Art is the lens with which I see the world, you know? And it's one thing that I enjoy doing. It is a gift from God given to me, so I'm going to use it. So when I

get up to heaven, he's...I mean, like...‘Job well done.’ You know? ‘Job well done.’ So, it's an interesting thing with the students too, which brings us back to the beginning of ‘what is art?’ Why is it important...having that conversation? So, in terms of the impact and outcomes on my students? To be able to be comfortable with the idea of the creative process...that I can make some art and that I don't have to be an artist. We're all an artist in some ways. But I don't have to want to be an artist to find value in the process. I think one of the things I learned was that...these kids that are taking my class—my beginning drawing class—they're going to grow to be doctors, lawyers, rocket scientists. Maybe they'll support somebody...our program someday. Maybe they'll buy somebody's artwork. ‘Come back and holler at me in a few years,’ you know? So the idea that we could encourage and inspire and impact the students in a positive way through art, or...check this out...if I give you a skill...let's talk about this journal for a minute, right? If I teach you how to write down your thoughts...if I...you know, this freewriting exercise—one of the first things I have them doing, which I'll have them do next week—is ‘Describe one of your summer memories in color.’ So, ‘I woke up, and I went into the restroom. The wall was blue. And, I reached for my purple toothbrush and squeezed blue toothpaste.’ You know? So you're in your mind thinking about the yellow sky or whatever...I get you thinking about this book as a repository for your ideas. I have a kid as an engineer, and he draws really well. We talked about ‘Why don't you just write your ideas

there?’ You know? So if you're doing...like the vision board—the [Wildly Important Goal] board—one of the things you do with the vision board is you cut out things that align with where you want to go. You kick it up a notch: you start talking about somebody like Romare Bearden and composition and line and color. And you're not just looking at things that you cut out: you're looking at shapes and blocks of color. You know? So...in answer to your question, in terms of the impact, I want to empower the young people through art and words. That is what I feel like my purpose is. Period. So if I'm teaching in an art classroom, or if I'm developing a museum education program, if I'm developing a broader arts initiative, then it still does those things.

Naomi identifies art as a lens through which she sees the world and her God-given gifting. Her identity is that of a “real” artist who finds value in the creative process for all students regardless of their potential career path. She speaks of artistic ways of perceiving and developing an artistic sensibility to one’s surroundings as skills she can strengthen in her students through both written and visual activities. There is the sense that she is beginning with the student and their goals in mind and then using the art and writing activities in her classroom as a tool to help them realize those goals.

### ***Helen***

“I suppose my goal...well, I would have a couple of goals. I would have that initial goal that we were talking about at the beginning [the interview]: of trying to pinpoint the kids that actually might need to do something with this after they leave high school. So, I'm trying to figure

out who those kids are and make them believe that it's possible. But then you have all the others. That's only going to be a few of them. That's gonna be a small handful. Right? So with all of the others...you know...of course, I want them to take something away from their short time with me. So, I'm hoping that I can... I'm not even going to try to make this sound.

*[Jenny speaking: "It doesn't have to be academic."]*

I want to show them how cool art can be, and what an impact it can have on their community, and that they don't even have to be good at it. They can just know a little bit about it. And it's just cool. It's just such a great thing to be aware of, even if you're not good at it. Right?... They can find it interesting because I can show them so much cool art, and so many things that it has done in history, and how the purpose of it has changed. And, how with every new movement, there was a new group of rebels. Right? I mean, even what's his name? The guy who did the first overlapping people in the fresco...Giotto. Giotto, you know? So even when you look back at these old medieval artists...I can look at those medieval artists with my kids and go, 'These guys were the rebels. And let me tell you why.' Right? And with every new movement, it was just artists pushing against the ones before them and coming up with new things. And, that's what they want to see....that's what they want to see. They want it. They want to see...like...what am I going to learn in school about people or ideas that are outside of the box...that don't conform to what they're all telling me to do. And, that's what they want to see. I show



them a lot of that. So, I guess if they could just leave my class feeling like, 'man, I know a little bit now about that. I know who this is now, and I know who that is. And they did this for the community'...yeah, that's it."

Helen identifies a two-fold purpose. The first is to encourage students with a strong interest in art that art is a viable career path worth pursuing. And the second is to characterize art as a catalyst for community change. In linking her students' identities as rebels/non-conformists to those of artists throughout history, Helen seeks to expand her students' cultural knowledge in general and their understanding of art's role in creating culture more specifically.

*Wes*

"Art one is tough. And, if you're looking over the TEKS, they are very, very ambitious for kids. I know at \_\_\_\_ high school...inner city, you're just like, 'these kids aren't going to the museums on the weekends.' Come on, you know? I always told them I want them to go to the museum, and I want them to be able to identify one work. And it's like...that's about as good as it's going to get for a lot of these kids in Art I.

My other goal is very much like I had in high school: I really want my kids to enjoy my class. I want it to be fun, and I want them to like me because I care about them...I think that's one of my main goals. I do want my kids to come out with a general understanding of how to draw.

And...like....an introduction to all the disciplines of art. That's probably my main goal. But really, I want them to be able to draw. So if they come to Art II, we can have maybe more fun, and I won't have to reteach...

...I really want the kids to be themselves. I think that's important. I don't want to micromanage them. I want them to enjoy the process of creating. I think that's the main goal...and eventually to get them to practice daily. And that's the hard part...but you really want to get them to the discipline of being able to work and create for an hour each day, and then to continue to do that after the wonderful journey of high school. But, yeah..."

Wes indicates goals and purposes for Art I in both the cognitive and affective domains for his students. On the cognitive level, his goals for students include identifying an artwork in a museum and developing drawing skills. On the affective level, he wants students to enjoy the experience—his classroom, themselves, the process, and him as a teacher—and develop self-discipline.

### ***Ethan***

"Well, so...that's all very different: The students that are just kind of one-and-done or two-and-done, I think, take this kind of enjoyable communal experience of self-reflection and discussion, and all of those kind of things. And, I think that's hugely important.

I think sometimes we forget that we're making people, you know? I mean, we're making full citizens of this world. And so...we had a principal that asked us to follow a random student's schedule for a day and go do everything that they did and just be a part of their class. And you said either, 'yes, I'll do it' or 'no, I won't.' They gave you a random schedule, and you just had to do it. And it was a miserable day. Like, it

was miserable...it was physically uncomfortable. I was constantly either hungry or had to go to the bathroom...like there was there was no point that my body was in a position of comfort. And, you were always, like, discombobulated because you came in and had to make a home in this too-small of a space and then pack up everything and...in a very short amount of time...and run to the next place and then set up your home again. And it was like, you know, some sort of weird camping experience where you have to move every day. Yeah. And it was very just hard. Like it was just hard, physically and emotionally. It was lonely. And, I was so busy that...this poor kid turned around to ask me some questions, and I was trying to catch up on emails and everything else, and I blew the kid off. I'm like...I felt like a jerk. This has been years now, and I still think about that poor kid because that kid was...I'm sure...in the same boat as I was. He was dying to reach out for human connection, but I found my human connection in my emails, and he didn't have emails to check right then. So, I still think about that poor kid.

So, to give the kids a space to process all of the things that are going on in this world...to sit around and gather with their friends and just talk about life, and ideas, and where they're at, and how they're feeling...And to make friends, and to be a little goofy, and to get a little messy, and physically be able to move. It's hugely important, and I don't think we pay enough attention to that in school. It's like, 'oh, well, you know, art doesn't...you know...? It doesn't what? Doesn't what? Like

what? What is the thing that we as humans are trying to accomplish here? Because, I mean, math is great and all...and I'm not saying that it's not important. But at the end of the day, what it's like is that all humans are learning things so that they can perform them for pay. And then where is the...? We owe it to these kids in some way to nourish their souls, and their beings, and their humanity. So that is kind of the goal: is that you've got these kids that spend their time with me retelling stories...like a lot of our stuff is connected to memory, and reflection on your life, and ritual, and things like that. You've got to talk about your favorite rituals, and we always do. Like, here's a writing component. Then run it past your neighbor: What are they going to do? How?...like, you exchange ideas. And so now you've got this idea of teamwork and all this other stuff. It's part of the process of being a community. I think that's...you know...especially now when we're in this moment where society is failing because so many people can't be a good member of community. You know? Maybe we should have taken more flippin' art classes. You know? Because I don't think it's the band kids that can't figure out how to put a mask on their face. I'll tell you that right now.

So, I mean, for the older kids. I want them to be able to make art without an adult, ever. Like I want them to be able to sit there and go, 'I have an idea. I want to communicate that idea. I know the steps to execute that.' I want them to be able to go through that whole process without needing anyone...I still have alumni that will send me...like, 'hey, I'm

trying to work my way through this thing. Could you give me some...you know...let's talk about this.' And I love that. But, there's not a need of an assignment. Nobody needs a prompt...They came out of this an artist that has ideas and wants to share those ideas. And even if they're...you know...you've got kids that are in college and doing high-level art stuff. And then you've got kids that are just making little watercolors on the side of their retail job...Like both work for me, you know? It's not my job to determine what role this is going to play in their life, but I like that it still plays a role without me giving them an assignment. You know? They're not looking for what should I make art about? They're looking for how do I find time to focus on my art in this chaotic world."

Echoing Helen, Ethan shows recognition of serving kids in his class with two different goals in mind: those who are taking the class to fulfill the state-mandated fine art credit ("one and done") and those who are taking it out of a more serious interest in art. For those who progress in art, his goal for them is to have art continue to play a role in their lives and provide expression to their ideas. For all students, regardless of their plans with art, there are similarities here to Naomi as well. Ethan tells a story that focuses on the student and how to provide them with a space for and experiences through art and writing to help them "nourish their souls, and their being, and their humanity."

### ***Julia***

"And with Art I, I think the biggest thing that they get out of it is confidence...So they come in on day one and go, 'Oh, miss, hey, I can't draw. I don't know how to do any of this kind of thing.' And the way that I

present it...I try to break it down as basic as I possibly can. And then once we get that basic skill, then I build up on it. And so that that kinda creates a...you know...‘Can you draw a line?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘OK, you just made art. Now you make that line a circle, and you just made a shape.’ ...and kind of go in simple so that they can understand that art is something that you learn and that you can do if you pay attention and put the practice into it. It’s not just a talent that some people have, and some people don’t. So, that confidence? You can see it. And towards the end of the year...we do a project at the beginning of the year, and then we do that same project at the end of the year. Then I give them their first projects back and let them compare how they grew as an artist and their confidence within their skills.

Like Wes, Julia focuses more on the skill-building, discipline-based features of the art curriculum but with an eye to the affective goal of building confidence in her students and recognizing that new skill sets can be achieved through discipline and practice.

It is important to note that in the narratives of purpose, the teacher-participants do not verbalize a sense of tension arising from incorporating diverse principles and practices into their curriculums.

### **Stories of lessons**

The question providing the narrative data about lessons was from the group interviews. I asked the teacher-participants to come to the meeting prepared to share their favorite Art 1 lesson/unit with the group, and what follows are the narratives they shared.

Though their narratives may reflect one side of Figure 5 from Chapter Two more than the other, in all cases, the teacher-participants express ideas that could also be found on the opposite side of the chart.

*Naomi*

“There is a lesson that I did recently with Frida Kahlo's artwork that I thought would be interesting or relevant to share. I started out...that's our social socio-emotional piece...with where they're at. And I started them out with them having to submit a photograph of themselves as a superhero and talked a lot about them being the superhero in the story that is their life. We talked about who is responsible for telling their story.

Okay, so typically, I'll start off with a quote, and to get engagement, I'll have them read it. I work with the sentence stems. I'll have something else. We have a leading questions. I talk about, you know, just protocol. I want to share this video with you than I did with Adobe Spark: *[video voiceover plays]* ‘Art is my superpower. What's yours? Everyone has a unique gift. You have to give yourself permission to figure out what your gifting is. Some are born with special gifts. Many of us discover them throughout our lifetime. You are stronger than you feel and stronger than you know. What is one thing you can do today to move yourself forward? Unleash your creativity on the world. Follow the rhythm that's in your own sphere. Dare to dream. Make something beautiful. Believe you have the power to create something amazing. Plant

seeds in the Earth by sharing your most precious gifts. Imagine the possibilities.' [video voiceover ends]

We talked about that was done with Adobe Spark. Just to kind of put that out there. It's an app that you can download on your phone. You can also access it through your through your laptop. And for Hispanic Heritage Month, we look at the artwork of Frida Kahlo. And the underlying thing was—or is—that she dealt with a lot of pain, and she used her artwork to push through pain. Because our school is like half Hispanic, half African-American, pretty much...you know...that idea of their voice, and does their voice matter?, and just the weight of things that they're carrying before [the Covid-19 pandemic]. Right? So, we've been talking a lot about whose responsibility is it to tell the story and the visual activist. And so, we looked at ways that artists...this is an Afro-Latino artist...are challenging the narrative. And then, I talked about creating an ezine...I had them create one. They had to include their superhero photo. They had to include four images about themselves.

...Then we talked about the process and different ways that they can interpret the art because this is...you know...beginning level. But one of the things that I've done...is I'll take a theme, and I'll go across my levels because a lot of times they'll put so many different students in there. We also talked about digital manipulation, and I shared with them the documentary that we did called *Stronger than Covid19* and how it was high school artwork...high school photography...that was now streaming



through that virtual exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts. And, that it's high school...again, to reiterate to them the power of their voice and the strength that they have as a young person to tell their story and how impactful it can be. So contour drawing...and mixed media...and I was trying to give them different ways in which they could bring their idea to life. These were the themes that we worked with pushing through pain, challenge or an obstacle, family heritage, dreams, and interests...digital manipulation of yourself, social justice, and political opinion...We did a deep dive into Frida Kahlo's artwork, and...you know...these are some of the themes that we pulled out, that they could bring. I think your question was why? Where did this lesson come from? This lesson came from....this is talking through how do you bring your idea to life? And then so, this just goes through looking at Frida Kahlo as artwork and the elements. We talked a lot about symbolism, right? And that this idea of pain...and even though she has these nails in her face, we don't know what that pain is. And so, for the students to get them to open up, what were some of those symbols? So...you know...we looked through the artwork, and in this particular piece...where she's holding onto the Mexican flag, we talked about how she's literally holding onto her heritage.

And so in terms of the value, I feel like with young people of color...how do you get them to...how do you awaken that sense of curiosity in them and get them vested in the process? Right? Because a lot of them feel like they can't do it. They've never done it...or they're not

sure...and that their voice doesn't matter. Or, there is an overwhelming sense of doom. So, in terms of the value of the work: I'm starting with them. It came from wanting to acknowledge Hispanic Heritage Month...wanting to acknowledge that there's so many more similarities than differences. So, the whole time I'm giving them quotes that they respond to in their journal. And also, we listen to music. We listen to Santana. We listen to Afro-Cuban music. Then their final output was...they did drawings. They did digital manipulation. I didn't really see anybody do the collage except to cover their journal. And then, they had to create a presentation. They created their own little ezine.”

Naomi spends a lot of time in her narrative describing how her lesson draws upon the life experiences of her students—from exploring art by artists who represent the ethnicities of her student populations to their life experiences both before and after the Covid-19 pandemic. The mining of student experiences as a basis for art-making is an approach supported by the life-centered advocates in the literature. Her students talk through and write reflections on the art-making process, also life-centered. And, there are mentions of activism and art as a catalyst for personal and community change, which is also a life-centered concern. However, she also attends to form-centered concerns, directly teaching specific formal processes such as contour drawing, defining disciplines and genres such as digital media and ezine as a form of creative output. She pulls artist exemplars from the Western canon and is concerned with formalist principles. She moves between life-centered and form-centered interests fluidly and with no indication of any feeling any tension about doing so.

*Helen*

“There was a lesson that I've talked about a little bit with Jenny in our one-on-one interview. It's my controversial assignment that has caused me some issues with administration. And that's exciting. So I figured why not share that one.

Okay, so in art one, I have a printmaking assignment that is pretty extravagant...we spend a lot of time developing the concept before we actually make the artwork. And, the students are shocked because when you make a print, it takes a matter of seconds to roll the ink onto the...you know...onto that prototype and basically make a stamp. And, they're always shocked because it took us two weeks to get to that point. So, it's pretty extravagant. There's a lot of pieces to the assignment, but it's titled Activist Art Printmaking. And I've been developing it. This is just my fourth year of teaching. I started doing this in my first year and have since built upon it a little bit each year to try and make it better, especially when...you know...I had to deal with a really angry parent over the assignment that I was doing and had to basically answer to my administrators and send them the lesson and...you know...explain the objectives, and why it's relevant to art, and why I should be teaching this...you know...this content. I had to defend my teaching in my second year. So I did that, and I'm planning to move forward with it and continue to do it responsibly. But I figured that that would be the most interesting one to share. And it also ends up being one of the most powerful projects

that resonates with the kids because they actually are really interested in activist art.

Like Naomi, I teach at a Title 1 school, mostly Hispanic children. Some African-American children. And then, I might have a total of two white students...The majority of the students qualify for the free and reduced lunch program. So, 90-something percent are living below the poverty line. So...you know...it's a very specific group of students, and I think that that should certainly mold any teacher's curriculum. It molds mine greatly.

And we start by talking about activist art. And we're basically making mini-posters, Andy Warhol style, where they make a few prints in different colors. And it's very basic. This is Art I, and I am not a printmaker. So...you know...these are...What is it called when you have multiple layers of ink in the print? Anyways, it's not that. It's the most simple printmaking that you can do. But we look at Andy Warhol. They choose the color schemes that they want, and then they build posters. We basically attach their prints together to make large posters, and then we hang them in the hallway.

So we start by talking about environmental and social issues of our time because that is usually what activism is stemmed from throughout history, and obviously, today it's extremely significant in modern and contemporary art. So, the first time I did it, I used the students to help me build this list. And it was, like, anything goes...like there is no topic that is

off-limits. So on this list...you know... you'll see everything from abortion to gun rights, LGBTQ rights...you know...science, religion, deforestation, animal rights. It's politics, right? Yeah. And they use this list to choose a topic that they were interested in or to try and get interested in a topic. And it was this list that ended up getting me in trouble because I had it in print after that and passed it out. So, apparently my principal said that I should not have done that. It just linked some really controversial topics and gave a paper trail straight to my class. So that was a principal that we no longer have. I actually think that our new principal...he's...from what I can tell about him, I don't think that it would be an issue with this principal. I think he's a good fit for our school.

So, we talk about printmaking specifically at the beginning because it is a printmaking activity. I use Shepard Fairey as a big inspiration, so we look at a lot of Shepard Fairey works. I show them a documentary. Last year I showed them *Human Flow* by Ai Weiwei. The year before that, I showed them a Shepard Fairey documentary. We dive into it pretty deeply. The most popular topics...it's really interesting because the most popular topics are immigration because I have mostly Hispanic students, but then also abortion. And so those are the two main topics that I'm looking at when we do this assignment...I try to look at opposing viewpoints, and I show them how you can send messages or create messages without words as well. And how does adding text change the message? So we start by just looking at these images, and then we talk

about printmaking and how they're going to do this. Right? As you can see, it's like really simple Styrofoam, not too in-depth. They do have trouble with the backwards text. And the first time I did it, I actually did mine backwards. Just so you guys know...not a printmaker. So then I had to redo my example because the text backwards. But I told Jenny...you know...that printmaking offers such a great opportunity for this topic that even though I'm not a printmaker and not a professional that...you know...I'm going to take it seriously, and I'm going to teach it...teach it that way.

So we start by looking at those really...you know...basic printmaking images, but then we dive a little bit deeper into what activist art is, and they complete what I call investigations. Before every project, my students do an investigation, and they can expect it. It's the same thing. It's a project-based class. And [the Activist Art Printmaking investigation] is probably the most in-depth investigation. So these questions start by asking them two topics that they think they're interested in, and then they have to research activist artists in general. So we're not even talking about printmaking anymore. We're just talking about activism in art. So...you know...that's why I end up showing Ai Wei Wei and his documentary and a bunch of other artists that they research. And then, I basically try to explain to them that...you know...activist artists choose to focus on issues that they're usually for or against. And, in order to be an informed activist artist, you need to make sure that you understand fully...you know...the

for and against arguments, both sides of every situation. And I explained to them that...you know...I want to see their research. I tell them that they're going to cite their work, and they look at me like I'm crazy. That's it. That's really scary. By the way, how many high school students don't understand when I asked them what their resources were. Like what? How do they not know that? Anyways, maybe it's because it's an art class, and they're shocked that I'm asking them to do it.

But so...you know...we talk about the media and really easy one-liners, and that you need to read deeper, and read more than once, and read from different sources. So...you know...I start by asking them, 'what are you for? What are you against? What do people with opposing viewpoints on this issue believe?' So then it starts to look like a debate class. And so, I just I really want them to understand that...you know...what you put in your art matters, and that it needs to be carefully considered, and that if you start to do research and your mind changes and you don't feel as strongly about that issue anymore, that's a good thing. And it means that you're a flexible thinker and a compassionate thinker, and it means that you need to choose a different topic. Yeah. So before they just start throwing words and phrases...you know...catchphrases that they hear in the news into their printmaking assignment. I make them look a little bit deeper into it because if they don't feel as strongly about it after they research it a little bit more, then they shouldn't be doing that topic. Researching the topic should strengthen how you feel about it, and if it

weakens it, it means that you need to choose something else. So it's a big deal. It's a big unit.

And then obviously, there is a thumbnail sketch. So they have to do a lot of work before we even start the art-making or printmaking process. So this research...you know...they spend at least a week on this, and then another week developing their sketches and ideas, and they get so invested in it. Probably more than any of the other art projects that I do. It's like they are thirsty for a chance to express something that they feel strongly about. And I just...you know...maybe they're not as informed as we would want them to be. And you can tell. Right? But then I ask them to become a little bit more educated and to read about it a little bit more and have an open mind. And it's okay if you change your mind. It's also okay if you think something differently from your parents because you can tell that that's where they're getting a lot of what they say from. And, I watch students change their minds. I witness it happen. And I think that's huge because being a flexible thinker is so important and being a compassionate thinker is so important. And I watch them look things up, and read it a few different times, and then go, 'Oh. I don't know about that.' And, they change their topic. So I think that that's a good thing.

And then I've also...you know...I've also sat next to the little boy. I say little...all right, this 16-year-old boy. I've sat next to the boy in class that starts crying next to me in the classroom because he's talking about immigration, and he's telling me the story of how his parents came here,



and how his dad is upset because they don't feel like they're appreciated by the white community, and his mom cleans houses, and his dad works in agriculture. So I feel very lucky and fortunate that I have such close access to this type of student because I am able to witness things like that. And it's real. It's not just what we hear in the news media, or what what we're being told to think, or what we're being told to believe. I get to experience firsthand what these kids care about.

*[Jenny speaking: "So just to clarify, you developed this lesson with no prior influence, like it just kind of came out of you as a brainchild or you...?"]*

Right. So that was the other question. Another thing that I told Jenny is that the thing that informs a lot of my projects...a lot of my projects are actually informed directly from the artists. I look a lot at contemporary artists. And then, of course, I'm going to also look at art history. But I mean, truly, I just spend a lot of time researching art. And, I mean this started by looking at Shepard Fairey and by learning about Ai Weiwei and then learning about all of these other activist artists that I'm interested in. So, it's the artists themselves that inform most of my projects. And...you know...I try to mimic what the artists do. And, I ask my kids to look at famous artists and mimic their process. So, yeah, I mean, I started with Shepard Fairey because he's a printmaker. And this was originally a print...you know...it's a printmaking assignment, so that's

where I start. And then, I just build from there based off of what other artists do.”

In the description of her lesson, Helen centers the idea of inquiry through the “investigations” she designs for her students, emphasizing the preliminary processes involved in art-making. Process-based inquiry approaches like this fall firmly into the life-centered ideological camp. In addition, like Naomi, she draws on the personal experiences of her students to drive the product-outcomes, resulting in a more authentic art-making experience for her students, also life-centered. Helen also prioritizes contemporary artists with a social-justice bent for this unit of study, which could also be characterized as life-centered. However, also like Naomi, formal aspects of art-making are still important and considered in her description when she discusses learning printmaking techniques and developing color schemes for the student products. She is also attending to form-centered concerns throughout the lesson.

Though there is some accounting of tension in her narrative, it comes from others in proximity to her teaching who have conflicting ideas about the aims and purposes of art education, not from any ideological tension that she herself is experiencing.

*Wes*

“Okay. It is a pipe drawing. And again, it was not developed by me. It was developed by Miss \_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_ High School, and I've modified it over the years. But basically, I was on an art one team. We were told we had to all teach aligned curriculum, and we had all do to the same lesson. So, the reason I like it is because I actually got to learn and see how the other teachers did it. It was the first time in my career I actually shared a

lesson with other teachers and saw the outcomes...and I could compare and contrast other teachers and how they...you know...we actually could dissect this lesson and sit down and talk about real issues that these kids are having: Do they know how to use a ruler? I mean, things like that. And that's why I like the lesson because it teaches the design. It's very non-subjective. We had to address what our students needed to learn in the first six weeks, and we all agreed that they needed to learn value. So we said, 'Okay,' and we developed this lesson.

It's very...like I said...non-subjective. They have to identify their values. They have to follow all the directions the way that they're supposed to. Everything...you know...day one is this, day two is that. They take their ruler. They have to measure it. It's either two inches or three inches wide. They have to draw right angles, and you have to tell them it has to be at right angles. Then they curve their pipe, and every time the pipe curves, it has to have connectors. Those connectors are also one inch. So when I grade these, everything is non-subjective: Is that an inch to three inches?

So they do that, and then they have to include a handle. Once they do the design...the layout...they can start shading. And that's the other thing we have to address: 'Are we going to smudge with our fingers? No, no, no, no, no. That's not going to get you a good grade. You have to crosshatch.' And then, the kids look at you. But there's prior knowledge because you've already taught all that stuff. So then...you know...then,

they start shading. You have to identify the highlights. That's always an issue because the highlights are gonna be on the corner of where the connectors go...right here. And then, in the middle is your highlight, and then your dark side...midtone and highlight...so very concrete. No nonsense.

But the reason I like it: Thirty-five kids in a class, all at risk. No prior knowledge. Most of them have did not sign up for the course. They need a fine arts elective. But I have never seen a kid not be successful with this particular lesson. And, I can say that I've seen multiple teachers do the same thing. But another reason I really like it because...we do this like the third week of school, and at the time, we had four art teachers in the art one block, and they're all open concept...there's a wall. And what we did...we would take all the pipe drawings...and this is a big 6A school, so you're probably looking at maybe like four or five hundred kids who did this project. We put them all on the wall...it doesn't look like there's a wall there because there's so many of these pipe drawings. And it's just phenomenal. And like I said, none of these kids have any prior knowledge. They come in thinking it's a blow-off class. That it's...you know...there's no right or wrong answers. But then they get this lesson, and it's very specific, and very sort of...math-integrated. Yeah. But like I said, I've done it at the middle school and high school, and I've had, like, one hundred percent success rate.”

Unlike Naomi and Helen, Wes's lesson description is far more form-centered. He is not as concerned about the students' experiences driving the art-making process. Instead, it is guided by specific, step-by-step instructions from him. He refers to the importance of developing skill, technique, and discipline—all form-centered concerns. Likewise, the student products could be described as school art given the high degree of similarity when finished. As discussed in the literature review, school art products are generally considered more form-centered and less authentic. However, there are also ideas of access—helping all students feel successful—and some other instrumental benefits of art that are more closely aligned with the life-centered ideology. Again, even though he is crossing the binaries in less extensive ways than Naomi or Helen, there is no evidence that he feels any tensions arising from doing so.

### ***Ethan***

“And we're just going to have a bunch of jumbled stuff up on the screen all at once for you. So the product I'm going to do is...it's half inspired by assemblage and half inspired by power figures from the Congo. And so, this started...because I noticed my art one curriculum was too painting heavy, as I like paintings, that's kind of my default fallback...So, I had a project that was based on abstract expressionism and looking at the New York School. And I was like, ‘well, that's a good spot, something I can get rid of.’ And I had already talked about Rauschenberg...so I thought to lean into the combines and then bring in some contemporary artists: Sarah Sze, that kind of thing...Jimmy Durham...artists that build sculptural structures out of everyday materials.

And then a teacher down the hall...was doing assemblage based on Congolese power figures...the minkisi figures...and those are kind of found object materials that represent a spiritual defense. And so, we structured this as a group project...couple of reasons: A) like I said, we needed a sculpture project. Then, B) assemblage is really cheap because you can do it with basically scrap cardboard as your structural basis. We threw in some paper mâché if they needed to build things themselves, and then everything else we just had them bring in. We did it as a group project.

So what they did...we did it on strengths and fears. They had to write a list of things that were their personal strengths and things that were their personal fears and find objects that were metaphorical representations of those things. And so then, they would combine them into a figure that represented their strengths and fears. And so, I'll flip through a couple of examples for... they turned out really fun, but usually pretty dark. I think mine are a little sunnier. We've had...you know...since I've done it, we've spread it to the entire department. And so they...some of them get real, real dark, just depending on who the student is, and what their fears are, and how much they want to lean into their fears instead of their powers. And...there's always...you know...again, we talked about fears...there's associations to death. Last year when we did it, there were associations to school shootings, things of that nature that are...you know...and obviously...the kids fear things that everybody else fears. And

so...you know...we always thought that was a positive way to get them to get their fears out and to talk about them. And, you know, we were able to have some good conversations with kids...reassuring conversations with kids.

And then...so I thought about talking about this project when the idea of controversy with administration came up. So, we have all these creepy sculptures...some of them are fun, but a lot of them get really creepy. And so, we had a cafe space that...they moved to a different magnet-type location, and so they emptied out this cafe space, and it was just a little maybe 25 feet wide by eight feet deep with glass walls. And. I'm like, 'well, that's a perfect place to put art. Let's do that.' And so, we were putting art displays in that space so the kids could see it without actually physically worrying about [others] touching things or having things...we could leave it unsupervised. And so, we had loaded that space with all of these super creepy sculptures. And everybody loved that. We loved it, except for one of the employees of the school who thought the school was influencing kids to...you know...make work about this kind of thing, and it did not align with her beliefs. She thought kids should be making shiny, happy things. And, I tried to discuss with her the fact...this person got very, very upset and went to my principal and...pulled the 'I'm a member of this community, and if the community finds out you're teaching these things to kids' and...you know...Luckily my administrator was very much like, 'well, if we want a society where

kids make fun, happy sunshine art, then maybe we should provide them a fun, shiny sunshine, happy society. They need to get it out in a healthy way. This seems like a healthy way. I don't see the problem'...and handled it very diplomatically. But I will say that the decision was made by me to...out of respect for the staff member because I didn't want them to feel uncomfortable coming to work...we actually covered the interior of this space with black paper and cut out little eye holes and put, like, little look-at-your-own-risk...and a little sign that said, 'This is a collection of all of our fears. It is scary.' And, it gave an explainer. And it also gave informed consent. And it really...the students really liked...it really was that much more enjoyable because we did it this way. We lit it really creepily and everything...like, it was really perfect. It was really perfect. And boy, did that staff member light up like a Christmas tree in anger at me, which I'm not going to say was my intention, but it wasn't not my intention at the same time. And I explained that...you know...this was my way of making sure that they didn't have to see anything that they found upsetting or offensive, but also respecting my students' voice in their desire to express their fears. And I thought this was perfectly fine. She thought I was making fun of her, which I would never do in any way, shape or form...so anyway, this was my solution for it.

And again, the project came out of the fact that I needed to convert a painting project to a sculptural project to have more well-rounded students. And I already kind of had the structure built for it. And it was a



good blend. You're bringing in a heavy focus on Rauschenberg. We had a lot of contemporary artists that we could bring in that were doing great assemblage. I really like making sure that we can focus on...if you show students multiple examples of genius from all races and backgrounds and ethnicities, then eventually it's going to be really hard for them to be racist if they celebrate genius that is non-white male multiple times in their course. And this was a perfect opportunity. Like...you know...Nam June Paik is a non-white artist. Sarah Sze, female, non-white artist. You've got Jimmy Durham, who's a Native American artist. And then you're looking at the Congolese power figures, and you're blending that with Robert Rauschenberg. And one of my favorite things to do is like, 'hey, Rauschenberg, the Texas boy...here we are in Texas celebrating our Texas artists, everybody.' 'Whoo, Texas!' 'Yes. And, also there is his partner, Jasper Johns. And they had a loving relationship...' And it's like, 'what?' 'Oh. Yeah.' Yeah. Well, so I do...you know...I guess I do like poking the bear a little bit in these situations. Because, I mean, I don't know how you can prepare students to be participants in an art world without preparing them for the variety of identity and genius that's in the art world. So...you know...I like being able to have a project that shows off so many examples of identity that is successful. To make sure that every student that is sitting in my room may go through seven of their eight classes a day and never see a person that looks like them or lives like them in a successful state...and then come into my class and make sure that every

unit we're talking about...that there is one artist and they go, 'hey, that's me. That's a me that went out into the world with my attitudes, and my ideas, and my skin, and my life. And they were successful, and we're celebrating them. Maybe I can go out into the world and be successful and celebrated.'”

Ethan’s lesson, like Naomi’s, rolls very fluidly back and forth from life-centered to form-centered concerns. However, though Ethan does describe some of his lesson in terms of art disciplines (i.e., painting, sculpture) and skills/techniques (i.e., assemblage, paper mache), he shows less concern about formalist principles than all of the other teachers. And, though he does pull from the Western art canon for some of his exemplars, there is a heavy emphasis on traditions outside of the Western tradition and contemporary artists. Like Helen, though there is some description of tension in his narrative, it comes from others outside his teaching rather than from any ideological tension that he experiences within himself.

### ***Julia***

“My lesson's kind of like Wes's. It's more of a first-week kind of morale-boosting project. Let's get this going. Okay, so this is the one that we start with. Whenever we're introducing the elements of art, we add that element to our paper every day. And so, I always tell them that I did this with my elementary kids as well. So, we have an elementary line, a junior high line, and a high school line...we have our straight, our curly, and then we have our textured...they call it the 'eyelash line.’

So every day, we kind of build on this project. And especially now with Covid, it's like my class is the only class that they actually touch something. They have a pencil. They have paper. It goes in their bin, and it's theirs. They can touch it. They can hold it. They can move it. And it's not on their computer like everything else is.

And like Wes said,...you know...with this, it's really hard to mess up. Whenever I grade it: 'Do you have three lines?' 'Yes.' 'Do you have three spaces of value?' 'Yes.' 'Do you have three shapes, organic and geometric?' 'Yes, you do.' You have your form...so pretty much everybody, if they do it, gets a 100 on it because they have their threes. They followed instructions...And that one hundred on your first project is really a morale booster. And then from there, we kind of build it. Here: this one is when we take elements of line, shape, and value, and then we bring in principles. So, we talk about movement, and we talk about emphasis, and we bring pattern into this one as well. So we kind of tie our elements that we learned into our principles and go to this project, which once they're finished...it looks like these. So they're supposed to have one ribbon that creates the emphasis. The ribbons itself create the movement. And we have our contrast between our Sharpie and our color red...So again, it's something that is simple, but when completed, it looks pretty good. It looks a lot harder than it. And, the kids are really excited about it because they're successful on a project.

So that project...I've done it for ten years. I did it when I taught high school, and I took it down to my elementary because—no matter who you are, what level you're in—there are basic...you know...principles and elements. And every year, I make my Drawing II do it: 'the ribbons?' I'm like, 'Yep, but with our ribbons this year, we're going to add'...you know? And, I made them do organic forms. They had to do some organic shapes in a three-dimensional way. So, I kind of challenged them a little bit more. But it's like that's our, that's always our starter. You know...it's something that gets their morale up again. You know...the Art I kids who are taking art because they don't want to take choir...it makes them feel like they can do it. They can be successful...you know...if you know all of these things, then you can build on it and create something really nice at the end. And like Wes said...I display those ending projects like crazy because that first time they come around the corner, it's all...and they work harder for you throughout the year because they know that you believe, and you appreciate all their work.

*[Jenny speaking: "Is that one that you developed or is that one that you maybe learned from Cheryl and then adapted?"]*

No, that's not Evan's one. I saw an example of it on Pinterest, and I kind of brought the elements in it. We talk about Kandinsky when we do our first initial element drawing. And so it just kind of pulled from all different things that I've had exposed to me throughout the years...pulled together into one big assignment."

And finally, Julia, like Wes, focuses more on form-centered concerns in her lesson, creating a school art-style product, wherein the chief aim is to understand the formalist principles, and there is a great deal of similarity among the student products. However, also like Wes, she expresses the life-centered notions of access and the instrumental value of art to motivate and build confidence. And, though her binary crossings are also limited, there is still no evidence of ideological tension when they do occur.

### **Binary tensions and the power of “and”**

Throughout my research, I waited to see evidence from my teacher-participants of similar frustrations to my own regarding the binary tensions in art education that had prompted this entire study for me. It was noted throughout their lesson narratives that no internal tension was expressed by any of the teacher-participants. In my interview schedule for the one-on-one interviews, I included the following questions to get directly to descriptions relevant to this aspect of my study: Describe an ideal Art 1 curriculum. How close do you come to achieving it? If you aren't reaching it, describe the constraints that keep you from achieving it? In my practice interview with my critical friend, these questions had prompted her to speak about trying to balance projects devoted to skill-building with projects devoted to creative expression, and I had expected similar responses from my teacher-participants. However, in reviewing the transcripts from the one-on-one interviews, the responses to the questions revealed frustrations with contextual factors—such as too-large class sizes, lack of resources for artmaking, and students who were assigned to the class to fulfill the state's compulsory requirement of

one fine art credit—but nothing specifically having to do with competing ideas about the purpose or outcomes of Art I.

For a time, I had myself convinced that this dissimilarity must be a result of the amount of time I (and apparently, my critical friend as well) had spent in the literature in the past few years, while obviously—as the pitch of a self-aggrandizing assumption goes—my teacher-participants hadn't spent enough (Figure 6).

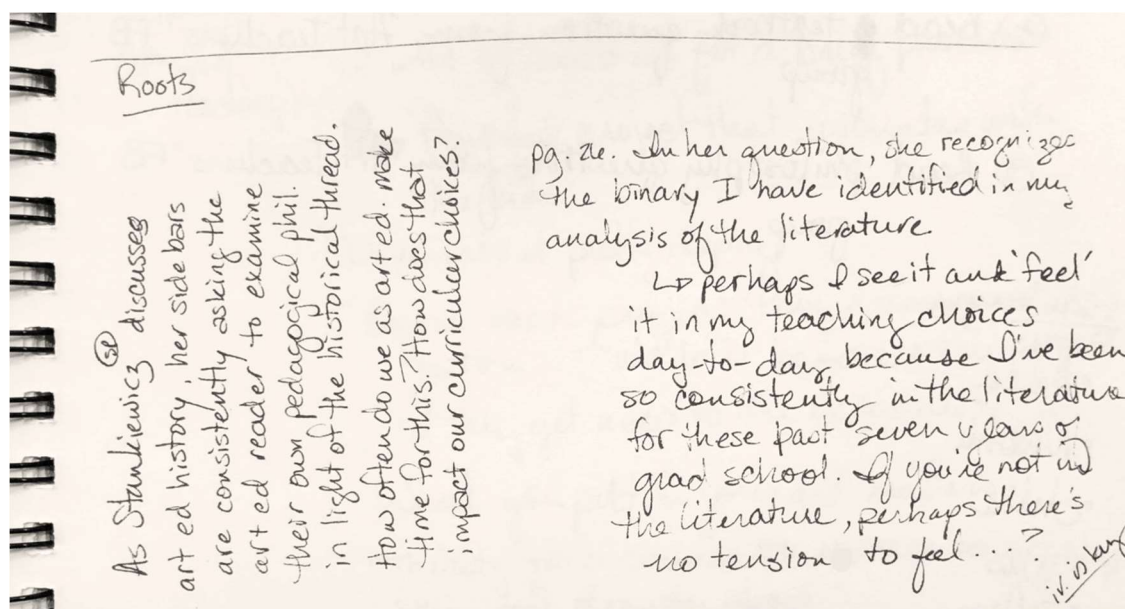


Figure 6. Notes on *Roots* by Stankiewicz. Reading through *Roots of Art Education*, I question why I recognize binary tensions in art education, but my teacher-participants do not.

However, as I transcribed the lesson stories, I noticed the frequency with which they strung together various ideas, vocabulary, concepts, art historical references, critical questioning, etc., with the conjunction “and.” Remembering rhizomatic study and the potential of “and” to dissolve binary thinking as people continuously create semiotic chains, I was suddenly aware that I was seeing this phenomenon at work in the teacher-participants’ stories. Perhaps the teachers were not articulating any frustration with philosophical binaries in their work because they had already dissolved them through the

power of a three-letter coordinating conjunction. Here are examples from each teacher-participants' narrative with the word "and" italicized for emphasis:

***Naomi***

*And* for Hispanic Heritage Month, we look at the artwork of Frida Kahlo. *And* the underlying thing was—or is—that she dealt with a lot of pain, *and* she used her artwork to push through pain. Because our school is like half Hispanic, half African-American, pretty much...you know...that idea of their voice, *and* does their voice matter?, *and* just the weight of things that they're carrying before [the Covid-19 pandemic]. Right? So, we've been talking a lot about whose responsibility is it to tell the story *and* the visual activist. *And* so, we looked at ways that artists...this is an Afro-Latino artist...are challenging the narrative. *And* then, I talked about creating an ezine...I had them create one.

***Helen***

*And* we start by talking about activist art. *And* we're basically making mini-posters, Andy Warhol style, where they make a few prints in different colors. *And* it's very basic. This is Art I, *and* I am not a printmaker. So...you know...these are...What is it called when you have multiple layers of ink in the print? Anyways, it's not that. It's the most simple printmaking that you can do. But we look at Andy Warhol. They choose the color schemes that they want, *and* then they build posters. We basically attach their prints together to make large posters, *and* then we hang them in the hallway. So we start by talking about environmental *and*

social issues of our time because that is usually what activism is stemmed from throughout history, *and* obviously, today it's extremely significant in modern and contemporary art.

***Wes***

*And* what we did...we would take all the pipe drawings...*and* this is a big 6A school, so you're probably looking at maybe like four or five hundred kids who did this project. We put them all on the wall...it doesn't look like there's a wall there because there's so many of these pipe drawings. *And* it's just phenomenal. *And* like I said, none of these kids have any prior knowledge. They come in thinking it's a blow-off class. That it's...you know...there's no right or wrong answers. But then they get this lesson, *and* it's very specific, *and* very sort of...math-integrated. Yeah. But like I said, I've done it at the middle school *and* high school, *and* I've had, like, one hundred percent success rate.

***Ethan***

*And* so, this started...because I noticed my art one curriculum was too painting heavy, as I like paintings, that's kind of my default fallback...So, I had a project that was based on abstract expressionism *and* looking at the New York School. *And* I was like, 'well, that's a good spot, something I can get rid of.' *And* I had already talked about Rauschenberg...so I thought to lean into the combines *and* then bring in some contemporary artists: Sarah Sze, that kind of thing...Jimmy Durham...artists that build sculptural structures out of everyday materials. *And* then a teacher down



the hall...was doing assemblage based on Congolese power figures...the minkisi figures...*and* those are kind of found object materials that represent a spiritual defense. *And* so, we structured this as a group project...couple of reasons: A) like I said, we needed a sculpture project. Then, B) assemblage is really cheap because you can do it with basically scrap cardboard as your structural basis. We threw in some paper mâché if they needed to build things themselves, *and* then everything else we just had them bring in. We did it as a group project. So what they did...we did it on strengths *and* fears.

### ***Julia***

*And* with Art I, I think the biggest thing that they get out of it is confidence...So they come in on day one *and* go, 'Oh, miss, hey, I can't draw. I don't know how to do any of this kind of thing.' *And* the way that I present it...I try to break it down as basic as I possibly can. *And* then once we get that basic skill, then I build up on it. *And* so that that kinda creates a...you know... 'Can you draw a line?' 'Yes.' 'OK, you just made art. Now you make that line a circle, *and* you just made a shape.' ...*and* kind of go in simple so that they can understand that art is something that you learn *and* that you can do if you pay attention *and* put the practice into it. It's not just a talent that some people have *and* some people don't.

Suddenly, I rethought all my prior work in NVivo and started a brand new project. However, this time, rather than meticulously adding to the new project's stop list, I erased it entirely. This time I was looking at the frequency of all words, including the

most seemingly inconsequential. All words were included. I uploaded all the interview transcript data separated by teacher-participant, including portions of the group interview transcript in which that person was speaking. I ran a word frequency query across all five transcripts (Appendix E, Figure E1).

The result of this query showed “and” to be the most frequently occurring word in the transcript data with a frequency percentage of 3.85. While this result interested me, I was more interested to see what happened to the numbers when I queried for the frequency of all words in the data that was specifically the work I had copied into this chapter from the transcripts separated from the rest of the data for the themes of Purpose and Lessons<sup>3</sup>. To that end, I uploaded those data sets and selected them for the word frequency query (Appendix E, Figure E2). Figure E2 shows that “and” is still the most frequently occurring word. In the sections of the interviews I transcribed earlier in this chapter characterizing the purposes of the teacher-participants and the descriptions of their lessons that followed, its frequency had increased by almost a full percentage point. If nothing else, this query at least supported the “glowing” I had noticed in the word “and” and that the teacher-participants were indeed stringing together several ideas together within their teaching stories. If the reader will bear with me through a brief discussion of the TEKS in the next section, I will follow it with another section illustrating these idea chains in my teacher-participants' stories and how they can be mapped within the TEKS.

### **Navigating the TEKS**

---

<sup>3</sup> In my initial coding, the Lessons data was included in the data set for the theme of Activities.

As noted in the previous chapter in the section regarding the coding process, my initial looks at the data showed that the teachers in the study integrate all of Dillon's seven components of curriculum into their curricular decision-making and design. However, of more interest to me is how they bring those ideas to bear on the TEKS and, in so doing, then decide how to approach the state (or national) required standards in deploying the curriculum in their classrooms. To that end, in the one-on-one interviews, I asked the teacher-participants specifically, "What role do the Visual Art TEKS for High School Level 1 play in developing your Art I curriculum? How important are the TEKS for constructing/designing your curriculum? Why or why not?" I also asked, "What role do the National Core Art Standards for High School Level 1 play in developing your Art I curriculum? How important are the National Core Art Standards for constructing/designing your curriculum? Why or why not?"

Four of the five teacher-participants responded that the National Core Art Standards played no role at all in their curriculum design. Helen, in fact, had not heard of them. However, though he didn't say he used them in his planning, Wes did express some admiration for them: "As far as the National Core Art Standards though, the one advantage I would give them is the wording that they have: the creating, the presenting, the responding and connecting. I think that makes a lot more sense than what's going on in the TEKS." On the whole, the teacher-participants confirmed what I suspected: art teachers in Texas interact with the TEKS because they are the standards mandated by our state law, but they do not look to the National Standards when making curriculum decisions. Ethan put it this way, "I think I've seen them in an email once and have not circled back to them all that often...I'm sure I've looked at them, but it was another one of

those overarching documents that doesn't seem to...you know?...How many umbrella documents that give you a vague idea of what you're gonna do do you need?"

On the other hand, the TEKS played a role in each teacher-participant's curriculum, albeit a slightly different role from person to person. For Julia, at least initially, the TEKS' requirement to teach the elements of art and principles of design are the primary organizing factor for her curriculum: "I would say at the beginning, [the TEKS] play a pretty big part because, you know...introducing the elements and principles and tying those in is kind of the main part of the, you know, the general TEKS." However, she goes on to express some frustration with the generality of the TEKS that several other teacher-participants expressed as well: "But a lot of the TEKS are very open...like, implement...you know...creativity. Ok. Well, we do that in every lesson, and so it's like in every lesson you can kind of put every TEK there because they are...so open." At the end of her response, she re-emphasized the primacy of the 7+7 in the TEKS and, as a result, in her curriculum as well: "But I think that basis of the general TEKS to implement the elements and principles is kind of what I run most of my lessons over."

For all her checking of boxes in her lesson design process, Naomi's response regarding the TEKS was by far the shortest and most perfunctory of the five teacher-participants: "Oh, yeah. I mean, we have to put those on a board and be accountable for moving through them...you know...the four strands."

For Helen, the TEKS were a secondary factor in her lesson-planning: "I'm more focused on what [students are] going to find interesting than anything else. I'm more interested in that than the TEKS. I'm more interested in what the school wants me to do

and what they want to see for competitions, you know...all the competitions and TAEA and all that. That's the number one factor that drives my decisions.” Like Julia, Helen acknowledged the general applicability of the TEKS, saying, “...and I can teach a lot of TEKS with one project.” Further in our conversation, as she was trying to dismiss the importance of the TEKS in her curriculum planning, she ended up acknowledging that they played a larger role than she previously admitted:

“How important are the TEKS? Yeah...they play a really small, nonexistent role...OK, so that was probably an exaggeration. There are a couple of things that I do that I probably...it would not have occurred to me to do without the TEKS. So they do guide me. And obviously, I have to fulfill them. I have to put them in my lesson plans, you know? Before I started teaching high school, I probably hadn't done printmaking since I was in high school. Right? But it's in our TEKS, and I'm glad because I had to reteach myself some printmaking. And now I do a really awesome activist art printmaking project. It's and... I love it. But I probably I never would have thought of that if it wasn't in the TEKS, honestly. So I was exaggerating when I said they don't matter. They do. They do. They do matter. And I do have to fulfill them. I look at them.”

However, even after that concession to an unexpected benefit of using the TEKS in curriculum planning, Helen settled on their function in her planning as mostly a secondary or supporting one:

“I understand that I'm supposed to teach all of the TEKS, but honestly, I think of the projects first...for the most part. And then I plug in whatever

TEKS I can make fit. It's not the other way around. I'm not looking at the TEKS and thinking, oh, what project can I create from that? I've used them so that I know what I'm supposed to teach. I appreciate them in that way, 'OK. This is a basic art one class. You need to do all of this.' But then I come up with the projects on my own, and I plug the TEKS in."

Of all the teacher-participants, Wes expressed the most frustration with the imprecision of the TEKS:

"When I was in school, I was told what the TEKS were. Well, actually...my professors kind of laughed when they brought that up. Which I thought was funny, but they were kind of right...When they wrote the TEKS, they made them very vague. They're very wordy. They're very vague. And they said they did that so the teachers would have freedom...So I have never, in my 17 years of teaching, looked at a TEK and said, 'Oh, I like I agree with this. I'm going to do a six-week unit...' It's always been about, 'OK, what am I doing? I'm going to plug this in here. And that's just kind of what it feels like. My experience in East \_\_\_\_, we were required to put like TEKS on the board. We used to just have a blast, like laughing at all these people that were coming in from the state. And we're teaching, like, first-grade bilingual kids that have hardly any English-speaking ability. And we've got, you know, an entire paragraph...we're just like, 'why do we have to put...? These kids don't even understand.' Right? So...I have a love-hate relationship with the TEKS.

Like Helen, he tells about choosing lessons first and then “plugging in” TEKS where they fit secondarily. In reading through the document, he nearly recognizes the potential of the TEKS to inspire, or at least, inform one’s curriculum design, but then backs away from that potential, dissolving into frustration once again:

“So here's one: ‘collaborate to create original works of art.’ So, all right...They’re a class of 35. Do I really need a document...? I mean...but am I really thinking about making...but then it makes me think, ‘do I need to get the kids into working groups?’ I wrote a lesson in college when we were doing social theory about how important it was to work in groups...But they're very vague. For somebody who wrote a curriculum who is saying you need to do printmaking this six-weeks, you need to do sculpture or ceramics this six-weeks...And I even struggle when I'm putting in ceramic lessons, for example...like ‘how am I going to fit this in’ and I'm just trying to get them to learn how to wedge. I don't see it in...that’s where I think I’m a discipline-based fan. That's where my biggest complaint is because everything is so vague...We get into something like, you know, appropriate coursework for drawing, painting and making sculpture, ceramics, fiber design, digital art, media, photography, jewelry, mixed media. OK. And they create the TEK...using one of those disciplines. But what are we really breaking down the discipline into? Most of my teaching is how to use cross-hatching to develop a shadow. How to...well, you know, those techniques. How are you going to, you know...very technique-driven. If you're going to do

watercolors, are you going to use wet-on-wet?. So...this...it doesn't have that studio feel that we all love...and that's my problem. That...that's the nail in the coffin right there...yeah, for me...is that there is...none of that.

There is no studio feel. It feels very...like an English class, you know.”

At the end of our conversation about the TEKS, Wes concedes that he refers to the TEKS because it is the law. However, they are still a secondary consideration in his curriculum design: “But yeah, it's for me, you know, the TEKS are a necessary evil. I don't want to be a person that says that I don't use them because I do. But they have never driven my instruction.”

Ethan's story about the TEKS begins in much the same place as the other teacher-participants with indifference to the TEKS as a factor in curriculum design and with a certain level of frustration with their generality. However, his position changes with his experience of designing the Art I curriculum:

“So we actually did...when we designed the curriculum...we brought in somebody from Region 10, and she had done training with other disciplines. And so what they did was...they actually like said, ‘OK, here's the TEKS. Here's what you've got to teach in the year, and you're gonna have to sprinkle them out.’ And there were rules as to how you could sprinkle them out because you couldn't pack all the same thing into the same beat, you know? Like, it had to be done in a way...And so, we actually just cut up the TEKS and said like, ‘hey, now let's look at what were you doing’...you know...what already fits? What would fit well that we may have forgotten was a TEK?...that kind of thing. And so we did



actually lay out a document that has the TEKS in an overarching kind of format. And I gotta say, entering that process, you know...I read the TEKS when I first came to Texas, and, you know...I was aware of them. I knew where to find them. And, it was...I had a kind of like an indifference towards them because they are incredibly broad, you know...But then when you read them deeper...When you really have to go through, and like, cut them up, and divvy them up, and all that kind of thing. I really actually have a great respect for the way that document was designed. I mean, it was really designed so that you hit, like, important points...all these important points are there that you should cover. They're very important, but they're left with a broadness that allows you to do it well in the way that you want to do it. So, I actually really like that document now that I've worked with it more. It covers important concepts but doesn't get bogged down in the minutia, you know...I mean, you see this with other curriculums where it's like you have to teach about this person on this day, and it's like...I mean...we have this conversation in art all the time. It's like, 'oh, I really love this piece, but it's...you know...there's a lot of naked in it.' And it's like, yeah, I know that's a great concept to talk about, and I'm not opposed to showing Art I kids artwork that is important that has nudity in it. Like, I'm never gonna to put something over the statue of David. No, we're not going to do that. But...can you have the same conversation? You know? Like, I was looking at a Bouguereau painting because of his atmospheric perspective behind his figure groups. And it's

like, I've got two Bouguereau paintings here: one is of a naked lady, one is of a clothed lady. But I can make the same point with either one, you know? Like, let's do the clothes...And so, you know, when you can have those conversations using any artist, why would you have it with artists that don't look like the kids in the classroom? And so the TEKS really allow you that broadness of...like you need to cover these big picture ideas, but you don't cover them with anybody specifically.”

Nearly all of the teacher-participants agree on the TEKS's broad nature and the secondary role they play in their curriculum design: “plugging them into” lessons that have already been formulated. However, there is an undercurrent of potential for a more primary place for the TEKS in the curriculum decisions of teachers. Recognizing that potential in the stories of Helen and Wes, and then seeing it come full-circle in Ethan’s story, my own understanding of the TEKS is expanding. Seldom do art teachers engage in a close reading of the document the way that Ethan did. In fact, Helen described her experience this way:

“I’ve been using Eduphoria, and [the TEKS] look different. So when you look at the TEKS, like on the official TEA website, that’s not how they looked in Eduphoria. I mean, like straight up, I would be confused looking at the two. And I’m glad that we’re not using Eduphoria anymore. Because now when I put the TEKS in, they’re actually coming from what you see when you look at them.”

*[Jenny speaking: “Is that a district software application?”]*

“Eduphoria?... Yeah. I mean, our district was using it. We're not using it anymore... So we would look in the column... you click Art 1, and then a column would show up, and it would literally say ‘form’ and ‘value,’ ‘color,’ ‘drawing with line,’ ‘printmaking’... So, it was guiding me, like, these are the art things you need to be doing. And then you could... look into the TEKS in a more detailed way... like after that, you could click on another link, and then it was a little bit more detailed. Yes.

So even thinking about the four strands... I'm not sure I could spit them back... Yeah. So that's kind of a funny thing that I'm just realizing as I'm talking about it... is that the TEKS that I've been using are from Eduphoria, and they look different. They look different. And this year is the first year we're not using Eduphoria. So now, when I look at the TEKS, they actually look like they do... official. OK, so now I'm like, ‘oh, that's what Eduphoria was trying to show me.’ Crazy.”

Armed with Ethan’s more nuanced understanding of the document, I now recognize several aspects of the TEKS in the stories of Purpose and Lessons that the teacher-participants told. Art teachers—myself, Wes, Helen, Julia, for example—tend to think of the elements of art, the principles of design, and specific art media, and some discreet art processes when bringing the TEKS to mind; however, a close reading of the TEKS reveal other concerns—“big picture ideas” to borrow Ethan’s phrase—embedded in the text that are also reflected in the teacher-participants’ stories of purpose and lessons.

### **Mapping the TEKS in the Teachers’ stories of purpose and lessons**

To more easily illustrate how the teacher-participants' stories of purpose and lessons can be mapped across and through the TEKS, I included the High School Art Level I TEKS in a table and numbered each line for ease of reference (Appendix F, Table F1). In addition, for each teacher participant, I pulled brief segments from their stories of purpose and lessons and placed them in tables as well and number the segments according to which lines from the TEKS are alluded to through them (Tables 1-5). Following the construction of those tables, I overlaid that information back into the original text of the TEKS for each participant, using a digital highlighter set to 20% opacity. When particular portions of the TEKS were reflected in the teacher-participant's narrative more than once, those repetitions built up the opacity of the highlighter, creating darker areas in the text and showing particular areas of emphasis by the teacher in the purposes they hold and the lesson they described.

### *Naomi*

Table 1

*The TEKS from Table F1 mapped through Naomi's narratives*

Source Narrative	Narrative Segment	Corresponding TEKS
Story of Purpose	"their competence as a human"	32-36
	"comfortable with the creative process"	20-22
	"Describe one of your summer memories in color"	29, 43-44
	"cut out things that align with where you want to go"	66-68
	"start talking about somebody like Romare Bearden"	93-94
	"and composition and line and color"	44, 50-52
	"you're not just looking at things that you cut out: you're looking at shapes and blocks of color"	50-52
Lesson	"started them out with them having to submit a photograph of themselves as a superhero"	60-63, 74-75
	"give yourself permission to figure out what your gifting is"	13-19

---

“for Hispanic Heritage Month, we look at the artwork of Frida Kahlo”	80-84, 87-89
“she dealt with a lot of pain, and she used her artwork to push through pain”	100-102
“that idea of their voice, and does their voice matter?, and just the weight of things that they're carrying before [the Covid-19 pandemic]”	12-13, 27-31
“whose responsibility is it to tell the story and the visual activist”	19-20, 97-99
“creating an ezine”	77-79
“to include four images about themselves”	74-75
“respond to in their journal”	63-64
“They did drawings. They did digital manipulation”	66-68, 74-75, 77-79
“they had to create a presentation”	97-98, 107-109

---

1	19 TAC Chapter 117. Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Fine Arts
2	Subchapter C. High School
3	§117.301. Implementation of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Fine Arts, High School, Adopted 2013.
4	
5	§117.302. Art, Level I (One Credit), Adopted 2013.
6	(a) General requirements. Students may fulfill fine arts and elective requirements for graduation by successfully completing one or more of the following art courses: Art I, Art Appreciation, and Art and Media Communications I (one credit per course).
7	
8	
9	
10	(b) Introduction.
11	(1) The fine arts incorporate the study of dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts to offer unique experiences and empower students to explore realities, relationships, and ideas. These disciplines engage and motivate all students through active learning, critical thinking, and innovative problem solving. The fine arts develop cognitive functioning and increase student academic achievement, higher-order thinking, communication, and collaboration skills, making the fine arts applicable to college readiness, career opportunities, workplace environments, social skills, and everyday life. Students develop aesthetic and cultural awareness through exploration, leading to creative expression. Creativity, encouraged through the study of the fine arts, is essential to nurture and develop the whole child.
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	(2) Four basic strands—foundations: observation and perception; creative expression; historical and cultural relevance; and critical evaluation and response—provide broad, unifying structures for organizing the knowledge and skills students are expected to acquire. Each strand is of equal value and may be presented in any order throughout the year. Students rely on personal observations and perceptions, which are developed through increasing visual literacy and sensitivity to surroundings, communities, memories, imaginings, and life experiences as sources for thinking about, planning, and creating original artworks. Students communicate their thoughts and ideas with innovation and creativity. Through art, students challenge their imaginations, foster critical thinking, collaborate with others, and build reflective skills. While exercising meaningful problem-solving skills, students develop the lifelong ability to make informed judgments.
24	
25	
26	
27	
28	
29	
30	
31	
32	
33	
34	
35	
36	

37	(3) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended as possible illustrative examples.
38	
39	
40	(c) Knowledge and skills.
41	(1) Foundations: observation and perception. The student develops and expands visual literacy skills using critical thinking, imagination, and the senses to observe and explore the world by learning about, understanding, and applying the elements of art, principles of design, and expressive qualities. The student uses what the student sees, knows, and has experienced as sources for examining, understanding, and creating original artwork. The student is expected to:
42	
43	
44	
45	
46	
47	
48	(A) consider concepts and ideas from direct observation, original sources, experiences, and imagination for original artwork;
49	
50	(B) identify and understand the elements of art, including line, shape, color, texture, form, space, and value, as the fundamentals of art in personal artwork;
51	
52	
53	(C) identify and understand the principles of design, including emphasis, repetition/pattern, movement/rhythm, contrast/variety, balance, proportion, and unity, in personal artwork; and
54	
55	
56	
57	(D) make judgments about the expressive properties such as content, meaning, message, and metaphor of artwork using art vocabulary accurately.
58	
59	
60	(2) Creative expression. The student communicates ideas through original artwork using a variety of media with appropriate skills. The student expresses thoughts and ideas creatively while challenging the imagination, fostering reflective thinking, and developing disciplined effort and progressive problem-solving skills. The student is expected to:
61	
62	
63	
64	
65	
66	(A) use visual solutions to create original artwork by problem solving through direct observation, original sources, experiences, narrations, and imagination;
67	
68	
69	(B) communicate a variety of applications for design solutions;
70	
71	(C) use an understanding of copyright and public domain to appropriate imagery constituting the main focal point of

72	original artwork when working from images rather than direct observation or imagination;
73	
74	(D) create original artwork to communicate thoughts, feelings, ideas, or impressions;
75	
76	(E) collaborate to create original works of art; and
77	(F) demonstrate effective use of art media and tools in drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, fiber art, design, and digital art and media.
78	
79	
80	(3) Historical and cultural relevance. The student demonstrates an understanding of art history and culture by analyzing artistic styles, historical periods, and a variety of cultures. The student develops global awareness and respect for the traditions and contributions of diverse cultures. The student is expected to:
81	
82	
83	
84	
85	(A) compare and contrast historical and contemporary styles while identifying general themes and trends;
86	
87	(B) describe general characteristics in artwork from a variety of cultures, which might also include personal identity and heritage;
88	
89	
90	(C) collaborate on community-based art projects; and
91	(D) compare and contrast career and avocational opportunities in art.
92	
93	(4) Critical evaluation and response. The student responds to and analyzes the artworks of self and others, contributing to the development of the lifelong skills of making informed judgments and reasoned evaluations. The student is expected to:
94	
95	
96	
97	(A) interpret, evaluate, and justify artistic decisions in artwork by self, peers, and other artists such as that in museums, local galleries, art exhibits, and websites;
98	
99	
100	(B) evaluate and analyze artwork using a verbal or written method of critique such as describing the artwork, analyzing the way it is organized, interpreting the artist's intention, and evaluating the success of the artwork;
101	
102	
103	

104	(C) construct a physical or electronic portfolio by evaluating and analyzing personal original artwork to provide evidence of learning; and
105	
106	
107	(D) select and analyze original artwork, portfolios, and exhibitions to form precise conclusions about formal qualities, historical and cultural contexts, intentions, and meanings.
108	
109	

Figure 7. Naomi—Color Map. The TEKS tracked in Naomi's narrative overlaid in layers of transparent color on the TEKS document.

*Helen*

Table 2.

*The TEKS from Table F1 mapped through Helen's narratives*

Source Narrative	Narrative Segment	Corresponding TEKS
Story of Purpose	"what an impact it can have on their community"	12-13
	"just such a great thing to be aware of"	19-20, 80-84
	"and so many things that it has done in history, and how the purpose of it has changed"	85-86
	"The guy who did the first overlapping people in the fresco...Giotto"	97-98
Lesson	"printmaking assignment"	77-78
	"spend a lot of time developing the concept before we actually make the artwork"	62-64
	"one of the most powerful projects that resonates with the kids because they actually are really interested in activist art"	87-89
	"mini-posters, Andy Warhol style"	78, 81-82
	"color schemes"	44, 50-52
	"environmental and social issues of our time because that is usually what activism is stemmed from throughout history and obviously today it's extremely significant in modern and contemporary art"	19-20, 29-30, 85-86
	"you'll see everything from abortion to gun rights, LGBTQ rights...you know...science, religion, deforestation, animal rights. It's politics, right?"	12-13, 33-36
	"Shepard Fairey...Ai Wei Wei"	81-82
	"they complete what I call investigations"	62-64
	"thumbnail sketch"	69
	"if you start to do research and your mind changes and you don't feel as strongly about that issue anymore, that's a good thing. And it means that you're a flexible thinker and a compassionate thinker"	16, 21-22, 33
	"I ask them to become a little bit more educated and to read about it a little bit more and have an open mind. And it's okay if you change your mind. It's also okay if you think something differently from your parents"	16-19, 33
	"I get to experience firsthand what these kids care about"	45-47, 60-61, 74-75
	"based off of what other artists do"	93-94

1	19 TAC Chapter 117. Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Fine Arts
2	Subchapter C. High School
3	§117.301. Implementation of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Fine Arts, High School, Adopted 2013.
4	
5	§117.302. Art, Level I (One Credit), Adopted 2013.
6	(a) General requirements. Students may fulfill fine arts and elective requirements for graduation by successfully completing one or more of the following art courses: Art I, Art Appreciation, and Art and Media Communications I (one credit per course).
7	
8	
9	
10	(b) Introduction.
11	(1) The fine arts incorporate the study of dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts to offer unique experiences and empower students to explore realities, relationships, and ideas. These disciplines engage and motivate all students through active learning, critical thinking, and innovative problem solving. The fine arts develop cognitive functioning and increase student academic achievement, higher-order thinking, communication, and collaboration skills, making the fine arts applicable to college readiness, career opportunities, workplace environments, social skills, and everyday life. Students develop aesthetic and cultural awareness through exploration, leading to creative expression. Creativity, encouraged through the study of the fine arts, is essential to nurture and develop the whole child.
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	(2) Four basic strands—foundations: observation and perception; creative expression; historical and cultural relevance; and critical evaluation and response—provide broad, unifying structures for organizing the knowledge and skills students are expected to acquire. Each strand is of equal value and may be presented in any order throughout the year. Students rely on personal observations and perceptions, which are developed through increasing visual literacy and sensitivity to surroundings, communities, memories, imaginings, and life experiences as sources for thinking about, planning, and creating original artworks. Students communicate their thoughts and ideas with innovation and creativity. Through art, students challenge their imaginations, foster critical thinking, collaborate with others, and build reflective skills. While exercising meaningful problem-solving skills, students develop the lifelong ability to make informed judgments.
24	
25	
26	
27	
28	
29	
30	
31	
32	
33	
34	
35	
36	

37	(3) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended as possible illustrative examples.
38	
39	
40	(c) Knowledge and skills.
41	(1) Foundations: observation and perception. The student develops and expands visual literacy skills using critical thinking, imagination, and the senses to observe and explore the world by learning about, understanding, and applying the elements of art, principles of design, and expressive qualities. The student uses what the student sees, knows, and has experienced as sources for examining, understanding, and creating original artwork. The student is expected to:
42	
43	
44	
45	
46	
47	
48	(A) consider concepts and ideas from direct observation, original sources, experiences, and imagination for original artwork;
49	
50	(B) identify and understand the elements of art, including line, shape, color, texture, form, space, and value, as the fundamentals of art in personal artwork;
51	
52	
53	(C) identify and understand the principles of design, including emphasis, repetition/pattern, movement/rhythm, contrast/variety, balance, proportion, and unity, in personal artwork; and
54	
55	
56	
57	(D) make judgments about the expressive properties such as content, meaning, message, and metaphor of artwork using art vocabulary accurately.
58	
59	
60	(2) Creative expression. The student communicates ideas through original artwork using a variety of media with appropriate skills. The student expresses thoughts and ideas creatively while challenging the imagination, fostering reflective thinking, and developing disciplined effort and progressive problem-solving skills. The student is expected to:
61	
62	
63	
64	
65	
66	(A) use visual solutions to create original artwork by problem solving through direct observation, original sources, experiences, narrations, and imagination;
67	
68	
69	(B) communicate a variety of applications for design solutions;
70	
71	(C) use an understanding of copyright and public domain to appropriate imagery constituting the main focal point of

72	original artwork when working from images rather than direct observation or imagination;
73	
74	(D) create original artwork to communicate thoughts, feelings, ideas, or impressions;
75	
76	(E) collaborate to create original works of art; and
77	
78	(F) demonstrate effective use of art media and tools in drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, fiber art, design, and digital art and media.
79	
80	(3) Historical and cultural relevance. The student demonstrates an understanding of art history and culture by analyzing artistic styles, historical periods, and a variety of cultures. The student develops global awareness and respect for the traditions and contributions of diverse cultures. The student is expected to:
81	
82	
83	
84	
85	(A) compare and contrast historical and contemporary styles while identifying general themes and trends;
86	
87	(B) describe general characteristics in artwork from a variety of cultures, which might also include personal identity and heritage;
88	
89	
90	(C) collaborate on community-based art projects; and
91	
92	(D) compare and contrast career and avocational opportunities in art.
93	(4) Critical evaluation and response. The student responds to and analyzes the artworks of self and others, contributing to the development of the lifelong skills of making informed judgments and reasoned evaluations. The student is expected to:
94	
95	
96	
97	(A) interpret, evaluate, and justify artistic decisions in artwork by self, peers, and other artists such as that in museums, local galleries, art exhibits, and websites;
98	
99	
100	(B) evaluate and analyze artwork using a verbal or written method of critique such as describing the artwork, analyzing the way it is organized, interpreting the artist's intention, and evaluating the success of the artwork;
101	
102	
103	

104	(C) construct a physical or electronic portfolio by evaluating and analyzing personal original artwork to provide evidence of learning; and
105	
106	
107	(D) select and analyze original artwork, portfolios, and exhibitions to form precise conclusions about formal qualities, historical and cultural contexts, intentions, and meanings.
108	
109	

Figure 8.. Helen—Color Map. The TEKS tracked in Helen's narrative overlaid in layers of transparent color on the TEKS document.



*Wes*

Table 3.

The TEKS from Table F1 mapped through Wes's narratives

Source Narrative	Narrative Segment	Corresponding TEKS
Story of Purpose	"I want them to go to the museum, and I want them to be able to identify one work"	19
	"enjoy my class"	13-14
	"a general understanding of how to draw"	77
	"an introduction to all the disciplines of art"	77-79
	"the kids to be themselves"	12-13, 21-22
	"enjoy the process of creating"	20-22
	"discipline of being able to work and create for an hour each day"	63-64
Lesson	"they needed to learn value"	44, 50-52
	"They take their ruler. They have to measure it. It's either two inches or three inches wide. They have to draw right angles, and you have to tell them it has to be at right angles. Then they curve their pipe, and at each every time the pipe curves, it has to have connectors. Those connectors are also one inch"	77
	"do the design...the layout"	53-56
	"shading... the highlights are gonna be on the corner of where the connectors go...right here. And then, in the middle is your highlight, and then your dark side...midtone and highlight"	43-44, 50-52, 63-64
	"I have never seen a kid not be successful with this particular lesson"	13-14
	"they get this lesson, and it's very specific, and very sort of...math-integrated"	17-18

1	19 TAC Chapter 117. Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Fine Arts	37	(3) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended as possible illustrative examples.
2	Subchapter C. High School	38	
3	§117.301. Implementation of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Fine Arts, High School, Adopted 2013.	39	
4		40	(c) Knowledge and skills.
5	§117.302. Art, Level I (One Credit), Adopted 2013.	41	(1) Foundations: observation and perception. The student develops and expands visual literacy skills using critical thinking, imagination, and the senses to observe and explore the world by learning about, understanding, and applying the elements of art, principles of design, and expressive qualities. The student uses what the student sees, knows, and has experienced as sources for examining, understanding, and creating original artwork. The student is expected to:
6	(a) General requirements. Students may fulfill fine arts and elective requirements for graduation by successfully completing one or more of the following art courses: Art I, Art Appreciation, and Art and Media Communications I (one credit per course).	42	
7		43	
8		44	
9		45	
10	(b) Introduction.	46	
11		47	
12	(1) The fine arts incorporate the study of dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts to offer unique experiences and empower students to explore realities, relationships, and ideas. These disciplines engage and motivate all students through active learning, critical thinking, and innovative problem solving. The fine arts develop cognitive functioning and increase student academic achievement, higher-order thinking, communication, and collaboration skills, making the fine arts applicable to college readiness, career opportunities, workplace environments, social skills, and everyday life. Students develop aesthetic and cultural awareness through exploration, leading to creative expression. Creativity, encouraged through the study of the fine arts, is essential to nurture and develop the whole child.	48	(A) consider concepts and ideas from direct observation, original sources, experiences, and imagination for original artwork;
13		49	
14		50	(B) identify and understand the elements of art, including line, shape, color, texture, form, space, and value, as the fundamentals of art in personal artwork;
15		51	
16		52	
17		53	(C) identify and understand the principles of design, including emphasis, repetition/pattern, movement/rhythm, contrast/variety, balance, proportion, and unity, in personal artwork; and
18		54	
19		55	(D) make judgments about the expressive properties such as content, meaning, message, and metaphor of artwork using art vocabulary accurately.
20		56	
21		57	
22		58	
23	(2) Four basic strands—foundations: observation and perception; creative expression; historical and cultural relevance; and critical evaluation and response—provide broad, unifying structures for organizing the knowledge and skills students are expected to acquire. Each strand is of equal value and may be presented in any order throughout the year. Students rely on personal observations and perceptions, which are developed through increasing visual literacy and sensitivity to surroundings, communities, memories, imaginings, and life experiences as sources for thinking about, planning, and creating original artworks. Students communicate their thoughts and ideas with innovation and creativity. Through art, students challenge their imaginations, foster critical thinking, collaborate with others, and build reflective skills. While exercising meaningful problem-solving skills, students develop the lifelong ability to make informed judgments.	59	
24		60	(2) Creative expression. The student communicates ideas through original artwork using a variety of media with appropriate skills. The student expresses thoughts and ideas creatively while challenging the imagination, fostering reflective thinking, and developing disciplined effort and progressive problem-solving skills. The student is expected to:
25		61	
26		62	
27		63	
28		64	
29		65	
30		66	(A) use visual solutions to create original artwork by problem solving through direct observation, original sources, experiences, narrations, and imagination;
31		67	
32		68	(B) communicate a variety of applications for design solutions;
33		69	
34		70	(C) use an understanding of copyright and public domain to appropriate imagery constituting the main focal point of
35		71	
36			
72	original artwork when working from images rather than direct observation or imagination;	104	(C) construct a physical or electronic portfolio by evaluating and analyzing personal original artwork to provide evidence of learning; and
73		105	
74	(D) create original artwork to communicate thoughts, feelings, ideas, or impressions;	106	
75		107	(D) select and analyze original artwork, portfolios, and exhibitions to form precise conclusions about formal qualities, historical and cultural contexts, intentions, and meanings.
76	(E) collaborate to create original works of art; and	108	
77	(F) demonstrate effective use of art media and tools in drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, fiber art, design, and digital art and media.	109	
78			
79			
80	(3) Historical and cultural relevance. The student demonstrates an understanding of art history and culture by analyzing artistic styles, historical periods, and a variety of cultures. The student develops global awareness and respect for the traditions and contributions of diverse cultures. The student is expected to:		
81			
82			
83			
84			
85	(A) compare and contrast historical and contemporary styles while identifying general themes and trends;		
86			
87	(B) describe general characteristics in artwork from a variety of cultures, which might also include personal identity and heritage;		
88			
89			
90	(C) collaborate on community-based art projects; and		
91			
92	(D) compare and contrast career and avocational opportunities in art.		
93	(4) Critical evaluation and response. The student responds to and analyzes the artworks of self and others, contributing to the development of the lifelong skills of making informed judgments and reasoned evaluations. The student is expected to:		
94			
95			
96			
97	(A) interpret, evaluate, and justify artistic decisions in artwork by self, peers, and other artists such as that in museums, local galleries, art exhibits, and websites;		
98			
99			
100	(B) evaluate and analyze artwork using a verbal or written method of critique such as describing the artwork, analyzing the way it is organized, interpreting the artist's intention, and evaluating the success of the artwork;		
101			
102			
103			

Figure 9.. Wes—Color Map. The TEKS tracked in Wes's narrative overlaid in layers of transparent color on the TEKS document.

*Ethan*

Table 4.

*The TEKS from Table F1 mapped through Ethan's narratives*

Source Narrative	Narrative Segment	Corresponding TEKS
Story of Purpose	"communal experience of self-reflection and discussion"	16-19
	"we're making full citizens of this world"	21-22, 35-36
	"give the kids a space to process all of the things that are going on in this world"	33-34
	"to make friends, and to be a little goofy, and to get a little messy, and physically be able to move"	13-14, 17-19
	"kids that spend their time with me retelling stories...like a lot of our stuff is connected to memory, and reflection on your life, and ritual"	29-34, 45-47, 74-75
	"here's a writing component. Then run it past your neighbor: What are they going to do? How?...like, you exchange ideas. And so now you've got this idea of teamwork"	16-17, 31-34, 74-75, 76
	"I want them to be able to make art without an adult, ever. Like I want them to be able to sit there and go, 'I have an idea. I want to communicate that idea. I know the steps to execute that.'"	31-32, 74-75
	"Nobody needs a prompt...They came out of this an artist that has ideas and wants to share those ideas"	19-22, 74-75
Lesson	"it's half inspired by assemblage and half inspired by power figures from the Congo"	80-84, 85-86
	"based on abstract expressionism and looking at the New York School"	85-86, 87-89
	"materials that represent a spiritual defense"	97-98
	"scrap cardboard as your structural basis... threw in some paper mâché if they needed to build things"	60-61, 77-79
	"strengths and fears. They had to write a list of things that were their personal strengths and things that were their personal fears"	30-32, 45-47, 74-75
	"find objects that were metaphorical representations of those things"	32-34, 57-59, 60-61
	"Last year when we did it, there were associations to school shootings, things of that nature that	27-31

Source Narrative	Narrative Segment	Corresponding TEKS
	are...you know...and obviously...the kids fear things that everybody else fears	
	“we were able to have some good conversations with kids...reassuring conversations with kids”	12-13
	“we actually covered the interior of this space with black paper and cut out little eye holes and put, like, little look-at-your-own-risk...and a little sign that said, ‘This is a collection of all of our fears. It is scary.’ And, it gave an explainer. And, it also gave informed consent”	97-99, 107-109
	“show students multiple examples of genius from all races and backgrounds and ethnicities, then eventually it's going to be really hard for them to be racist if they celebrate genius that is non-white male multiple times in their course”	87-89, 93-96
	“Nam June Paik is a non-white artist. Sarah Sze, female, non-white artist. You've got Jimmy Durham, who's a Native American artist. And then you're looking at the Congolese power figures, and you're blending that with Robert Rauschenberg.”	19-20, 85-86, 97-99
	“they go, ‘hey, that's me. That's a me that went out into the world with my attitudes, and my ideas, and my skin, and my life. And they were successful, and we're celebrating them. Maybe I can go out into the world and be successful and celebrated.’”	12-13

1	19 TAC Chapter 117. Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Fine Arts	37	(3) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that
2	Subchapter C. High School	38	must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended
3	§117.301. Implementation of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Fine	39	as possible illustrative examples.
4	Arts, High School, Adopted 2013.	40	(c) Knowledge and skills.
5	§117.302. Art, Level I (One Credit), Adopted 2013.	41	(1) Foundations: observation and perception. The student develops and
6	(a) General requirements. Students may fulfill fine arts and elective requirements	42	expands visual literacy skills using critical thinking, imagination, and
7	for graduation by successfully completing one or more of the following art	43	the senses to observe and explore the world by learning about,
8	courses: Art I, Art Appreciation, and Art and Media Communications I (one credit	44	understanding, and applying the elements of art, principles of design,
9	per course).	45	and expressive qualities. The student uses what the student sees,
10	(b) Introduction.	46	knows, and has experienced as sources for examining, understanding,
11	(1) The fine arts incorporate the study of dance, music, theatre, and the	47	and creating original artwork. The student is expected to:
12	visual arts to offer unique experiences and empower students to explore	48	(A) consider concepts and ideas from direct observation, original
13	realities, relationships, and ideas. These disciplines engage and motivate	49	sources, experiences, and imagination for original artwork;
14	all students through active learning, critical thinking, and innovative	50	(B) identify and understand the elements of art, including line,
15	problem solving. The fine arts develop cognitive functioning and increase	51	shape, color, texture, form, space, and value, as the
16	student academic achievement, higher-order thinking, communication, and	52	fundamentals of art in personal artwork;
17	collaboration skills, making the fine arts applicable to college readiness,	53	(C) identify and understand the principles of design, including
18	career opportunities, workplace environments, social skills, and everyday	54	emphasis, repetition/pattern, movement/rhythm,
19	life. Students develop aesthetic and cultural awareness through	55	contrast/variety, balance, proportion, and unity, in personal
20	exploration, leading to creative expression. Creativity, encouraged through	56	artwork; and
21	the study of the fine arts, is essential to nurture and develop the whole	57	(D) make judgments about the expressive properties such as
22	child.	58	content, meaning, message, and metaphor of artwork using art
23	(2) Four basic strands—foundations: observation and perception; creative	59	vocabulary accurately.
24	expression; historical and cultural relevance; and critical evaluation and	60	(2) Creative expression. The student communicates ideas through original
25	response—provide broad, unifying structures for organizing the knowledge	61	artwork using a variety of media with appropriate skills. The student
26	and skills students are expected to acquire. Each strand is of equal value	62	expresses thoughts and ideas creatively while challenging the
27	and may be presented in any order throughout the year. Students rely on	63	imagination, fostering reflective thinking, and developing disciplined
28	personal observations and perceptions, which are developed through	64	effort and progressive problem-solving skills. The student is expected
29	increasing visual literacy and sensitivity to surroundings, communities,	65	to:
30	memories, imaginings, and life experiences as sources for thinking about,	66	(A) use visual solutions to create original artwork by problem
31	planning, and creating original artworks. Students communicate their	67	solving through direct observation, original sources,
32	thoughts and ideas with innovation and creativity. Through art, students	68	experiences, narrations, and imagination;
33	challenge their imaginations, foster critical thinking, collaborate with	69	(B) communicate a variety of applications for design solutions;
34	others, and build reflective skills. While exercising meaningful problem-	70	(C) use an understanding of copyright and public domain to
35	solving skills, students develop the lifelong ability to make informed	71	appropriate imagery constituting the main focal point of
36	judgments.		
72	original artwork when working from images rather than direct	104	(C) construct a physical or electronic portfolio by evaluating and
73	observation or imagination;	105	analyzing personal original artwork to provide evidence of
74	(D) create original artwork to communicate thoughts, feelings,	106	learning; and
75	ideas, or impressions;	107	(D) select and analyze original artwork, portfolios, and exhibitions
76	(E) collaborate to create original works of art; and	108	to form precise conclusions about formal qualities, historical
77	(F) demonstrate effective use of art media and tools in drawing,	109	and cultural contexts, intentions, and meanings.
78	painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, fiber art, design,		
79	and digital art and media.		
80	(3) Historical and cultural relevance. The student demonstrates an		
81	understanding of art history and culture by analyzing artistic styles,		
82	historical periods, and a variety of cultures. The student develops		
83	global awareness and respect for the traditions and contributions of		
84	diverse cultures. The student is expected to:		
85	(A) compare and contrast historical and contemporary styles while		
86	identifying general themes and trends;		
87	(B) describe general characteristics in artwork from a variety of		
88	cultures, which might also include personal identity and		
89	heritage;		
90	(C) collaborate on community-based art projects; and		
91	(D) compare and contrast career and avocational opportunities in		
92	art.		
93	(4) Critical evaluation and response. The student responds to and analyzes		
94	the artworks of self and others, contributing to the development of the		
95	lifelong skills of making informed judgments and reasoned		
96	evaluations. The student is expected to:		
97	(A) interpret, evaluate, and justify artistic decisions in artwork by		
98	self, peers, and other artists such as that in museums, local		
99	galleries, art exhibits, and websites;		
100	(B) evaluate and analyze artwork using a verbal or written method		
101	of critique such as describing the artwork, analyzing the way it		
102	is organized, interpreting the artist's intention, and		
103	evaluating the success of the artwork;		

Figure 10. Ethan—Color Map. The TEKS tracked in Ethan's narrative overlaid in layers of transparent color on the TEKS document.

**Julia**

Table 5.

*The TEKS from Table F1 mapped through Julia's narratives*

Source Narrative	Narrative Segment	Corresponding TEKS
Story of Purpose	"confidence"	12-13
	"“Can you draw a line?” ‘Yes.’ ‘OK, you just made art. Now you make that line a circle, and you just made a shape.’”	50-52, 63-64, 77-79
	"so that they can understand that art is something that you learn and that you can do if you pay attention and put the practice into it"	63-64
	"give them their first projects back and let them compare how they grew as an artist and their confidence within their skills"	63-64, 104-106
Lesson	"introducing the elements of art, we add that element to our paper every day"	50-52
	"we have an elementary line, a junior high line, and a high school line...we have our straight. our curly, and then we have our textured...they call it the ‘eyelash line’"	57-59
	"“Do you have three lines?” ‘Yes.’ ‘Do you have three spaces of value?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Do you have three shapes, organic and geometric?’ ‘Yes, you do.’ You have your form"	50-52, 77-79
	"and then we bring in principles. So, we talk about movement, and we talk about emphasis, and we bring pattern into this one as well"	53-56
	"the kids are really excited about it because they're successful on a project"	13-14, 20-22
	"I display those ending projects like crazy because that first time they come around the corner, it's all...and they work harder for you throughout the year because they know that you believe, and you appreciate all their work"	20-22, 63-64



1	19 TAC Chapter 117. Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Fine Arts	37	(3) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that
2	Subchapter C. High School	38	must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended
3	§117.301. Implementation of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Fine	39	as possible illustrative examples.
4	Arts, High School, Adopted 2013.	40	(c) Knowledge and skills.
5	§117.302. Art, Level I (One Credit), Adopted 2013.	41	(1) Foundations: observation and perception. The student develops and
6	(a) General requirements. Students may fulfill fine arts and elective requirements	42	expands visual literacy skills using critical thinking, imagination, and
7	for graduation by successfully completing one or more of the following art	43	the senses to observe and explore the world by learning about,
8	courses: Art I, Art Appreciation, and Art and Media Communications I (one credit	44	understanding, and applying the elements of art, principles of design,
9	per course).	45	and expressive qualities. The student uses what the student sees,
10	(b) Introduction.	46	knows, and has experienced as sources for examining, understanding,
11	(1) The fine arts incorporate the study of dance, music, theatre, and the	47	and creating original artwork. The student is expected to:
12	visual arts to offer unique experiences and empower students to explore	48	(A) consider concepts and ideas from direct observation, original
13	realities, relationships, and ideas. These disciplines engage and motivate	49	sources, experiences, and imagination for original artwork;
14	all students through active learning, critical thinking, and innovative	50	(B) identify and understand the elements of art, including line,
15	problem solving. The fine arts develop cognitive functioning and increase	51	shape, color, texture, form, space, and value, as the
16	student academic achievement, higher-order thinking, communication, and	52	fundamentals of art in personal artwork;
17	collaboration skills, making the fine arts applicable to college readiness,	53	(C) identify and understand the principles of design, including
18	career opportunities, workplace environments, social skills, and everyday	54	emphasis, repetition/pattern, movement/rhythm,
19	life. Students develop aesthetic and cultural awareness through	55	contrast/variety, balance, proportion, and unity, in personal
20	exploration, leading to creative expression. Creativity, encouraged through	56	artwork; and
21	the study of the fine arts, is essential to nurture and develop the whole	57	(D) make judgments about the expressive properties such as
22	child.	58	content, meaning, message, and metaphor of artwork using art
23	(2) Four basic strands—foundations: observation and perception; creative	59	vocabulary accurately.
24	expression; historical and cultural relevance; and critical evaluation and	60	(2) Creative expression. The student communicates ideas through original
25	response—provide broad, unifying structures for organizing the knowledge	61	artwork using a variety of media with appropriate skills. The student
26	and skills students are expected to acquire. Each strand is of equal value	62	expresses thoughts and ideas creatively while challenging the
27	and may be presented in any order throughout the year. Students rely on	63	imagination, fostering reflective thinking, and developing disciplined
28	personal observations and perceptions, which are developed through	64	effort and progressive problem-solving skills. The student is expected
29	increasing visual literacy and sensitivity to surroundings, communities,	65	to:
30	memories, imaginings, and life experiences as sources for thinking about,	66	(A) use visual solutions to create original artwork by problem
31	planning, and creating original artworks. Students communicate their	67	solving through direct observation, original sources,
32	thoughts and ideas with innovation and creativity. Through art, students	68	experiences, narrations, and imagination;
33	challenge their imaginations, foster critical thinking, collaborate with	69	(B) communicate a variety of applications for design solutions;
34	others, and build reflective skills. While exercising meaningful problem-	70	(C) use an understanding of copyright and public domain to
35	solving skills, students develop the lifelong ability to make informed	71	appropriate imagery constituting the main focal point of
36	judgments.		
72	original artwork when working from images rather than direct	104	(C) construct a physical or electronic portfolio by evaluating and
73	observation or imagination;	105	analyzing personal original artwork to provide evidence of
74	(D) create original artwork to communicate thoughts, feelings,	106	learning; and
75	ideas, or impressions;	107	(D) select and analyze original artwork, portfolios, and exhibitions
76	(E) collaborate to create original works of art; and	108	to form precise conclusions about formal qualities, historical
77	(F) demonstrate effective use of art media and tools in drawing,	109	and cultural contexts, intentions, and meanings.
78	painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, fiber art, design,		
79	and digital art and media.		
80	(3) Historical and cultural relevance. The student demonstrates an		
81	understanding of art history and culture by analyzing artistic styles,		
82	historical periods, and a variety of cultures. The student develops		
83	global awareness and respect for the traditions and contributions of		
84	diverse cultures. The student is expected to:		
85	(A) compare and contrast historical and contemporary styles while		
86	identifying general themes and trends;		
87	(B) describe general characteristics in artwork from a variety of		
88	cultures, which might also include personal identity and		
89	heritage;		
90	(C) collaborate on community-based art projects; and		
91	(D) compare and contrast career and avocational opportunities in		
92	art.		
93	(4) Critical evaluation and response. The student responds to and analyzes		
94	the artworks of self and others, contributing to the development of the		
95	lifelong skills of making informed judgments and reasoned		
96	evaluations. The student is expected to:		
97	(A) interpret, evaluate, and justify artistic decisions in artwork by		
98	self, peers, and other artists such as that in museums, local		
99	galleries, art exhibits, and websites;		
100	(B) evaluate and analyze artwork using a verbal or written method		
101	of critique such as describing the artwork, analyzing the way		
102	it is organized, interpreting the artist's intention, and		
103	evaluating the success of the artwork;		

Figure 11. Julia—Color Map. The TEKS tracked in Julia's narrative overlaid in layers of transparent color on the TEKS document.

Despite the data showing the teacher-participants attending to both form-centered and life-centered concerns in the development of their classroom curriculum, reviewing the Color Maps of all the teacher-participants (Figures 20-24) reveals a pattern that seems to fall along binary lines. All of the teachers attend to *Introduction (1)*, *Knowledge and Skills (1)*, and *Knowledge and Skills (2)*; however, they do not all attend equally to *Introduction (2)*, *Knowledge and Skills (3)*, or *Knowledge and Skills (4)*. Both Wes and Julia show no color in their maps in *Introduction (2)* or *Knowledge and Skills (3)*. Wes also shows no color in his map in the *Knowledge and Skills (4)* section, while Julia only shows highlighting of lines 104-106. Wes and Julia could also be described as more form-centered leaning in their purpose and lesson narrative descriptions, while the other three teacher-participants, more life-centered leaning.

This difference could arise for various reasons. The most obvious of those reasons being that perhaps Wes and Julia have lessons focusing specifically on those other sections of the TEKS that were not captured by the limited focus of the questions of this particular inquiry. Or, perhaps it is because “the student is expected to” verbiage of *Knowledge and Skills (1)* causes them to focus their efforts there since that is the only place in the TEKS where that phrase is used. Regardless, the pattern of their more limited coverage of the TEKS is evident in the Color Maps (Figures 20-24).

It is important to note that the only concepts marked for mastery (line 57-59) in the TEKS document are the elements of art (lines 70-72) and the principles of design (lines 73-76), contributing to teachers like Julia putting so much emphasis on the 7+7. However, as the verbiage of the TEKS shows (lines 47, 64-65, 84, and 96), there are many more art concepts and practices that students are “expected to” spend time on in the



art classroom, apparently even if that time spent does not result in mastery. For the most part, the teacher-participants—especially Naomi, Helen, and Ethan—seem to share an awareness of the importance of these concepts and practices by the breadth of highlighting in the Color Maps, but do not necessarily ascribe them to the state art standards in their narratives. Though we can see how the TEKS could support the teachers’ focus on these concepts and practices in their curriculum building from the mapping shown in the charts above, most of the teacher-participants expressed that the TEKS were a secondary consideration for them. Instead, the teacher-participants seem to place more value on support from their peers through a show of tacit understanding of the primacy of certain aims and activities in their pedagogical practice. Evidence of how the teacher-participants were seeking this acknowledgment became apparent to me in the stories of my teacher-participants. I explore this finding in the section that follows.

### **“You know”**

In addition to “and,” one other phrase began to grow and glow into significance for me as I transcribed the purposes and lessons narrative: the phrase “you know.” Following a similar process as the one I used with “and,” I started by looking at the frequency of the phrase “you know” across all the interview data. Because I already knew that “you know” did not appear in the interview data as often as “and” and because it is a two-word phrase, I could not simply run a word frequency query in NVivo. Instead, I set up the “text search” operation to look specifically for instances of the phrase “you know” in the interview transcripts (Appendix E, Figure E3).

The results of the query shown in Figure E3 established a baseline for comparison to a second query. For the second query, I ran the same text search operation (Appendix E, Figure

E4). However, for this one, I limited the interview transcript data specifically to the sections themed for purpose and the teacher-participants' descriptions of their lessons from the group interview as these were the sections wherein I started to recognize the teacher-participants' reliance on the phrase.

As I suspected, NVivo confirmed an increased percentage in the frequency with which the phrase "you know" occurred in those specific sections of the interview transcripts. It occurred to me then that for a more accurate indication of the increase in frequency, I would need to take out those two sections out of the transcripts and run a query on the remaining data as including those two sections was likely bumping up the frequency in the first query. So, I created a document that was all of the interview transcript data except with the two sections of interest removed. Then, I ran the text search operation a third time on the new compilation of data (Appendix E, Figure E5). This final query showed an even more considerable difference between in the frequency percentage, confirming the trend I had noticed in the interview transcripts: the teacher-participants were using the phrase "you know" with more frequency in the sections of narratives in which they explained their conceptions of the purpose of Art I and described their lessons.

### **Becomings and the creative process**

One final observation I made while combing through the data was how the teacher-participants talked of teaching in similar ways to how artists talk about creating art. They talk of refining lessons, evaluating and improving them. They talk of designing to solve challenges, of wondering about other outcomes, and of thinking differently. The work is never mastered. There is always a way to make it better or look at it in a new way. Curriculum work is a work in progress:

*Naomi:*

“[Teaching is] a very conscious decision-making process, you know. Or maybe more of an intuitive...because I think part of what art is, is you have this idea, and then you go through the artistic process and then something else happens, you know. Like even if you're like, ‘well, I'm gonna draw a tree. It may not be the tree that you envision in your mind, but it's still some version of the tree. Or you might go through ten different versions till you get to the one that you are okay with...And also, part of what art is to me...is creative problem-solving. I'm taking something apart. I'm putting it back together. I'm restructuring it. I'm thinking outside the box. So for us, you know, in...the teacher environment...You can give me this book that tells me all these great projects, but we don't have access to any of these supplies. Then, that's just pretty pictures in a book, you know? A lot of it is having to adapt to the environment...And, you know, there's value in the process. I hone in on ‘there's value in the process.’...I think it's a combination of this is what is provided: These are the resources we have. This is what the need is, you know? And then, there's that element of surprise. There's that kid that has a bad attitude. There's the one that has an emotional disturbance, you know? So you're juggling all of these things at once...you're using your artist-mind to figure it out, how to make it work. I think when you are effective in your job, it looks easy to people....When you're used to living on the edge and having to make do and having to adapt, then you're just, you know, you do

it in such rapid fashion that it looks like everybody should be able to do it, but they can't. You know..."

**Helen:**

*[describing her current Art I curriculum]*

"And that and that has been a pretty good flow. The only thing is that I'm thinking of changing is it has been so project-based. I sometimes wonder if I couldn't show them more if I maybe did less or smaller projects. I sometimes wonder if I started to...I don't know...change the size of them, bring them down, maybe not make them so big...If I could fit more breadth and more development before the project. So that's what I've been wondering..."

*[describing the development of her printmaking project]*

"And I've been developing it. This is just my fourth year of teaching. And I started doing this in my first year and have since built upon it a little bit each year to try and make it better.

**Wes**

"I like the kids to think differently, and even for me to think differently. So I really spend a lot of time trying to figure out how the kids learn. And I learn from my students, I hate to say it, I do. I learn a lot from my students...Even my cell phone policy. I mean, I have teachers...I know a lot of teachers in the state, if I told them my cell phone policy, they would probably, like, disown me. But [the students] use it to make...I've seen when I stepped back and said, 'Use your cell phone as a tool for

composition and zoom in. You have a problem with the detail? Why don't you just zoom in a little on that picture you took?' I mean, yeah, I've been in heated meetings with some high ups about that kind of behavior, and it's like, 'Hello.' But then they're going to turn around and say, 'How are you teaching technology?' But yeah...that was something I learned, and I let the kids learn from each other. As an active artist, I am always seeking just new stuff. I'm always going out to places like \_\_\_\_ Studios on open Saturday that they have there. I'm going to museums, and I'm looking at things...you know, it's just a spur of the moment. 'They make that with rubber bands? Oh, I could do that. Let's get some rubber bands.'"

**Ethan**

*[describing the challenges of teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic]*  
The nerd in me really kind of likes the intellectual challenge of trying to

thread this needle of 'how do you create compelling, a compelling academic space that is virtual and in-person and that is studio-based?'

*[describing the importance of art as a result of the creative process]*

And so...a lot of teachers are going to Pinterest and the Internet. And I've looked on the Internet. There's nothing good on there. I mean, there is not a lot of good content on the Internet...Even the places that say they're good content, I looked through, and I'm like, 'This is a this is a cookbook.' This is a cookbook, you know...like all you have is a 10-step process as to how to make a thing and all your kids make the exact thing, like, who likes that? Who is into that? Like, what is the where is the kid in that you know? And then you get these kids in...Then you got VASE and all the

other things where it's like, 'go replicate a photo.' Just move it over here because we only teach that one flippin' process of replicating one square of a pencil drawing...like, you're going to have a kid for their entire four years copy photographs from like...Really? And so the problem is that art education is too separated from the discipline of being an artist and knowing that adventure and that experience.”

***Julia***

“...and I started doing this in my first year and have since built upon it a little bit each year to try and make it better...I've got lots and lots of stuff and sources...that I go and dig in. And then, you know, from previous years, I kind of figure out what worked and what didn't work. And the things that work, I duplicate them, but I kind of change them up a little bit so they're not the exact same.”

**Summary of findings**

Analysis of the teacher-participants' narratives revealed consideration of seven curriculum components—teacher, student, context, purpose, subject matter, activities, and outcomes—as they are presented by Dillon (2009), albeit with a distinctively visual art bent. In addition, teacher-participants' conceptions of purpose, subject matter, and activities are closely tied to the passionate attachments of the teacher-participants as revealed through their narratives and show a wide range of linkages to topics reviewed in the literature. Although the teacher-participants plainly express that TEKS are a secondary consideration in their curriculum decisions, mapping their lessons shows multiple points of connection to the TEKS document. None of the teacher-participants verbalized a sense of tension arising from

incorporating diverse principles and practices into their curriculums. Further analysis revealed associative thinking by the teacher-participants through their use of the word “and” in their narratives. In this way, they created chains of viewpoints and ideas—even ones ostensibly set against one another in the summary literature—that are all gathered into their curriculum and ultimately incorporated into their practice. Rather than validate these chains of choices by justifying them through the state standards document, they attempted instead to gain acceptance of the propositional content of their lessons from their peers, as shown by increased use of the phrase “you know” used within particular themes in their narratives. Neither are the curriculum-making stories of the teacher-participants ever finished, but rather they are assemblages constantly in progress, always open to wonderings, refinement, and new connections.

## **Chapter V**

### **Discussion and Recommendations for Future Research**

#### **Making the researcher**

Like Naomi stated in her narrative, “Art is the lens with which I see the world.” Over the years, I had learned to approach lesson-planning, and curriculum-making like an art-making endeavor, in ways similar to those of my teacher-participants: First, I considered myself, my student, the context, the various purposes as I conceived of them, the subject matter, possible activities, and outcomes I desired. These were the materials I placed together in some intuitive arrangement in time and space and involving some “element of surprise” (to borrow from Naomi’s story again) until a curriculum coalesced. The process, as she explained it, goes a bit like this: “I’m gonna draw a tree. It may not be the tree that you envision in your mind, but it’s still some version of the tree...you might go

through ten different versions till you get to the one that you are okay with.” My artist-mind was fine with this process.

And yet, during my graduate studies, my scholar-mind fell prey to the idea that I was “doing it wrong.” My thinking leading up to this study went like this: if I could show through my research the need to codify the TEKS more prescriptively, there would be less room for uncertainty and ambiguity on the part of art educators (aka. me) because, surely, uncertainty and ambiguity meant “wrong answers.” While the artist in me was comfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty of the processes of assemblage that I recognized in my curriculum planning, the scholar/educator in me was not. She believed in positivist thought and measurable outcomes: “the logic that underscores the notion that one person can observe a teacher teaching, analyze it along a checklist of criteria, and assign an either/or label: she is doing what she is supposed to, or she is not. She is effective or ineffective; Her lessons are teacher-led or student-centered; her students are engaged or disengaged” (Strom & Martin, 2017, p. 6).

Imagine the relief artist-me experienced when scholar-me found rhizomatic study:

“...rhizomatics offers multiple concepts with which to *think differently* about teaching, education, and life more generally. The language of rhizomatics breaks with fundamental notions of positivism, providing a vocabulary of multiples. fluidity, flux, expansion, and difference...rhizomatics is concerned with *processes* over states—becoming over being—because, if the world indeed is always changing from one moment to the next, in a constant state of transformation (or



becoming), studying *what is* would be a fruitless endeavor. By the time one has decided what *it is*, it would have become something else” (Strom & Martin, 2017, p. 7).

My artist-brain is familiar with rhizomatic thought (even I didn’t know a name for it existed) because a completed artwork is rarely actually “complete” in the artist’s mind. There are always revisions that could be made, decisions that could have gone another way and, therefore, remain to be investigated. (Clandinin, 2013; Strom & Martin, 2017). Beyond my personal intellectual growth through this study, I am also encouraged by the space that rhizomatic thinking opens in art education policy.

### **Binaries and Becomings**

I started this research process amid frustration with either/or, all-or-nothing approaches that predominated the art education journals and texts I was reading in graduate school. Driven by a desire to provide the very best art education I could for my students, I sought that “elusive grail: The Perfect Art Education” (Lankford, 1992, p.195) by attending graduate school and studying for a Doctorate. I positioned myself on a journey to an end: with the degree would come the answer, the “best” curriculum, the “perfect art education.”

Confronted with numerous texts in my studies that were seemingly at odds with each other and with the state standards my district had hired me to teach, I was led to wonder how other art teachers handle those ideological oppositions in their practice or if they were engaging in reconciling them at all. Evolving from that wondering, the questions I asked in my research were, “How do the teachers in my study navigate the varied and competing discourses in art education while developing the day-to-day

curriculum for use in their classrooms?” And, “In what ways do the teachers in my study make use of the TEKS in developing their classroom curriculum?”

My colleagues and this study have reminded me that there is no one right answer to teaching art, no one “best” curriculum; there is only becoming. What forms the constellation creating my curriculum today (Strom & Martin, 2017) will not be the same next year when I face a new group of Art I students. Each year of teaching and learning provides me with more experiences and complexities to reflect on and work into my curriculum, not fewer. I am not whittling away my experiences and knowledge into some imaginary “one right way;” I am sculpting additively and responding to shifting circumstances in an effort to find what resonates with my students as they are right now in this space. And as I share my ideas about teaching art with others, I will emphasize the relational and “[shift] to questions of process (how does it work?) and context (how does it work *for you*?) (Strom & Martin, 2017, p. 114).

### **The TEKS and art education policy**

As the findings of this research have shown, it’s the TEKS’s breadth and generality that allow for coverage of all the important points of art education and provide multiple linkage points for teachers. However, the findings also show that the prevailing impression among art teachers about the breadth and generality of the TEKS is a negative one. Nearly all my teacher-participants, including myself but excepting Ethan, relegated the TEKS to a secondary role in their curriculum making. However, there is evidence in the findings of the potential for the TEKS to support and inform our curriculum designs in more comprehensive ways.

And while future revisions of the TEKS can continue to fold in new thinking about purposes of and practice in the visual arts, which the study of *Art Education* by Efland or *Art Education in Practice* by Stankiewicz tells us is all but inevitable, policy change will likely not dictate curriculum change. If my teacher-participants' present attitudes are any indication, the state-mandated standards are something viewed by art teachers to be “plugged in” to their lessons at the end of design. Not only did my teacher-participants not express any concern about the gap between the state standards and their daily practice, but there also seems to be a shared understanding that art teachers will consider nearly every other component of curriculum design before considering the TEKS.

As the study findings indicated, art teachers have a great deal of autonomy in their curricular choices, and they are capable of integrating many approaches and purposes (including the apparent incompatible dichotomies of the literature) into their curriculum through what scholar-me now recognizes as rhizomatic thinking and artist-me has always been familiar with as associative thinking. The findings also indicated that art educators seek validation of their choices from other art educators. Further inquiry into the teacher-participants' frequent use of the phrase “you know” shows their attempts to gain acceptance of the propositional content of their purposes and lessons from their peers (see Östman, 1981). This finding implies that to awaken art teachers to the TEKS's potential as a starting point for curriculum design, they will have to be convinced collectively.

The findings also suggest that it would be wise to remember that art teachers fundamentally see themselves as creative artist practitioners when trying to convince art educators to make any changes to their pedagogical ideologies or practices. Those seeking

to engender change in art education would be better served establishing new understandings among art educators rather than mandating change via policy or entirely disaffecting their current values or practices by presenting binary oppositions or false dichotomies, as educational reform literature so often does. Particularly with those who identify as creative or who have come to rely on the creative process in their endeavors as many art teachers do, the idea of “honing” (see Gabora, 2019) might be applied to reform efforts and professional development opportunities for art educators.

### **Potential pitfalls**

But what happens when “honing” is unsuccessful, or rather than expanding their notions of art pedagogy and purposes, art educators choose instead to pursue a more limited ideology and practice. For instance, Wes has training in what he refers to as “social theory”; however, rather than incorporate that into his curriculum, he chooses instead to focus on skill-building in Art I:

“I got into this social theory program, which was very different from the way I teach now. And I think it's important, but...part of this social theory were things like ‘why aren't women artists represented in curriculum?’ We would spend an entire year on that... I would say that's kind of where my philosophy is now with social theory mainly being maybe AP classes, maybe the GT kids. But I just don't feel like the Art I is the place for it, unfortunately.”

In my reading of the TEKS, these questions of “social theory” are included in the introductory paragraphs and captured in words and phrases such as “making the fine arts applicable to...everyday life/develop...cultural awareness/nurture and

develop the whole child/develop the lifelong ability to make informed judgments.” If my analysis of the data was is an accurate reflection, the more life-centered issues of art education are supported in *Introduction (2)*, *Knowledge and Skills (3)*, and *Knowledge and Skills (4)* of the TEKS.

The same generality and flexibility that can help reterritorialize the institutional work of art education if enough people follow liberatory lines of flight in their curriculum over time (Strom and Martin, 2017) can indeed provide equal space for less liberatory practice (Reynolds & Webber, 2016). In fact, Reynolds and Webber counsel that “[c]urriculum scholars in this nomadic, dis/positioned line of flight cannot abrogate the political responsibility of their work. Simply admitting that curriculum studies scholarship and the rest are the result of political and ideological struggles, constructed through discourse and potentially nomadic, limits the very essence and function of curriculum studies. There needs to be investment in the political agency that can be engendered in this work”(2016, p. 7). Admittedly, it was tempting for me to use rhizomatics to find only the positive in the narratives of my teacher-participants whose practice was narrower in the scope of its purpose and aims, but I need to be more honest in my work than that. Openings to liberatory practice are available in the TEKS and must be put to use for students' sake. As Ethan put it in his narrative:

“And so the TEKS really allow you that broadness of like you need to cover these big, big picture ideas, but you don't cover them with just [any artist]...I find this, like, hugely problematic. If you are in a school that is like 80 percent black, why are you talking about white male painters? Like, you have so many black painters to choose from? Like,

why?...[Students] don't need to go from DaVinci to Picasso to Warhol...Why don't you start with Charles White, you know? You can start with Charles White, and then you can move to Basquiat or Kerry James Marshall, you know...and have that entire conversation. And then, of course, I'm getting to the point where 70 percent of my classes are female because of...I don't want to call it the 'toxic masculinity' that prevents people from taking painting classes...and so, it's like, 'well, shouldn't 70 percent of the people that I show in my class then be women artists?' Why do we need Jackson Pollock? Because, you know, there was an equally talented, if not more talented, woman standing next to him the whole time making paintings. We could just slip him out and slip her in, and the kids are never going to notice. And, they're still going to learn abstract expressionism and what it meant to society and all of that. And who cares? Jackson Pollock won't mind. He's dead. He's not going to make a big stink about it any more than a rotting corpse already does, you know.”

Ethan shows us an example here of what Strom and Martin mean when they assert, “The fabric of everyday life in the classroom provides a multitude of opportunities for lines of flight” (Strom & Martin, 2017, p. 10). But, we must remember, too, that lines of flight are not permanent. This line of flight exists in Ethan’s classroom for his students because he is there, and with him, his decisions about the purposes and aims of art education and the lesson he created as a result. The molar lines of institutions are not easily reconfigured even if teachers follow molecular lines in, through, and with the

TEKS. However, Strom and Martin offer this hope: “Multiple lines of flight, reconstructed in classrooms over time, have the potential to disrupt the neoliberal influences and enable a rethinking of teaching and learning that attends to the equitable inclusion of all individuals (teachers and students) and provide opportunities for the realization of both imagined and not-yet-thought becomings” (p. 10). As Ethan shared this insight with me, so too may I share it with others, creating “multiple lines of flight reconstructed in classrooms over time.”

### **Recommendations for future study**

The most obvious short-coming of this research project is its focus on teaching art in Texas because Texas is among the handful of states that do not follow the National Core Art Standards. Therefore, research that replicated this study but looked at sample groups in states that do adhere to the National Core Art Standards could provide additional insight and points for comparison.

In addition to that recommendation, this work presents both personal and professional issues for me that warrant further investigation. On a personal level, I am interested in the outcomes of this study on the becomings of the teacher-participants. To know how the research process influenced (if at all) the becomings of the teacher-participants interests me a great deal. Throughout my research journal, I scribbled many questions pertaining to this line of inquiry. For instance, those scribbles include: “All of the teachers mentioned in interviews or correspondence how, even though it was a Zoom meeting, it was nice to talk to someone about art education. How do those conversations influence their teaching? What would happen if more of these opportunities occurred?”

And also, “Do the teachers have any significant thoughts about their teaching as a result of seeing their Color Map data?”

On a professional level, I am interested in learning more about two concepts as they relate to art education, curriculum development, and education policy and reform efforts. First is the idea of “honing.” Those seeking to engender change in art education have predominantly attempted to do so by creating a discourse that stands in opposition to existing discourse, forcing art teachers into the position of having to cut ideological ties with their current values or practices. Perhaps if those seeking change did so through the notion of “honing,” their ideas would find a broader, more receptive audience among creative thinkers who are generally open to processes of refinement through critique.

Additionally, during my research, I stumbled across Maggie MacLure’s conception of research analysis as “wunderkammer”—“a wonder cabinet” (2013, p. 180). In her work, she discusses the concept of wunderkammer as a replacement for more arboreal forms of qualitative coding and writes of it as “an open-ended and ongoing practice of *making* sense. It would also recognize that the gaps and intervals that we make as we cut and code the flow of difference are possible openings for wonder” (2013, p. 181). And so, like the gaps and intervals for wonder she describes, while reading her discussions, I was led to consider areas where the metaphor of wunderkammer could create spaces for wonder and ambiguity such as scholarly research (as she suggests), curriculum design, and education policy.



## References

- Acuff, J. B. (2015). Failure to operationalize: Investing in multicultural art education. *Journal of Social Theory in Art Education*, 35, 30-43.
- Acuff, J. B. (2016). 'Being' a critical multicultural pedagogue in the art education classroom. *Critical Studies in Education*, 1-19.
- Akuno, E., Klepacki, L., Lin, M.-C., O'Toole, J., Reihana, T., Wagner, E., & Zapata Restrepo, G. (2015). Whose arts education? International and intercultural dialogue. In M. Fleming, L. Bresler, & J. O'Toole (Eds.), *The Routledge international handbook of the arts and education* (pp. 79-105). Routledge.
- Alvermann, D. E. (2000). Researching libraries, literacies, and lives: A rhizoanalysis. In E. A. St. Pierre, & W. S. Pillow (Eds.), *Working in the ruins: Feminist poststructural theory and methods in education* (pp. 114-129). Routledge.
- Anderson, T. (2003). Art education for life. *The International Journal of Art & Design*, 22(1), 58-66.
- Anderson, T., & Milbrandt, M. (1998). Authentic instruction in art: Why and how to dump the school art style. *Visual Arts Research*, 24(1), 13-20.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20715931>
- Anderson, T., & Milbrandt, M. K. (2005). *Art for life: Authentic instruction in art*. McGraw-Hill.
- Atkinson, D. (2006, February). School art education: Mourning the past and opening a future. *The International Journal of Art & Design*, 25(1), 16-27.
- Belzer, A., & Ryan, S. (2013). Defining the problem of practice dissertation: Where's the practice, what's the problem? *Planning & Changing*, 44(3/4), 195–207.

- Buchanan, I. (2017, August). Assemblage theory, or, the future of an illusion. *Deleuze Studies*, 11(3), 457-474.
- Burton, J., Horowitz, R., & Abeles, H. (1999). Learning in and through the arts: Curriculum implications. In E. B. Fiske (Ed.), *Champions of change: The impact of the arts on learning* (pp. 36-46). The Arts Education Partnership.
- Catterall, J. S., & Peppler, K. A. (2007, December 1). Learning in the visual arts and the worldviews of young children. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 37(4), 543-560.
- Center for Educator Development in Fine Arts. (2020, March 8). *Curriculum Frameworks*. <https://cedfa.org/downloads/artframework.pdf>
- Charman, H., & Ross, M. (2004, Autumn). *Contemporary art and the role of interpretation*. Tate Papers no. 2.  
<https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/02/contemporary-art-and-the-role-of-interpretation>
- Clandinin, D. J. (2013). *Engaging in narrative inquiry*. Left Coast Press, Inc.
- Clough, P., & Nutbrown, C. (2012). *A student's guide to methodology: Justifying enquiry* (Vol. 3rd). Sage Publications.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. Harper & Row.
- Davenport, M. (2000, Summer). Culture and education: Polishing the lenses. *Studies in Art Education*, 41(4), 361-375.
- Davis, B. (2013, July). A critique of social practice art: What does it mean to be a political artist? *International Socialist Review*, 90.

- Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*. (B. Massumi, Trans.) University of Minnesota Press.
- Dewey, J. (1934). *Art as Experience*. Group (USA).
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and Education* (Kindle ed.). Touchstone eBook by Simon and Schuster.
- Dillon, J. T. (2009). The questions of curriculum. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 41(3), 343-359.
- Downing, D., & Watson, R. (2004). *School art: What's in it?* National Foundation for Educational Research.  
<https://www.nfer.ac.uk/nfer/publications/VAL01/VAL01.pdf>
- Duncum, P. (2011). Engaging public space: Art education pedagogies for social justice. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 44(3), 348-363.
- Duncum, P. (2002, February). Visual Culture Art Education: Why, what and how. *International Journal of Art & Design*, 21(1), 14-23.
- Efland, A. (1976). The school art style: A functional analysis. *Studies in Art Education*, 17(2), 37-44. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1319979>
- Efland, A. D. (1990). *A history of art education: Intellectual and social currents in teaching the visual arts*. Teachers College Press.
- Eisner, E. (2002). *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*. Yale University Press.
- Fehr, D. E. (1994, Summer). Promise and paradox: Art education in the postmodern era. *Studies in Art Education*, 35(4), 209-217. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1320529>
- Freedman, K. (2003). *Teaching visual culture: Curriculum, aesthetics, and the social life of art*. Teachers College Press.

- Freedman, K., & Stuhr, P. (2004). Curriculum change for the 21st century: Visual culture in art education. In E. W. Eisner, & M. D. Day (Eds.), *Handbook of research and policy in art education* (pp. 815-828). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Freire, P. (2013). *Education for critical consciousness* (Bloomsbury Revelation ed.). Bloomsbury Academic.
- Gabora, L. (2019). Reframing convergent and divergent thought for the 21st century. In A. Goel, C. Seifert, & C. Freska (Eds.), *Proceedings of 41st annual meeting of the cognitive science society*.
- Galletta, A. (2013). *Mastering the semi-structured interview and beyond: From research design to analysis and publication*. New York University Press.
- Gergen, K. J. (2001). Psychological science in a postmodern context. *American Psychologist*, 56(10), 803-813.
- Greene, M. (1995). *Releasing the imagination: Essays on education, the arts, and social change*. Jossey-Bass.
- Greer, W. D. (1984, Summer). Discipline-Based Art Education: Approaching art as a subject of study. *Studies in Art Education*, 25(4), 212-218.
- Gude, O. (2004, January). Postmodern principles: In search of a 21st century art education. *Art Education*, 57(1), 6-15.
- Gude, O. (2009, November). The 2009 Lowenfield lecture: Art education for Democratic life. *Art Education*, 62(6), 6-11.
- Gude, O. (2013, January). New school art styles: The project of art education. *Art Education*, 6-15.

- Haanstra, F. (2010, October). Self-initiated art work and school art. *The International Journal of Art & Design*, 29(3), 271-282.
- Hamblen, K. A. (1997, Fall). Second Generation DBAE. *Visual Arts Research*, 23(2), 98-106.
- Hamblen, K. A. (2003). Local art knowledge: Within children's art work and outside school culture. *Visual Arts Research*, 29(57), 109-119.
- Hammond, Z. (2015). *Culturally responsive teaching and the brain: Promoting authentic engagement and rigor among culturally and linguistically diverse students*. Corwin.
- Hanely, C. (2019). Thinking with Deleuze and Guattari: An exploration of writing as assemblage. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 51(4), 413-423.
- Hathaway, N. E. (2013, May). Smoke and mirrors: Art teacher as magician. *Art Education*, 66(3), 9-15.
- Heijnen, E. (2015). Remixing the art curriculum: How contemporary visual practices inspire authentic art education.  
<https://repository.ubn.ru.nl/bitstream/handle/2066/143969/143969.pdf>
- Hetland, L., Winner, E., Veenema, S., & Sheridan, K. M. (2013). *Studio Thinking 2: The real benefits of visual arts education*. Teachers College Press.
- Heybach, J. (2009). Rescuing social justice in education: A critique of the NCATE controversy. *Philosophical Studies in Education*, 40, 234-245.
- Hickson, H. (2011). Critical reflection: Reflecting on learning to be reflective. *Reflective Practice*, 12(6), 829-839.

- Honan, E. (2007). Writing a rhizome: An (im)plausible methodology. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 531-546.
- Honan, E. (2014). Disrupting the habit of interviewing. *Reconceptualizing Educational Research Methodology*, 5(1), 1-17.
- Honan, E. (2015). Thinking rhizomatically: Using Deleuze in education policy contexts. In K. N. Gulson, M. Clarke, & E. B. Petersen (Eds.), *Educational policy and contemporary theory: Implications for research*. London and New York: Routledge.
- hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress*. New York: Routledge.
- Hunter-Doniger, T. (2018, January 2). "But he looks like me. I never saw an artist look like that": Making connections to social justice through art. *Art Education*, 71(1), 17-19.
- Kamhi, M. M. (2010). Modernism, postmodernism, or neither? A fresh look at "fine art". *Arts Education Policy Review*, 107(5), 31-38.
- Kamhi, M. M. (2010, April). The hijacking of art education. *Aristos*, 1-10.
- Kamhi, M. M., & Torres, L. (2008, March). What about the other face of contemporary art? *Art Education*, 53-58.
- Katwyk, T., & Seko, Y. (2018). Resilience beyond risk: Youth re-defining resilience through collective art-making. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 36(6), 609-619.
- Kim, J.-H. (2016). *Understanding narrative inquiry*. Sage Publishing.
- Knight, W. B. (2015). Culturally responsive teaching in art education. *International Journal of Arts Education*, 13(1), 70-89.

- La Porte, A. M., Speirs, P., & Young, B. (2008). Art curriculum influences: A national survey. *Studies in Art Education*, 49(4), 358-370.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2014, Spring). Culturally relevant pedagogy. *Harvard Educational Review*.
- Lanier, V. (1990). The future is behind us. *Canadian Review of Art Education*, 17(1), 51-62.
- Lankford, E. L. (1992). Philosophy of art education: Focusing our vision. *Studies in Art Education*, 195-200.
- Leake, M. (2014, September). Social engagement with contemporary art: Connecting theory with practice. *Art Education*, 67(5), 23-30.
- Lee, J., M.D. (2020, July 26). *A psychological exploration of Zoom fatigue*. Psychiatric Times. <https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/view/psychological-exploration-zoom-fatigue>
- Leung, G. (2010, September 16). *Nomadic Thinking*. Critical Legal Thinking. <https://criticallegalthinking.com/2010/09/16/nomadic-thinking/>
- Loughran, J. (2010). Seeking knowledge for teaching teaching: Moving beyond stories. *Studying Teacher Education*, 6(3), 221–226.
- Macgregor, J. W. (2011). Assemblage. In C. J. Stivale (Ed.), *Gilles Deleuze: Key Concepts* (2nd ed.). Acumen.
- MacLure, M. (2003). *Discourse in educational and social research (conducting educational research)*. Open University Press.

- MacLure, M. (2013). Classification or wonder: Coding as an analytic practice in qualitative research. In R. Coleman & J. Ringrose (Eds.), *Deleuze connections: Deleuze and research methodologies* (pp. 164–183). Edinburgh University Press.
- Masny, D. (2015). Problematizing qualitative educational research: Reading observations and interviews through rhizoanalysis and multiple literacies. *Reconceptualizing educational research methodology*, 6(1), 1-14.
- NAEA. (2016, March). *NAEA position statement on 21st century skills and visual arts education*. National Art Education Association.  
<https://www.arteducators.org/advocacy/articles/496-naeaposition-statement-on-21st-century-skills-and-visual-arts-education>
- Niculescu, R. M. (2015). Curriculum between theory and practice: A further approach of curriculum. *Journal Plus Education*, 22(2), 42–57.
- Oreck, B., Baum, S., & McCartney, H. (1999). Artistic talent development for urban youth: The promise and the challenge. In E. B. Fiske (Ed.), *Champions of change: The impact of the arts on learning* (pp. 64-78). The Arts Education Partnership.
- Ostman, J.-O. (1981). 'You know': *A discourse-functional study*. In H. Parret & J. Verschueren (Eds.), *Pragmatics & beyond: An interdisciplinary series of language studies*. John Benjamins.
- Peppler, K., & Davis, H. (2010). Arts and learning: A review of the impact of arts and aesthetics on learning and opportunities for further research. In K. Gomez, L. Lyons, & J. Radinsky (Eds.), *Learning in the disciplines: Proceedings of the 9th International Conference of the Learning Sciences* (Vol. 1, pp. 1000-1007). International Society of the Learning Sciences.



- Reynolds, W. M., & Webber, J. A. (Eds.). (2016). *Expanding curriculum theory: Dis/positions and lines of flight* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Robinson, L., & Maguire, M. (2010). The rhizome and the tree: Changing metaphors for information organisation. *Journal of Documentation*, 66(4), 604-613.
- Rolling Jr., J. H. (2013, March). Art as social response and responsibility: Reframing critical thinking in art education as a basis for altruistic intent. *Art Education*, 66(2), 6-12.
- Rollings, J. H., Jr. (2020). Making black lives matter: Toward an anti-racist artmaking and teaching agenda. *Art Education*, 73(6), 8–11.
- Rowley, J. (2012, March). Conducting research interviews. *Management Research Review*, 35(3/4), 260-271.
- Schmoker, M., & Marzano, R. J. (1999). Realizing the promise of standards-based education. *Educational Leadership*, 17-21.
- Sellers, M. (2015). working with (a) rhizoanalysis and working (with) a rhizoanalysis. *Complicity*, 12(1), 6-31.
- Shuman, A. (2006). Entitlement and empathy in personal narrative. *Narrative Inquiry*, 16, 148-155.
- Sinnema, C., Meyer, F., & Aitken, G. (2017). Capturing the complex, situated, and active nature of teaching through inquiry-oriented standards for teaching. *Journal of Teaching Education*, 68(1), 9–27.
- Sotirin, P. (2011). Becoming-woman. In C. J. Stivale (Ed.), *Gilles Deleuze: Key concepts* (2nd ed.). Acumen.

- Stankiewicz, M. (2001). *Art Education in Practice: Roots of art education practice*. Davis Publications.
- Stevenson, L. M., & Deasy, R. J. (2005). *Third space: When learning matters*. Arts Education Partnership.
- Stewart, M., & Walker, S. (2005). *Rethinking curriculum in art*. Davis Publications.
- Strom, K. J., & Martin, A. D. (2013). Putting philosophy to work in the classroom: Using rhizomatics to deterritorialize neoliberal thought and practice. *Studying Teacher Education*, 9(3), 219-235.
- Strom, K. J., & Martin, A. D. (2017). *Becoming-teacher: A rhizomatic look at first-year teaching*. Sense Publishers.
- Sukumar, P. T., & Metoyer, R. (2019, February 2). *Replication and transparency of qualitative research from a constructivist perspective*.
- Texas Education Agency. (2020, March 29). TEA.gov. <https://tea.texas.gov/>
- Texas Education Agency. (2020). *Campus and District Type Data Search*. Reports and Data. <https://tea.texas.gov/reports-and-data/school-data/campus-and-district-type-data-search>
- Thompson, C. M. (2014). The best of intentions: Leading us beyond the unfulfilled promises of arts integration. *Visual Inquiry: Learning & Teaching Art*, 3(3), 377-389.
- Thompson, C. M. (2015). Constructivism in the art classroom: Praxis and policy. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 116, 118-127.
- Thornton, A. (2012). *Artist, researcher, teacher A study of professional identity in art and education*. Intellect Books.

- Tripp, D. (1994). Teachers' lives, critical incidents, and professional practice. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 7(1), 65–76.
- Walker, M. A. (2014, Summer). From theory to practice: Concept-based inquiry in a high school art classroom. *Studies in Art Education: A Journal of Issues and Research in Art Education*, 55(4), 287-299.
- Walker, S. R. (2001). *Teaching meaning in artmaking*. Davis Publications.

## Appendices

### Appendix A Study Approval Letter



DIVISION OF RESEARCH  
Institutional Review Boards

### APPROVAL OF SUBMISSION

August 28, 2020

Jenny Lucas  
[jlucas@uh.edu](mailto:jlucas@uh.edu)

Dear Jenny Lucas:

On August 28, 2020, the IRB reviewed the following submission:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title of Study:	THE ART OF ASSEMBLAGE: A NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF HIGH SCHOOL ART TEACHERS AS CURRICULUM MAKERS
Investigator:	Jenny Lucas
IRB ID:	STUDY00002448
Funding/ Proposed Funding:	Name: Unfunded
Award ID:	
Award Title:	
IND, IDE, or HDE:	None
Documents Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HRP-502a Lucas.pdf, Category: Consent Form;</li> <li>• Interview Questions_Lucas.pdf, Category: Study tools (ex: surveys, interview/focus group questions, data collection forms, etc.);</li> <li>• HRP-503 Lucas.pdf, Category: IRB Protocol;</li> <li>• Sample Recruitment Email_Lucas.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials;</li> </ul>
Review Category:	Exempt
Committee Name:	Designated review
IRB Coordinator:	<u>Maria Martinez</u>



DIVISION OF RESEARCH  
Institutional Review Boards

The IRB approved the study on August 28, 2020; recruitment and procedures detailed within the approved protocol may now be initiated.

As this study was approved under an exempt or expedited process, recently revised regulatory requirements do not require the submission of annual continuing review documentation. However, it is critical that the following submissions are made to the IRB to ensure continued compliance:

- Modifications to the protocol prior to initiating any changes (for example, the addition of study personnel, updated recruitment materials, change in study design, requests for additional subjects)
- Reportable New Information/Unanticipated Problems Involving Risks to Subjects or Others
- Study Closure

Unless a waiver has been granted by the IRB, use the stamped consent form approved by the IRB to document consent. The approved version may be downloaded from the documents tab.

In conducting this study, you are required to follow the requirements listed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103), which can be found by navigating to the IRB Library within the IRB system.

Sincerely,

Research Integrity and Oversight (RIO)  
Office University of Houston, Division  
of Research 713 743 9204

[cphs@central.uh.edu](mailto:cphs@central.uh.edu)  
<http://www.uh.edu/research/compliance/irb-cphs/>

## Appendix B Schedule of questions for individual interviews

1. Please describe your professional background. How did you come to teach art?
2. Describe a semester/year of Art 1? What is the general progression of units, topics, or processes?
3. How does a day in Art 1 look? What are you doing? What are the students doing?
4. Are there atypical days? What do those look like?
5. How do you determine what you will teach? How you will teach it? What are your sources of information? ...inspiration? goals?
6. What do you perceive to be the impact or outcomes of the art curriculum as you teach it? What do the students who take the class come away with? How do you know?
7. Describe an ideal Art 1 curriculum. How close do you come to achieving it? If you aren't reaching it, describe the constraints that keep you from achieving it?
8. What role do the Visual Art TEKS for High School Level 1 play in developing your Art I curriculum? How important are the TEKS for constructing/designing your curriculum? Why or why not?
9. What role do the National Core Art Standards for High School Level 1 play in developing your Art I curriculum? How important are the National Core Art Standards for constructing/designing your curriculum? Why or why not?
10. What more would you like to tell me?

## Appendix C Text of email that followed the group interview

“Thank you again for sharing your lessons and thoughts with the group this afternoon. I find my interviews with you all to be very energizing. At the beginning of my research journey, I anticipated this part of the process would feel like work, but it has been quite the opposite.

Here are my two questions from the Art Teacher page on social media that I would like your insights on:

1) A teacher wrote, ‘My school has a 'school improvement committee' and I was asked what my source was for my curriculum. They were thinking like other teachers have a textbook. I don't use a textbook. I use what I've learned over the years, from other teachers' lessons, internet research and so on. I mean, I can't be the only art teacher that does planning like this...am I?’ What would your response to this teacher be?

2) Another teacher wrote, ‘A huge part of what we do is our own personal philosophy of art and teaching. When was the last time you looked at that? Do you focus on skill vs creativity? One-ness versus group? Future versus present?’ I'm not as interested in your response to these questions as this one: When you're planning lessons and developing curriculum, do you feel binary tensions like this teacher describes? If so, could you describe them or other philosophical questions that arise when you're creating your classroom curriculum? If you don't feel any philosophical tension when making curriculum choices, that's a fair answer too.

Thanks again,  
Jen”

## Appendix D Figures used in Chapter III

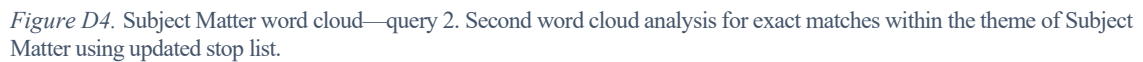


Figure D1. Autocoding of all interview transcripts. A chart of the initial coding references across all interview data.





Figure D2. Autocoding the theme of Subject Matter. A chart of coding references across the interview text coded for Subject Matter.





know	project	want	painting	teach	use	color	point	time			
		kids	try	let	talk	see	ideas	second	composition		
			thing	now	take	work	based	class	different	something	
	drawing	right	mean	need	maybe	teachers	theory	history	new	basically	place
even			weeks	six	lyrics	contemporary	way	practice	give	school	end
			design	research	feel	change	topics	value	learning	better	
start		make	going	bring	little	students	elements	every	called	curriculum	printmaking
	tell			two	lesson	might	build	group	part	always	
think	year	artists	big	good	line	sketch	social	sometimes	everything	people	person
								come	shading	many	cut
							book	structure	show	contour	materials

Figure D7. Subject Matter tree map—query 5. First tree map analysis for synonyms within the theme of Subject Matter.



Figure 8. Subject Matter word cloud—query 6. First word cloud analysis for generalizations within the theme of Subject Matter.

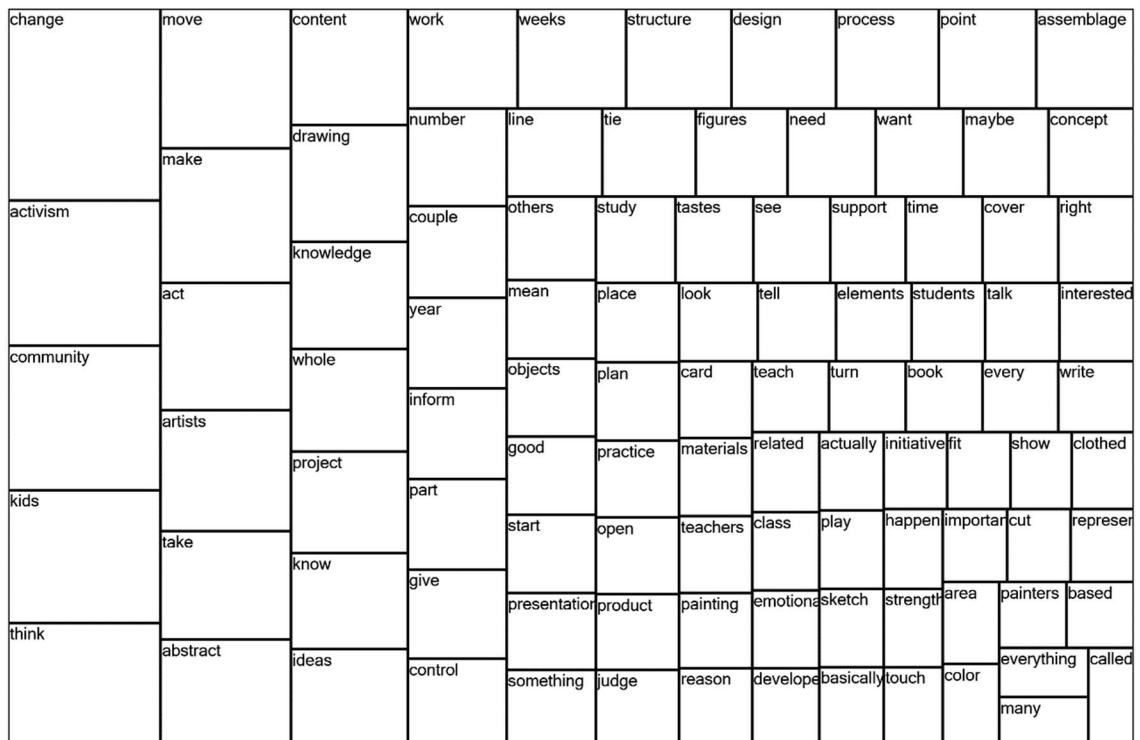


Figure D10. Subject Matter tree map—query 6. First tree map analysis for generalizations within the theme of Subject Matter.



## Appendix E Figures used in Chapter IV

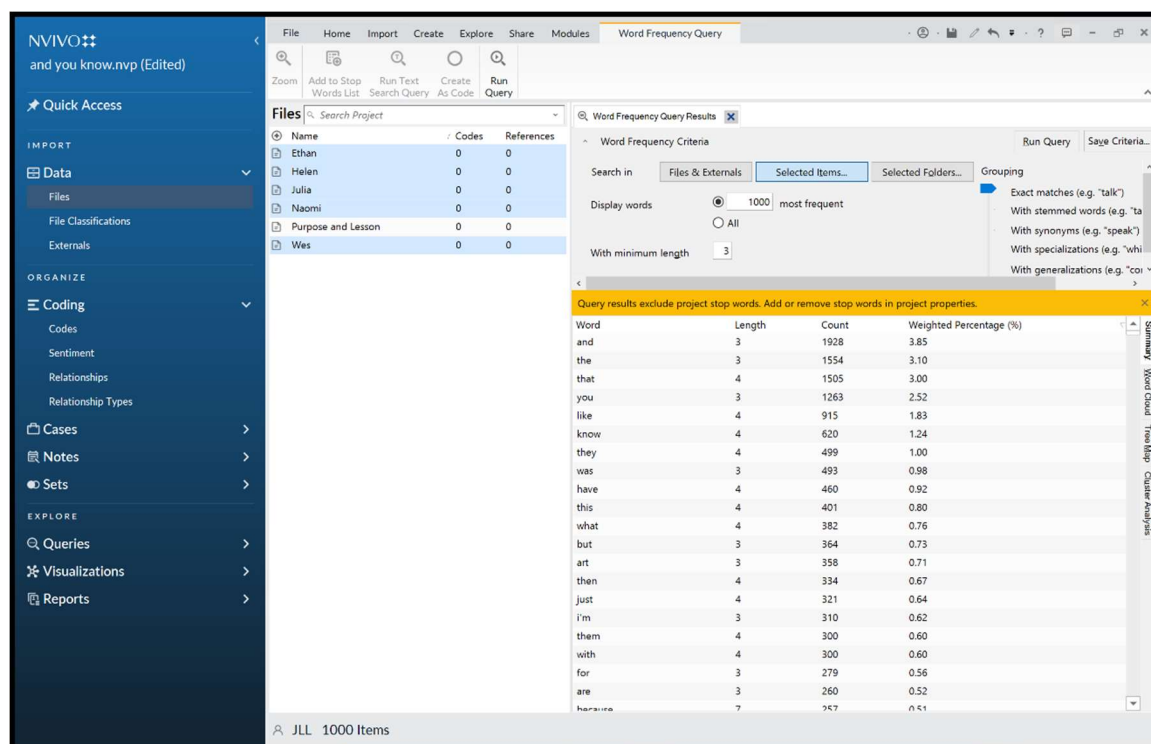


Figure E1. “And”—query one. A chart of the frequency of all words in all the transcript data.

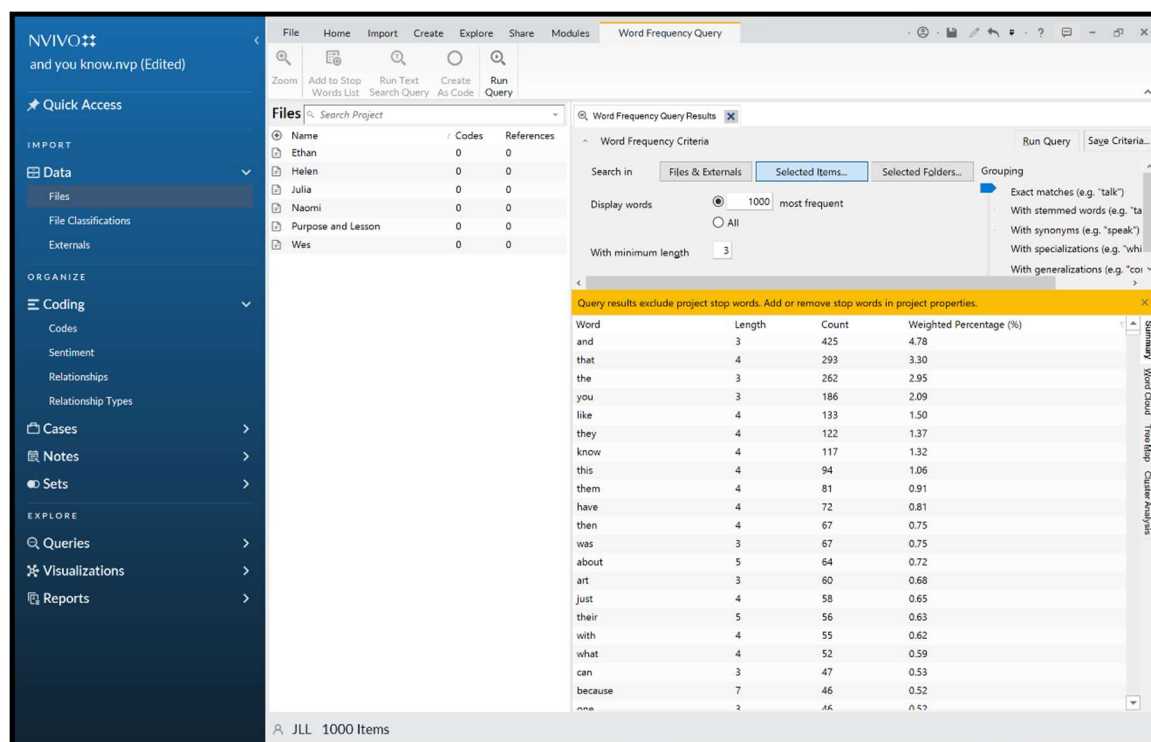


Figure E2. “And” in Purposes and Lessons—query two. A chart of the frequency of all words in the transcript data included in this study as “stories of purpose” and the lessons that followed.



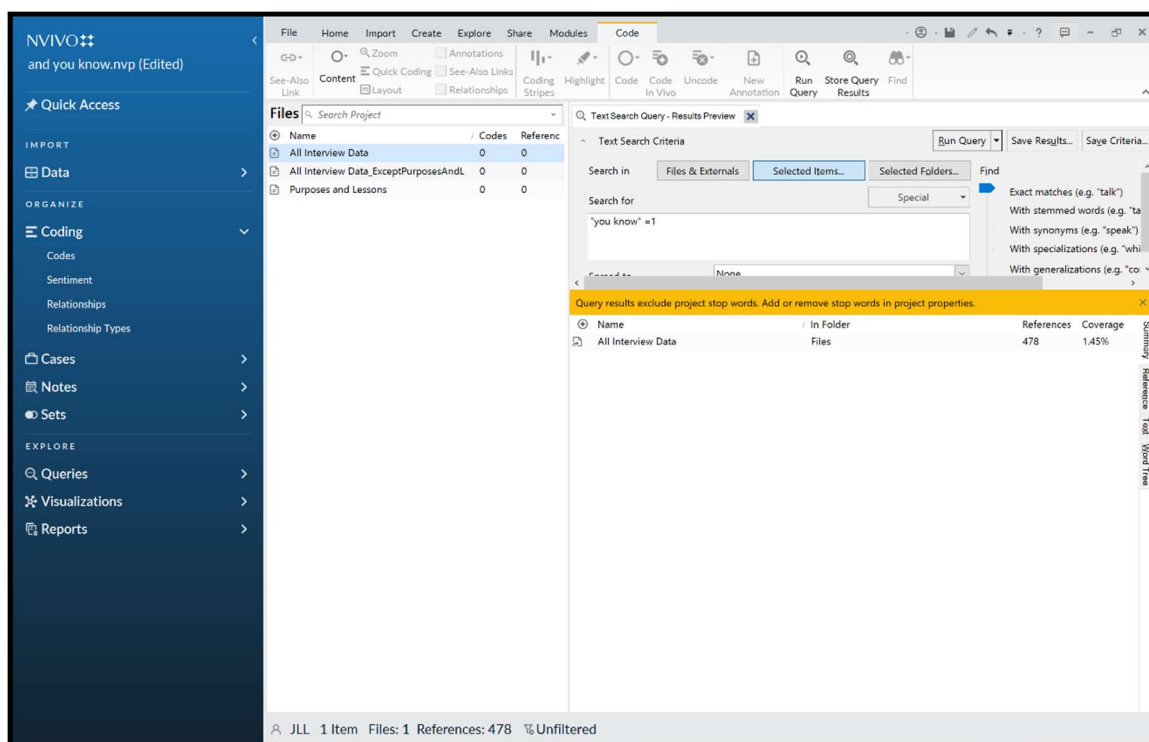


Figure E3. “You know”—query one. A chart showing the frequency of the phrase “you know” across all the interview data.

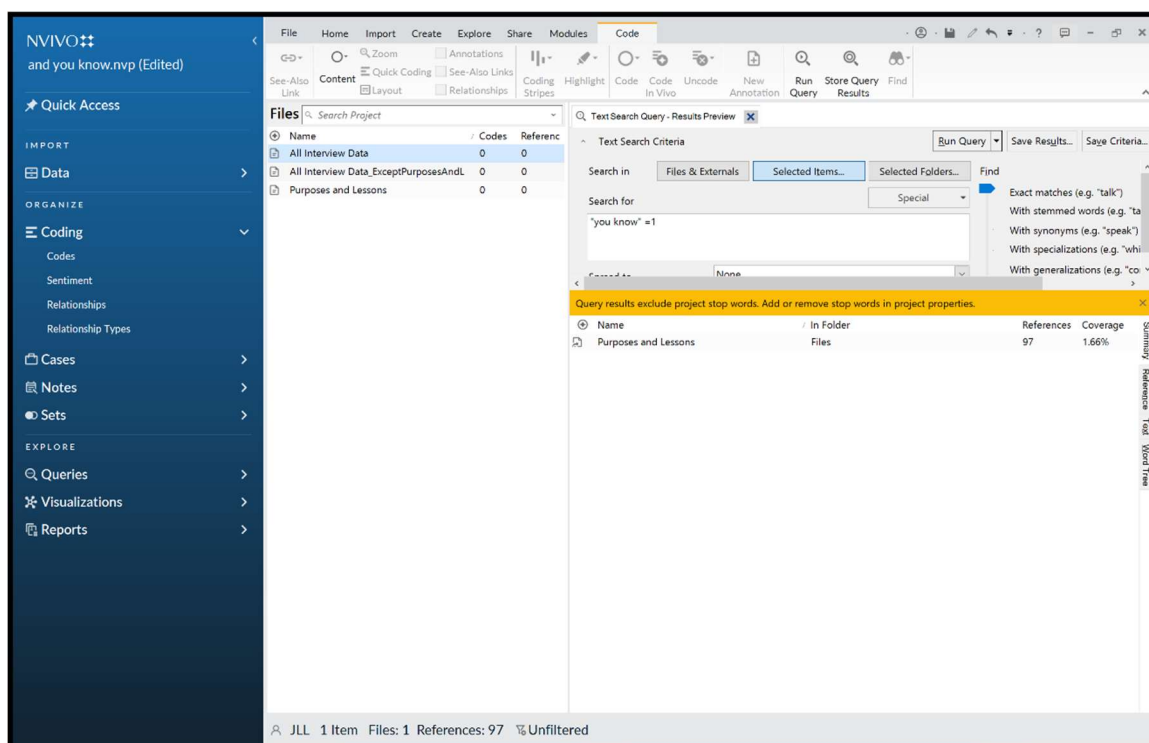


Figure E4. “You know”—query two. A chart showing the frequency of the phrase “you know” across all the data pertaining to Purposes and Lessons.



The screenshot displays the NVivo software interface. On the left is a dark blue sidebar with navigation options: Quick Access, Import (Data), Organize (Coding, Cases, Notes, Sets), and Explore (Queries, Visualizations, Reports). The main workspace is divided into several panes. The top pane shows a 'Files' list with columns for Name, Codes, and References. The middle pane is titled 'Text Search Query - Results Preview' and contains a search criteria section with a search box containing 'you know' and a 'Find' button. Below this is a table of results. The bottom status bar shows 'JLL 1 Item Files: 1 References: 367 %Unfiltered'.

Name	Codes	References
All Interview Data	0	0
All Interview Data_ExceptPurposesAndL	0	0
Purposes and Lessons	0	0

Name	In Folder	References	Coverage
All Interview Data_ExceptPurposesAndLesson	Files	367	1.38%

Figure E5. “You know”—query three. A chart showing the frequency of the phrase “you know” across all the remaining interview data after the data pertaining to Purposes and Lessons was removed.

## Appendix F TEKS for High School Art Level I numbered by line

Table F1

TEKS for high school level I

1	<b>19 TAC Chapter 117. Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Fine Arts</b>
2	<b>Subchapter C. High School</b>
3	<b>§117.301. Implementation of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Fine</b>
4	<b>Arts, High School, Adopted 2013.</b>
5	<b>§117.302. Art, Level I (One Credit), Adopted 2013.</b>
6	(a) General requirements. Students may fulfill fine arts and elective
7	requirements for graduation by successfully completing one or more of the
8	following art courses: Art I, Art Appreciation, and Art and Media
9	Communications I (one credit per course).
10	(b) Introduction.
11	(1) The fine arts incorporate the study of dance, music, theatre, and the
12	visual arts to offer unique experiences and empower students to explore
13	realities, relationships, and ideas. These disciplines engage and motivate
14	all students through active learning, critical thinking, and innovative
15	problem solving. The fine arts develop cognitive functioning and increase
16	student academic achievement, higher-order thinking, communication,
17	and collaboration skills, making the fine arts applicable to college
18	readiness, career opportunities, workplace environments, social skills,
19	and everyday life. Students develop aesthetic and cultural awareness
20	through exploration, leading to creative expression. Creativity,
21	encouraged through the study of the fine arts, is essential to nurture and
22	develop the whole child.
23	(2) Four basic strands--foundations: observation and perception; creative
24	expression; historical and cultural relevance; and critical evaluation and
25	response--provide broad, unifying structures for organizing the
26	knowledge and skills students are expected to acquire. Each strand is of
27	equal value and may be presented in any order throughout the year.
28	Students rely on personal observations and perceptions, which are
29	developed through increasing visual literacy and sensitivity to
30	surroundings, communities, memories, imaginings, and life experiences
31	as sources for thinking about, planning, and creating original artworks.
32	Students communicate their thoughts and ideas with innovation and
33	creativity. Through art, students challenge their imaginations, foster
34	critical thinking, collaborate with others, and build reflective skills. While

35	exercising meaningful problem-solving skills, students develop the
36	lifelong ability to make informed judgments.
37	(3) Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that
38	must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are
39	intended as possible illustrative examples.
40	(c) Knowledge and skills.
41	(1) Foundations: observation and perception. The student develops and
42	expands visual literacy skills using critical thinking, imagination, and
43	the senses to observe and explore the world by learning about,
44	understanding, and applying the elements of art, principles of design,
45	and expressive qualities. The student uses what the student sees,
46	knows, and has experienced as sources for examining, understanding,
47	and creating original artwork. The student is expected to:
48	(A) consider concepts and ideas from direct observation, original
49	sources, experiences, and imagination for original artwork;
50	(B) identify and understand the elements of art, including line,
51	shape, color, texture, form, space, and value, as the
52	fundamentals of art in personal artwork;
53	(C) identify and understand the principles of design, including
54	emphasis, repetition/pattern, movement/rhythm,
55	contrast/variety, balance, proportion, and unity, in personal
56	artwork; and
57	(D) make judgments about the expressive properties such as
58	content, meaning, message, and metaphor of artwork using
59	art vocabulary accurately.
60	(2) Creative expression. The student communicates ideas through original
61	artwork using a variety of media with appropriate skills. The student
62	expresses thoughts and ideas creatively while challenging the
63	imagination, fostering reflective thinking, and developing disciplined
64	effort and progressive problem-solving skills. The student is expected
65	to:
66	(A) use visual solutions to create original artwork by problem
67	solving through direct observation, original sources,
68	experiences, narrations, and imagination;
69	(B) communicate a variety of applications for design solutions;

70	(C) use an understanding of copyright and public domain to
71	appropriate imagery constituting the main focal point of
72	original artwork when working from images rather than
73	direct observation or imagination;
74	(D) create original artwork to communicate thoughts, feelings,
75	ideas, or impressions;
76	(E) collaborate to create original works of art; and
77	(F) demonstrate effective use of art media and tools in drawing,
78	painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, fiber art, design,
79	and digital art and media.
80	(3) Historical and cultural relevance. The student demonstrates an
81	understanding of art history and culture by analyzing artistic styles,
82	historical periods, and a variety of cultures. The student develops
83	global awareness and respect for the traditions and contributions of
84	diverse cultures. The student is expected to:
85	(A) compare and contrast historical and contemporary styles
86	while identifying general themes and trends;
87	(B) describe general characteristics in artwork from a variety of
88	cultures, which might also include personal identity and
89	heritage;
90	(C) collaborate on community-based art projects; and
91	(D) compare and contrast career and avocational opportunities in
92	art.
93	(4) Critical evaluation and response. The student responds to and
94	analyzes the artworks of self and others, contributing to the
95	development of the lifelong skills of making informed judgments and
96	reasoned evaluations. The student is expected to:
97	(A) interpret, evaluate, and justify artistic decisions in artwork by
98	self, peers, and other artists such as that in museums, local
99	galleries, art exhibits, and websites;
100	(B) evaluate and analyze artwork using a verbal or written
101	method of critique such as describing the artwork, analyzing
102	the way it is organized, interpreting the artist's intention, and
103	evaluating the success of the artwork;

104	(C) construct a physical or electronic portfolio by evaluating and
105	
106	
107	(D) select and analyze original artwork, portfolios, and
108	
109	
110	