

Workshop 4

What Roles Do Students Take On?

This workshop session examines the artistic process of creating, performing, and responding. In the program, you'll see students assuming the roles of researcher, writer, designer, director, performer, and critic.

Learning Goals

The goals of this workshop are for you to:

- Identify the many roles students can take on as they engage in the artistic process
- Learn methods of responding to artworks that you can share with your students

Featured Classroom Examples

- In a unit integrating Greek mythology and puppetry, students create puppets, write scripts, perform scenes, and respond to each other's work.
- A music teacher guides a pianist and two dancers as they refine a dance they have created.
- Sixth-grade dancers interpreting the mathematical properties of circles critique each other's work.

Workshop Session (On-Site)

Get Ready

Read and discuss the following definitions of the artistic processes of creating, performing, and responding: (15 minutes)

Artistic Processes

Creating is the process of generating original art. Creating involves the artist expressing unique and personal ideas, feelings, and responses in the form of a visual image, a character, a written or improvised dramatic work, or the composition of a piece of music or a dance.

Performing is the process of presenting a work in dance, music, and theatre or exhibiting works of visual art. During the performing process, the artist is engaged in interpreting the artistic work and must not only have the skills, but the contextual understanding of both the work and the audience, to successfully perform the dance, musical composition, or play. This need for contextual understanding is also true for exhibiting in the visual arts.

Responding is both the process of artists reflecting on their work and the process of an audience member reacting to a work of art. Response is usually a combination of affective, cognitive, and physical behavior involving a level of perceptual or observational skills; a description, analysis, or interpretation on the part of the respondent; and sometimes a judgment or evaluation based on some criteria.

—National Assessment of Education Progress, *Arts Education Assessment Framework*, 1997 (PDF)
www.nagb.org/pubs/artsed.pdf

Discuss:

- Which artistic process do you tend to concentrate on most with your students? Why?
- Are there ways to engage students in the other roles more often? If there are barriers to doing so, how might these be overcome?

Watch the Workshop Program (60 minutes)

Consider the following questions as you watch the program—they will appear as discussion prompts on the screen. If you are part of a professional development group, consider stopping the video to discuss each question with your colleagues.

- How can you broaden the variety of artistic roles students assume in your classroom?
- How can you help your students understand the importance of revision in the artistic process?
- How can you help your students respond constructively to the work of others?

Workshop Session, cont'd.

Activities and Discussion

Activity: Responding to Works of Art

Many teachers ask students to critique their classmates' work. Many non-arts teachers, however, may not be familiar or comfortable in guiding students to respond to works of art, whether student work or professional work.

Set up. (prior to session)

Ask one of the school's arts specialists (dance, music, theatre, or visual art) to come to the session prepared to share a work of art with the group—as well as her/his procedure for helping students respond to it.

Respond to a work of art. (15-20 minutes)

Have the arts specialist lead the group in analyzing a work he/she has brought in—e.g., a video clip of a dance, a music recording, a clip of a theatre performance, or a drawing/painting/sculpture—following the same procedure she/he uses with students in the classroom.

Discuss. (15 minutes)

Afterward, talk about similar or different procedures participants use with their own students.

Between Sessions (On Your Own)

Online Activity: Respond to a Work of Art

After participating in this workshop session, educators may wish to practice responding to an artwork. Try the interactive exercise called "Respond to a Work of Art," available on the Web site that accompanies *Connecting With the Arts: A Workshop for Middle Grades Teachers* (www.learner.org/channel/workshops/connectingwitharts). You'll describe, interpret, and then evaluate student-produced artworks, and compare your own response to how the student artists view their work.

Additional Resources

Web Resources

Arts Education for a Changing World (PDF)
http://www.sceaonline.com/PDF/Arts_Education_for_Chang.pdf

An article highlighting the benefits of arts education in today's classrooms

The Kennedy Center Arts Edge: National Standards for Arts Education
<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/teach/standards.cfm>

Standards that outline what every K-12 student should know and be able to do in the arts

Print Resources

Greene, Maxine. *Releasing the Imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts, and Social Change*. Indianapolis, IN: Jossey-Bass, 2000. ISBN: 0-78795-291-5

This set of essays defines the role of imagination in general education, arts education, aesthetics, literature, and the social and multicultural context.

Jackson, Philip W. *John Dewey and the Lessons of Art*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000. ISBN: 0-30008-289-4

This is an examination of John Dewey's thinking about the arts, and an exploration of the practical implications of that thinking for educators.

Palmer Wolf, Dennie, & Balick, Dana (Eds.). *Art Works! Interdisciplinary Learning Powered by the Arts*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1999. ISBN: 0-32500-116-2

This book is a sophisticated analysis of what makes for an effective partnership between the arts and other forms of knowing.