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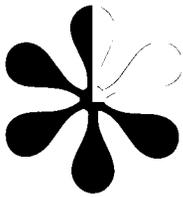
ABSTRACT

This guide and accompanying videotape are the fifth and final in a series that present full lessons and interviews with the instructors who created the lessons. Intended as starting points to stimulate thinking about a comprehensive approach to art education, these instructors discuss how they developed their lessons and how this approach has positively impacted their teaching and their students' capacity for learning. These materials focus on school-museum collaborations and highlight a program at the John and Mabel Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota, Florida. Working hand-in-hand, classroom teachers and curators engage students not only in analyzing and interpreting original works of art, but also in contributing creative artifacts to exhibit installations. Divided into two parts, Episode A takes a look at Susan Mudle's fourth-grade class' field trip and the way the students compare/contrast two Dutch paintings. Episode B follows art teacher Patricia Johnston's high school class as she leads them on a directed study adventure exploring the life and works of contemporary artist Eric Fischl. After extensive research, this class' adventure culminates in a face-to-face dialogue with the artist himself, surrounded by his work at the museum. (DQE)

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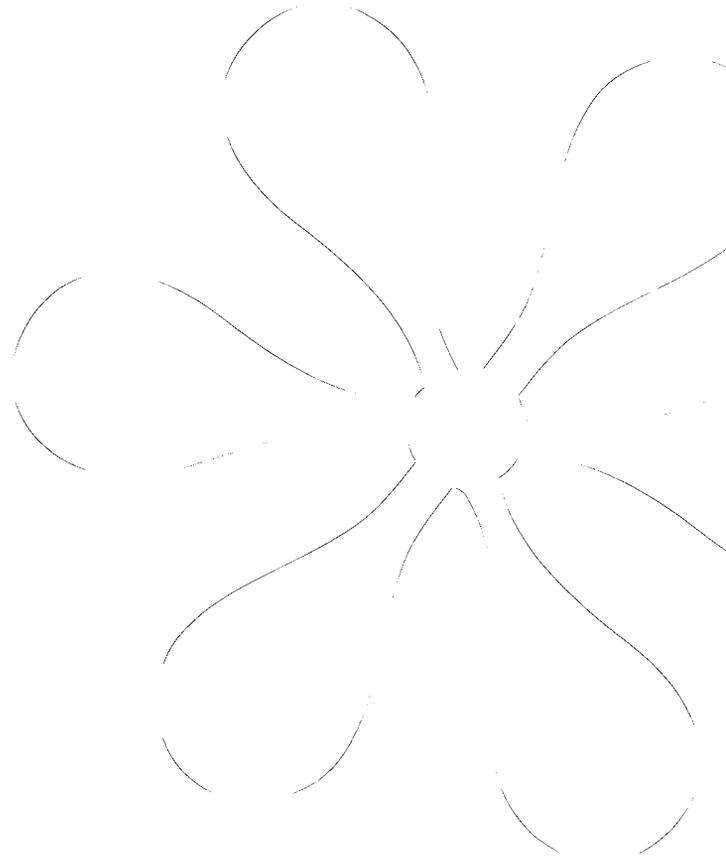
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SO 026831

# 5

## School-Museum Collaboration

Focus on A

Focus on Original Art

Focus on B

Interacting with a Contemporary Artist



## Viewers Guide

*Michael D. Day*

*Chair, Department of Art, Brigham Young University*

# 5

### School-Museum Collaboration

#### Episode A

Focus on Original Art

#### Episode B

Interacting with a Contemporary Artist

## **Art Education in Action**

1

### **Aesthetics**

Episode A: The Aesthetic Experience

Episode B: Teaching Across the Curriculum

2

### **Integrating the Art Disciplines**

Episode A: Highlighting Studio Production and Student Social Commentary

Episode B: Cultural Dimensions of Art

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### **Making Art**

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### **School-Museum Collaboration**

Episode A: Focus on Original Art

Episode B: Interacting with a Contemporary Artist

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# Introduction

- The teacher places a reproduction of a Romare Bearden collage on the easel and asks a question about symbols in art. A second-grade girl eagerly raises her hand, points to the steam locomotive in the background, and discusses three meanings of train symbols in Bearden's migration series.
- In another classroom, a first-grader helps his partner with her painting smock (a large shirt) as they prepare to paint their own versions of an expressive sky, using the primary colors of tempera paint, with black and white for value changes. On the display board are color prints of landscapes and skies by Vincent van Gogh.
- A group of middle school boys and girls performs a skit in front of a video camera operated by their art teacher. Taking the role of television commentators, they discuss a controversial sculpture, purchased with public funds, that has been installed outside a county jail.
- After studying uses of masks from traditional societies in Africa, pre-Columbian Mexico, and the northwest coast of North America, high school ceramics students watch their teacher demonstrate drape-mold clay construction methods they will use for creating their own masks.

These are a few vignettes from this video series featuring art teaching and learning in diverse classroom and art museum settings. The ten teachers demonstrate a variety of teaching styles and approaches to discipline-based art education (DBAE). As a series, the videos allow viewers to enter classrooms and observe teachers and students in action at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

The series was created to fill a need for visual demonstrations of DBAE accomplished by experienced, successful teachers in a variety of educational settings. The intended audience includes parents, general classroom teachers, administrators, school boards, art specialists, and others who believe that the study of art is essential for a balanced education. The videotapes provide a needed supplement for the scholarly, theoretical, and philosophical foundations for this approach to art education found in the professional literature, and as a complement to the written art curriculum units found in *Discipline-Based Art Education: A Curriculum Sampler*, published by the Getty Center for

Education in the Arts in 1991. The video series also provides compelling examples for implementation of the national standards for the visual arts, developed by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations and the National Art Education Association in response to the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, which was written into federal law in 1994.

Leaders of preservice teacher education programs and inservice professional development sessions can use these episodes to:

- observe a variety of approaches to DBAE;
- expose participants to urban and suburban school settings in a variety of cities and states from Florida to California;
- study different teaching styles, methods of instruction, learning activities, and issues in education featured in each classroom episode;
- note differences in student populations, classroom facilities, and school settings;
- observe substantive art instruction that exemplifies the recommendations of the National Standards for Visual Arts Education; and
- use events and activities in the videos as starting points for analysis and discussion of DBAE in action.

Each teaching episode is accompanied by a detailed written lesson plan that outlines the context of the lesson and the teacher's strategy for instruction and evaluation. During each video episode, viewers will note a logo, like a footnote, that appears periodically in the corner of the video screen. Each numbered footnote refers to written comments about topics and practices seen in the classroom episode. These unobtrusive footnotes serve to alert viewers that commentary is available in this guide. The lists of topics, teaching methods, and learning activities that appear at the end of each teaching episode also are included in the guide.

The final section of the guide is an essay about the making of the video, with a detailed discussion of DBAE, and suggested ways the videos can be used for teacher education and staff development. Viewers are urged to read all the materials in the viewers guide as a means to extend and enhance their analysis and discussion of the process of art education.

## Art Education in Action: Discipline-Based Theory into Practice

Eloquent as they might be, words cannot replace the first-hand experience of being in a classroom, seeing, hearing, and feeling the multitude of interactions among students and with their teachers. The dynamic visual imagery of a videotape that captures color, sound, and movement provides a much closer approximation of the school environment. An edited videotape depiction of teachers and students in action, such as you see in this series, can eliminate many of the mundane routines, pauses, and distractions that seem to be an inevitable part of every class session. We don't have to watch while the teacher takes roll, or listen to announcements on the loudspeaker about changes in the bus schedule, or wait while the teacher signs a student's pass to leave school for a doctor's appointment. The video version can focus our attention on the most significant occurrences of teaching and learning, and video technology can speed the pace of the classroom narrative to more closely approximate our expectations as contemporary television viewers. Through video technology we can visit classrooms in far-flung locations, stop and start the action, and view specific events over and over according to our interests.

What is missing from edited episodes of teaching and learning, however, is some of the reality in the lives of students and teachers, who meet in this setting day in and day out. Some viewers might be familiar with these realities and appreciative that many insignificant events have been omitted from the video time frame. Viewers without extensive experience in school classrooms, however, could benefit from classroom visits to gain insights about the contexts of schooling. After viewing several of the episodes from this series on art education in action, I hope you agree that there is much of value for viewers to experience and much that can be learned through analysis and discussion of the teaching methods, learning activities, and educational topics depicted on your video screen.

### Making the Video Series

For more than a decade the Getty Center for Education in the Arts has sought to strengthen art education in the public schools. The Center's support has taken multiple forms: research and theory development (Day et al., 1985, Broudy, 1987, Arnheim, 1989, Gardner, 1990), professional development for teachers (Greer et al., 1993), grants to school districts, publications (Levi & Smith, 1991, Brown & Korzenik, 1993, Parsons & Blocker, 1993, Addis &

Erickson, 1993, Perkins, 1993), national issues seminars (Getty Center for Education in the Arts, 1993), and conferences (Getty Center for Education in the Arts, 1991). As the theory of discipline-based art education has progressed, practitioners in the field have requested practical examples of curriculum and teaching. In response to these requests the Center organized the Getty Curriculum Development Institute, which resulted in the publication of *Discipline-Based Art Education: A Curriculum Sampler*, (Alexander & Day, 1991). The *Curriculum Sampler* consists of eight curriculum units written by

Richard Harsh: "When students sign up for this little ceramics course they come in thinking they're just going to play with clay, but it turns out they really get an exposure to aesthetics, to criticism of art. They go all the way through art history from ancient Egypt right up to Modern art, and they not only learn about the art and how to look at it, but a little about the culture, the philosophy, the economy, and the government, so this is not just going abstractly to some other period in time. Everything that's taught in this class I try to relate directly to their life so it touches them, so when they walk home they look at the world differently, they touch the world differently, they savor it differently."

Excerpt from Tape 1: "Aesthetics," Episode A: *The Aesthetic Experience*

art teachers and art museum educators. As a set of substantive plans for teaching, organized according to discipline-based theory applied by teams of art educators, the *Curriculum Sampler* has served as content for study and as a point of departure for college courses in art cur-

riculum, school district curriculum development initiatives, and inservice workshops for art educators, among other uses.

This video series, *Art Education in Action*, is intended to serve a similar purpose by presenting examples of teachers in action within their classrooms, applying the discipline-based approach in their own unique settings. As with the art units in the *Curriculum Sampler*, these teaching episodes are not held up as definitive models for emulation, but as sources for analysis, discussion, and motivation for art educators. As with the *Curriculum Sampler*, these materials can be useful for preservice and inservice teacher education programs at colleges, universities, and in school districts.

**The Teachers** The teachers seen in the ten episodes were selected from a group of candidates recommended by leaders from the Getty regional professional development institutes. During the selection process the teachers were asked to submit written art lesson plans and videotapes of themselves teaching the lessons in their own classrooms. For the purposes of balance within the series, teachers were selected at elementary, middle, and high school levels. Three are elementary classroom teachers and one is an elementary art specialist.

Five of the teachers are middle or high school art specialists and one teaches high school art history. Three teachers are from California, four are from Florida, two are from Nebraska, and one is from Minnesota. A variety of local settings, school districts, neighborhoods, and student populations is represented among the eight classrooms and the art museum.

All teachers appear in their own classrooms or the art museum with their regular students, teaching lessons they developed themselves. All classes are mainstreamed groups that include students with a variety of special needs. Each teacher has a record of years of successful teaching within his or her school setting and local community.

**The Art Lessons** Written lesson plans for the video episodes are included in this guide. They were written by the teachers and revised by the author, in collaboration with the teachers, in order to meet requirements for consistency and space limitations of this publication. Following on page 6 is the format for the lesson plans found in this guide. Please note that this is only one of several formats that teachers might use. For several other useful formats for discipline-based art lessons, please refer to the *Curriculum Sampler*.

# Sample Lesson Plan Format

<b>Context of the Video Lesson</b>	A brief synopsis of the context of the video episode places the activities within the ongoing classroom environment.
<b>Focus</b>	This brief statement is usually a generalization about art that provides direction for the lesson.
<b>Objectives</b>	These are stated in terms of what students are expected to do and learn within the central focus of the lesson. The teacher's intentions are clarified through the process of formulating objectives, but they need not reduce the teacher's flexibility or ability to improvise appropriately.
<b>Resources</b>	This section lists resources for teaching, such as art prints, books, videotapes, guest artists or speakers, and so on.
<b>Materials</b>	Listed here are materials used by students to make art or with which to participate in other learning activities.
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Lists few terms especially relevant to a particular lesson.
<b>Preparation</b>	For nearly every lesson teachers need to make things ready, such as handouts, art materials, slides and projectors, and so on. This section gives the teacher a quick source for needed preparation.
<b>Procedure</b>	This section lays out the sequence of activities for the teacher, with notes that explain reasons behind the strategy of the lesson. As with any lesson plan, teachers often change the sequence and alter the content at will, according to their own interests and strengths and the backgrounds of their students. Nevertheless, the material within this section will save teachers a good deal of planning time.
<b>Assessment</b>	Devices for assessment will vary as widely as content, teaching methods, and student learning activities. Assessments usually relate directly to objectives and are developed concurrently with them.
<b>Background for Teachers</b>	A complete discipline-based curriculum unit will provide needed background materials for teachers, such as historical information about an artist, artwork, art style, or culture; critical writings; writings on aesthetics; safety requirements for art processes and materials; and so on. Teachers can supplement these materials with additional research if they wish. This section is not fully developed in this video viewers guide because of space limitations.
<b>Background for Students</b>	Teachers often develop handouts for students, some of which are their translations of their background materials for the reading and conceptual levels of their students.
<b>Extensions</b>	This section provides practical suggestions for extending the lesson with various possibilities according to the teacher's choice. It might mean continuing the lesson theme with different art materials or changing the theme but extending uses of an art mode, such as painting. Under this heading suggestions are made for integrating the lesson topic with other subjects in the curriculum or collaborating with other teachers.
<b>Selected References</b>	This section provides a few resources for the teacher's benefit.

**Episodes of Art Teaching** The clear direction, internal completeness, and discrete parameters of written plans are not always characteristic of what happens in classrooms when students and teachers interact with the content of art. When the teachers were selected to appear in the video series, they were asked to teach a single lesson that would be videotaped as an example of DBAE in action. It would be as if the viewer were invited to drop in to a classroom as a visitor to experience what was going on that particular day. This approach was problematic for some of the teachers, however. They politely but persistently protested: “But in order to understand what we are doing in this session you need to know what happened during the last two class periods,” and “this is only the beginning of what I am trying to accomplish with the students; you really need to see where we are two weeks down the road.” The teachers were thinking holistically about their teaching and in most instances had complex strategies in mind that were difficult to segment into single discrete class sessions.

Through their comments the teachers also indicated their concerns that the complexity of what they were engaged in with students might not be apparent during a single class period. For example, how would viewers know the significance of that single brief response by a student as she volunteered a comment during class? Only the teacher could understand the effort required for the student to do this seemingly simple thing, and no one could possibly know the teacher’s role in empowering her to do it. Would a visitor to the classroom catch the significance of students assisting each other with their art materials or their ability to work cooperatively in groups? Would a visitor be critical of trivial habits or mannerisms of the teacher and miss the real teaching and learning being accomplished? Or, might a visitor object to some classroom procedure or disagree with a fine point related to the content of the class?

Because of these contingencies, complexities, contexts, and continuities, I have used the term *episode* to describe what has been captured on the videos. Viewing a single session in the art classroom is in many ways like experiencing

Middle school students investigated the controversy on use of public funds for placement of a sculpture outside a county jail in Massachusetts. Evelyn Sonnichsen asked her students: “Do you think the sculpture should stay at the jail or be moved to a new location?” Her students responded: “I think it should stay ‘cause it really does make it look a little more interesting.”

“I think it should stay ‘cause it kinda gives them something that is happy and positive.”

“I think that it should be moved because more people would go and see it if it was at a gallery and not a prison.”

“If you look at the design it doesn’t even look anything like it should be at a jail.”

“I think it should stay, also, because there’s artwork everywhere, but there’s probably never been an artwork at a jail, so it’s kind of like a change.”

“I think it should be moved ‘cause if you’re gonna spend that much money on it, put it someplace where people would even want to see it.”

*Excerpt from Tape 1: “Aesthetics,” Episode B: Teaching Across the Curriculum*

a segment from a rich and complex ongoing narrative. According to one dictionary definition, an episode is “a developed situation that is integral to but separable from a continuous narrative” or “an event that is distinctive and separate although part of a larger series.” In these senses the term is more meaningful than *lesson* or *unit*, which are associated with curriculum. The concept of an episode also is associated most often with the arts, as “a brief unit of action in a dramatic or literary work,” or “one of a series of loosely connected stories or scenes,” or “the part of a serial presented at one performance.” The term seems to fit here better than *lesson*, especially if we view teaching as an art form.

**Shooting the Videos** Picture this: The art classroom is ready for students who will soon arrive, lively and laughing, pushing and joking, and ready for their favorite class. The walls are covered with colorful reproductions of various types of art, and the art supplies are ready for distribution. But today is different. Crowded into the already crowded classroom are at least eight visitors, two holding large video cameras, two with long microphone booms in their hands, and another with earphones, sitting in front of a large panel of electronic equipment that includes two video monitors. Also present are the director, producer, and content (art education) consultant. We are ready to shoot a “normal” class session. Is the teacher nervous? Not at all. Well, maybe a little nervous.

This is the scene that greeted students who entered their regular classrooms for the videotaping of each of the episodes in this series. Of course students knew in advance that this was going to happen and had provided signed releases that allowed them to participate. What were the effects on their behaviors, however, when they realized that cameras and microphones were recording their every move and word? To place students at ease and assist them to behave as normally as possible, the director spent time with them prior to the shooting, explaining what the team of video professionals was doing, allowing them to look closely at all the equipment, and answering their questions.

Perhaps as a result of living in the media age, students seemed able to screen out the imposing technological environment that invaded their classroom. Most of them did not seem frightened or self-conscious, and after the sessions began, most students seemed to pay little attention to the videotaping. Their

responses during the classes were not rehearsed and they seemed to be engaged with their teachers in normal ways.

**Editing the Videos** Most of the video shoots required considerably more time than a normal class period, so arrangements were made in advance to free the classroom and clear students' schedules. Because two cameras were used, with one usually trained on the teacher and the other usually on students, the results of videotaping were twice as long as the videotaping sessions. This means that approximately four hours of videotape, in some cases, had to be edited down to a completed video episode of approximately twenty minutes.

There are many reasons why some of the videotape could not be used: a voice was unclear, an unwanted sound ruined a response, someone's arm covered the face of the speaker, and so on. Sometimes the video was excellent, but the audio was not, and vice versa. In such situations the hope was that the other camera caught the ruined shot. The video editor worked with these hours and hours of videotape and sound recordings, striving to make a cogent final result without distorting essential characteristics of each classroom episode. On several occasions for each videotape, the director, producer, and content consultant viewed the rough cut with the editor and made detailed suggestions regarding the art content and teaching segments.

The goal of the editing was to convey the essential content and quality of each art teaching episode, doing justice to what occurred in the classrooms and the intentions of the teachers. All of the sequences in the videos actually happened in class; none were staged or rehearsed. In all instances, the teachers were consulted regarding the written lesson plans and the video episodes, and they gave their approval of both.

## DBAE Theory Into Practice

One of the purposes of the video series is to provide viewers with multiple applications of discipline-based theory at several grade levels. Although some have charged that the discipline-based approach results in uniformity within classrooms, that result is no more or less likely than with any application of educational theory. The series also demonstrates that no single teaching style is required for discipline-based art education. We see wide diversity in style

among the ten teachers as they strive to employ the fundamentals of the discipline-based approach. This same diversity within the discipline-based definition was demonstrated by the teachers who wrote the art units for the *Curriculum Sampler*. Broad applicability of fundamental theory is a necessary trait for any significant movement in education. In order to be most effective the theory must be applied widely by diverse groups of art educators, yet retain its distinctive characteristics.

If most teachers can't "do it," even the most elegant theoretical construct will achieve only limited influence. If the characteristics that make an educational theory distinctive are lost through diverse applications, it will fail to be effective. This discussion raises two primary questions for viewers of the videos: Are the teachers able to apply the discipline-based theory in their classrooms? Do the teaching episodes maintain the essential characteristics of DBAE? These questions can be applied within any art classroom, with any teacher in preservice and inservice professional development programs.

**Discipline-Based Theory** The basic tenets and concepts of the discipline-based approach are discussed elsewhere in greater detail than is possible in this guide (Greer, 1984, Clark, Day & Greer, 1987, Dobbs, 1992, Eisner, 1988). In general terms, DBAE emphasizes the study of art as an essential component for a complete education. It is a comprehensive approach to art education with content derived from the disciplines of aesthetics, art criticism, art history, and art production or art making. Children and young people who are provided a discipline-based art education develop multiple skills and capacities for making art and responding to, interpreting, and evaluating their own art and the art of mature artists. They view and study works of art from many cultures and times, including fine arts, folk arts, and applied arts. In the process of learning, students engage in a wide range of activities including making art, viewing and studying original artworks and quality reproductions, responding to and discussing art, speculating about meaning and value in art, and reading and writing about some of the most engaging and fascinating objects created by the best artists from world cultures. They learn how art relates to the rest of their school curriculum, how art influences culture, and how culture, including the students' own contemporary culture, influences what artists create. They learn much about themselves as they create art and respond to the art of others.

This approach is related to a broad discipline-based tradition in the field of general curriculum (Smith, 1987). Any subject can be approached from the discipline-based perspective, which places value on the academic disciplines and recognizes communities of scholars who contribute to the advancement of knowledge and engage in discourse and debate within their respective disciplines. Content for curriculum in the schools and activities for student learning are derived from valid content within each discipline. In this way students are provided with high quality knowledge and skills and are prepared to take their places within society as fully educated adults. Content and activities, of course, must be presented and engaged in at levels appropriate to the respective abilities of children and young people from kindergarten through high school.

Discipline-based theory is relevant as it relates to three current topics in general education: 1) the range of learning styles within any student group, 2) multicultural education, and 3) holistic or integrated curriculum. Theoretically, DBAE is potentially compatible with all three concerns. Because of the range of content within a discipline-based art program, a variety of learning activities is required for its implementation. Students regularly engage in visual learning, use of oral and written language, and active creation of art through the skillful manipulation of materials. They learn and apply vocabulary, interpret visual symbols and metaphors found within exemplary works of art, investigate historical and cultural contexts, engage in research, and contemplate philosophical questions as they learn more about the functions of art in society. With such a variety of learning activities, it is more likely that the range of different learning styles

#### About Discipline-Based Art Education

The Getty Center for Education in the Arts advocates discipline-based art education (DBAE) as an effective means by which to help students experience the visual arts in a variety of ways.

DBAE is an approach to instruction and learning in art rather than a particular curriculum. The name *discipline-based art education* conveys the content of this approach, which is drawn from the four art disciplines. Because it is an approach and not a specific curriculum, DBAE can take many forms to serve the particular needs of the community in which it is being taught. For example, one or more of the disciplines can be selected as the central discipline(s) for helping students understand works of art, or the curriculum can be organized around themes. Artworks from a variety of countries and cultures can be featured, as can paintings, sculptures, crafts, architecture, and many other art forms and media.

The DBAE concept is not new. A group of leading art educators has held for the past quarter century that art education should integrate the ideas, skills, knowledge, and creative activity drawn from the four art disciplines and that it should be presented in written, sequential curricula. Such curricula enable students to develop their creative abilities for making art (studio art), evaluating the qualities of visual imagery and making informed judgments about art (art criticism), understanding art's cultural and historical contexts (art history), and raising questions about the nature of art (aesthetics).

This approach is compatible with the goals for art education stated by the College Board, the new national voluntary standards, the National Assessment of Educational Progress, and many state departments of education.

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among students will be accommodated and that all students, including those with special learning needs, will be encouraged and motivated to broaden their understanding of how information, knowledge, and skills are acquired and applied.

The visual arts are at the center of most world cultures, from the cave paintings and rock art in many locations of the world to contemporary applications

of the commercial arts that affect us all on a daily basis. By definition, a discipline-based art program features art from a range of cultures and styles, and because of the unprecedented availability of excellent art reproductions and publications of all types (books, films, videos, CD-ROMs, etc.), virtually any recognized culture can be selected for study. Over a thirteen-year period of serious art education from kindergarten through high school, students can become familiar with, knowledgeable about, and appreciative of the arts of many cultures and peoples. The study of art can be related directly to the values, characteristics, and needs of student populations within local school settings.

Concern for curriculum integration in general education is manifest in terms such as *constructivist education*, *teaching across the curriculum*, *whole language curriculum*, and *interdisciplinary* or *cross-disciplinary teaching*. With

the stipulation that the study of art remains as an essential part of the required curriculum, it is clear that the discipline-based approach to art education lends itself to integration with other school subjects. The fact that DBAE includes the study of the history of art is an obvious starting point for integration. The uses of language in the art program, often in ways that are not attended to in other subjects, provides more opportunities for cross-disciplinary teaching and reinforcement. However, the legitimate concern of art educators about the topic of curriculum integration is supported by long-standing experience. Too often in the past, art has been used primarily in support of other subjects, such as the making of a diorama for science or social studies projects. One of the fundamental tenets of discipline-based theory is that art, as the

Showing her sky painting with broad horizontal bands of bright pinks, lavenders, oranges, yellows, and blues, with a vivid blue and yellow semicircle on the left side, the first-grade girl explains: "This is my sunset, with a rainbow, and I put some swirly lines in it."

Sandy Walker-Craig: "Did you put the swirly lines in for a special reason to give it a special feeling?"

The girl replies: "It makes me feel romantic and every afternoon I have fun."

A boy shares his painting with the class. It is a dark night sky with lots of thick blacks and blues brushed together, a reddish brown area near the top of the painting, and several almost-white lines crisscrossing the sky diagonally. He tells the class: "I was thinking about the feeling of...sad, because this is when the sun goes down, and...um..."

Sandy Walker-Craig: "You told me when the sun goes down you feel sad because..."

Boy: "It's going and I can't play that much longer."

*Excerpt from Tape 3: "Making Art," Episode A: Integrating the Art Disciplines*

visual representative within the aesthetic domain of human experience, is an essential subject in its own right and requires a regular share of time within each school week.

**Demands on Teachers** Experienced educators are fully aware of the central role of teachers in the schools (Lieberman, 1994, p. x, Berliner, 1984, p. 53). A teacher's style or approach to teaching results, to a significant extent, from the teacher's personal set of values, beliefs about education, understanding of students, and knowledge of content (Hargreaves, 1994, p. xiv). Expert observers of education also know that a great deal is expected of teachers in today's schools. For example, teachers are expected to relate well to students and maintain a reasonably orderly climate for learning in their classrooms. They must meet, teach, and relate to students on a regular daily basis regardless of contingencies in their personal lives, normal variations in mood, or health considerations. Teachers are expected to be steady, reliable, and competent even when students in their classrooms might not be easy to work with or when there are too many students to allow for individualized attention. Especially in elementary schools, teachers often have few opportunities for supportive interactions with their colleagues. "Teaching is a lonely profession," observed one writer.

Carole DeBuse: "This particular mask that we're looking at now is a Toma mask from Africa. This is called a Mask of the Spirits of the Bush. Let me read you just a little bit about some of the things I found in my research."

Carole shares a brief excerpt from an article about the Toma society and their use of masks.

"When you look at this mask, what is the most obvious thing you notice?"

Dana: "There's no mouth."

Carole DeBuse: "How does that affect the mask, in your mind?"

Dana: "Like if a person wore this, they didn't use their mouth as much, like if they were doing a dance or whatever, they didn't make noises. They used their body because their mouth is covered up."

Carole DeBuse: "That's good. That's really good."

*Excerpt from Tape 2: "Integrating the Art Disciplines," Episode B: Cultural Dimensions of Art*

Because of its comprehensive scope and emphasis on content, the discipline-based approach to art education is particularly demanding of teachers. It is not uncommon in college teacher preparation programs (Hurwitz & Day, 1991) and within school districts to expect that art teachers should:

- a) acquire a basic knowledge of each of the four art disciplines (art history, art production, art criticism, and aesthetics), with a range of competencies in the studio area;
- b) develop curriculum by organizing content and activities from the art disciplines and make applications appropriate for the age and ability levels of their students;

- c) understand artistic developmental levels of children and their corresponding abilities in use of language, reading, and writing;
- d) become sensitive to diversity among students and adapt both curriculum and instruction to accommodate the needs of special learners (Blandy, 1989), gifted and talented (Clark & Zimmerman, 1984), at-risk students, ethnic minorities, students who speak English as a second language, physically handicapped, and other groups and individuals who enter their classrooms;
- e) exemplify skills of classroom management; care of supplies, tools, and materials; and classroom displays;
- f) apply a variety of teaching techniques, methods, and strategies to engage all students for optimum learning;
- g) assess student progress in relation to the art curriculum and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the art program; and
- h) successfully accomplish a myriad of other activities, such as keeping records, grading, performing supervisory duties, attending to faculty responsibilities, meeting with parents, and staying active in their professional organizations.

When we are fortunate enough to observe a good art teacher in action, we might not be aware of many of these competencies and accomplishments. Like Olympic athletes, when highly qualified professionals in any field perform, they often make the performance seem effortless. For those preparing to become teachers, however, and for teachers dedicated to continuous improvement, much can be learned through informed observations of teaching by experienced professionals.

**Local Settings** One of the most persistent confounding factors for educators and researchers who attempt to standardize educational practice is the wide variation of educational settings. In their faculty lounge repartee, teachers often affirm that different combinations of students in a classroom develop unique group dynamics or personalities. A third-grade teacher might praise her new class to a colleague, “They are so receptive and easy to teach,” or she might commiserate if the class regularly exhibits difficult behaviors. A middle school art teacher might love his second-period art class and mildly dread the third-period group, even though both are composed of seventh-grade students. This type of diversity is found within a single elementary, middle,

or high school, but much greater variation can be noted between schools in different neighborhoods, between school districts, and between districts in different regions of the country (Goodlad, 1990, p. 10).

The sources of variation in classroom settings are many. Some school districts are wealthy and others are not. Districts are urban, suburban, rural, and sometimes include schools from all three environments. Some districts value and support the arts and others do not. Some school principals and school counselors view the art program as part of the mainstream of the school curriculum, while others wish to use the art program as a “dumping ground” where they send problem students, low achievers, or those who they consider have little academic future. This list of differences could be extended significantly, but would be incomplete if differences in students, parents, and communities were not mentioned as primary sources for variations in classrooms. Some students come from home situations where they are fully supported with good nutrition and health care, a safe and stable home environment, encouragement from family, educational enrichment outside of class in the form of travel and museum visits, and items such as books and computers in the home. Other students have few or none of these positive factors.

The point of discussing these variations is to suggest that teachers often have to adjust to such differences. In order to adjust they must have at their disposal a repertoire of practical, conceptual, and theoretical understandings and teaching methods. Each of the videos in this series might best be viewed with the setting in mind, recognizing that the teachers have made adaptations in their approaches to teaching and to DBAE.

The fourth-grade students are sitting on the floor in front of a display of six prints by the eighteenth-century Japanese printmaker Utamaro, and seven prints by the American artist Mary Cassatt.

Evelyn Pender: “We know that Mary Cassatt was very much influenced by the Japanese culture and the prints she discovered while in Europe. Let’s look at them and talk about how Mary Cassatt’s prints are similar to the Japanese prints.”

Student: “They are all women.”

Student: “I think that she was influenced by some of the Japanese prints up there ‘cause they’re sort of doing the same things.”

Evelyn Pender: “Let’s focus on the Japanese prints.”

Student: “They’re all doing everyday things. The first one looks like she’s writing something. The second one, someone’s doing someone’s hair.”

Evelyn Pender: “All right. Normal everyday things that you do. There’s a special word for that. We’ve talked about that word before.”

Student: “Genre.”

Evelyn Pender: “Yes, and these are all genre scenes.”

*Excerpt from Tape 3 “Making Art,” Episode B: Integrating Art History and Art Criticism*

## Viewing the Videos

**Viewing Examples of Teaching Practice** The major focus of these videos is not on general teaching style or method; rather, it is on ways that several successful teachers have implemented the discipline-based approach to art education in their own classrooms. For viewers interested in teaching style, per se, several observations might be useful. As the study of teaching has progressed during the past several decades, and as research on teaching has been conducted

and published, a number of fundamental questions have arisen. One of the most persistent and most significant is the question of how to regard teaching: as a science or as an art?

### Teaching: An Art or a Science?

The brief answer to this question seems to be: teaching is both a science and an art. However, the relative emphasis placed on each conception of teaching varies widely among leading researchers and theorists. Much research using methods based in psychology has been conducted with the idea of contributing to a science

of teaching. It has been supposed that increased understanding about how children and adults think and learn would lead to sound principles for teaching that might be applied in classrooms with some precision. One theorist, for example, characterized teaching as “an applied science derived from research in human learning and human behavior: an applied science that utilizes the findings of psychology, neurology, sociology, and anthropology” (Hunter, 1984, p. 171).

Researchers essentially agree that a multitude of factors combine to constitute the teaching/learning environment in school classrooms. However, the unpredictability of educational situations and the valued uniqueness of each learner make scientific applications of teaching and learning principles diffi-

Second-grade teacher Ethel Tracy teaches her students about the artist Romare Bearden and his expression of African-American life in rural and urban settings. The students view a large color reproduction of Bearden's *Summertime*, a collage, and discuss the setting and symbols within the work.

Daniel (pointing at the work): “I think it's hot outside 'cause the man is outside getting away from the heat in the house.”

Ethel Tracy: “Absolutely, that could be. In Harlem at that time it was very crowded and people were living in very close conditions, weren't they?”

Violet (pointing): “It's in the city 'cause she has a sucker.”

Ethel Tracy: “And that would tell you that's in the city? Okay.”

Gregory (pointing to the object identified as a sucker): “I think this is a rose.”

Ethel Tracy: “How would you read that symbol if it's a rose?”

Gregory: “A symbol of love.”

Ethel Tracy: “Do you agree with him, Malcolm? You seem not to agree.”

Malcolm (pointing to the sucker/rose object): “It's an ice cream cone, 'cause I see the lines right there. 'Cause it's got that cone – you can tell that's an ice cream cone.”

Ethel Tracy: “If it's an ice cream cone would you read that image a little differently?” (Malcolm nods.) “It wouldn't be the same as if it were a rose, would it?”

*Excerpt from Tape 4: “Art History and Art Criticism,” Episode B: Art Informs History*

cult, at best. For these and other reasons, some educational theorists prefer to think of teaching as an art: “Teaching is an art in the sense that teachers, like painters, composers, actresses, and dancers, make judgments based largely on qualities that unfold during the course of action” (Eisner, 1979, p. 154). The notion of considering teaching as an art form and viewing education from the perspective of art criticism has been well developed by Eisner (1979, 1985, 1991) and others.

It is the relative emphasis on scientific foundation or artistic performance that is in contention, leading one writer to remark: “At present, our attitude toward teaching is too yang—too absolute, rational, and aggressive. What is needed is more yin—intuition, sensuousness and subtlety—to bring back a delicate balance” (Costa, 1984, p. 202). Perhaps DBAE can serve as a model that provides the needed balance of the scientific yang and the artistic yin.

**A “Best” Way to Teach?** Although there are proponents of particular sets of teaching practices considered “best” by adherents, there is little agreement in the field of teaching research and theory about a single best approach. Even a brief survey of the literature on teaching yields a wide range of approaches, each with a set of advocates. For example, researchers have identified numerous teaching styles (Mosston and Ashworth, 1990, Conti, 1989), stages of teacher competence (Pratt, 1989), families of teaching models (Joyce & Weil, 1986), and criteria for teacher appraisal (Hunter, 1984). Each of these sources might provide valuable perspectives, insights, and practical suggestions for teachers, yet the variance among them is great and no teacher could (or would wish to) apply them all simultaneously.

Research verifies the perception that a wide variety of practices exist among teachers, prompting one writer to predict that “any advocacy of uniform teaching practices thus seems both premature and doomed to failure” (Good, 1983, p. 42). Probably the greatest item of agreement among writers is expressed in this statement by a researcher and translator of research on teaching: “Teaching—real, live, honest-to-goodness classroom teaching—is extremely complex and extremely dynamic” (Berliner, 1984, p. 71).

Given that there seems to be a variety of successful teaching styles and practices, how does one judge quality in teaching? If there are no uniform stan-

The middle school students viewed a photographic reproduction of a large steel sculpture entitled *Portable Pueblo*, by Robert Haozous. After small group discussions guided by a worksheet with questions posed by art teacher Sharon Seim, students shared their interpretations of the work.

Student: "I saw people on the wheels, walking. It looks like they're walking around."

Student: "It shows the elevations of the land, the ground, the buildings and the air."

Student: "There's cars, and there's like, old buildings, and there's planes at the top."

Student: "We think that the wheel stands for that the world keeps on moving and it never stays in one place."

Student: "We think that he's an Indian and that the pueblos came from his heritage, and the cars and the airplanes show civilization moving up and becoming more advanced in time."

Student: "We think that it showed anger because it takes his memories with him, the artist, and each generation of Native American ways change."

Student: "It looks like new technologies and civilizations of today are moving the Native Americans out of their lands, 'cause they're trying to make new boundaries. The wheels look like they represent that they're picking up their things and leaving."

Sharon Seim: "That's very good. Robert Haozous is a Native American artist, and you're very close to what the artist was thinking. He has a belief that your art doesn't have to be beautiful, but it should say something, it should count for something."

*Excerpt from Tape 2: "Integrating the Art Disciplines," Episode A: Highlighting Studio Production and Student Social Commentary*

dards, no manageable set of criteria for excellence in teaching, how does one view teaching episodes such as those in this video series? The great philosopher John Dewey wrote extensively on education and authored the classic book, *Art as Experience*, in which he explicated a process of critical judgment in relation to works of art (Dewey, 1934).

In the world of art, as in teaching, there are many styles and many individual variations within each style. In art, as in teaching, it is not appropriate to apply criteria that might be acceptable within one style in order to make judgments about another style with its own internal set of ideas, principles, and criteria for excellence (Eisner, 1979, p. 166). Dewey's writing provided ways for observers and critics of art to negotiate this complex circumstance by addressing the question: How can we make judgments of quality and value in art?

Dewey emphasized the importance of "first-hand perception" which can never be displaced by knowledge of abstract theory (Dewey, p. 298). Applied to a teaching context, Dewey's words remind us to view carefully what actually occurs in the classroom and suggest that practical as well as theoretical knowledge of teaching is required.

The process of making judgments about art is "an act of controlled inquiry [that] demands a rich background and disciplined insight" and a funded store of experience (p. 300). How does the critic of art or of teaching acquire the characteristics of sensitivity, insight, knowledge, and experience? Dewey suggested several ways, the first of which is "acquaintance with the tradition of his particular art" (p. 310). The critical viewer of teaching, then, might develop sensitivity and insight through many first-hand perceptions of teaching, viewed with an attitude of controlled inquiry. The viewer's background of knowledge and experience for viewing this video series would be enhanced by acquaintance with art teaching (Bresler, 1993, Zimmerman, 1994) and, specifically, with the discipline-based approach.

A second means for developing critical insight is to gain knowledge not of a single approach but “of a wide range of traditions.” Contemporary art critics, for example, call upon their knowledge and experience with traditional works from the Renaissance, formalist Modern art, and the range of postmodern viewpoints. Critical viewers of teaching might enhance their sensitivity by calling upon knowledge and experience with current issues in education. Outcome-based education, multicultural education, site-based management, development of national standards for academic subjects (Music Educators National Conference, 1994), national assessment of educational progress, and emphasis on a “thinking curriculum” (Resnick & Klopfer, 1989) are a few topics of current educational discussions. More specifically within the field of art education, a knowledgeable viewer might benefit from understanding traditions of child-centered art education, emphasis on development of creativity, the aesthetic education movement, and the Quality Art Program of the National Art Education Association (NAEA, 1986), as well as the emergence and development of the discipline-based approach.

We are able to lay hold of the full import of a work of art, according to Dewey, by going through “in our own vital processes the processes the artist went through in producing the work” (p. 312). A person who has painted seriously, then, might be better able

to reconstruct the artist’s processes for creating a painting. This suggests that those who have seriously taught might better understand the teaching of another. Those viewers who lack the preparation for critical response might enhance their funded store of experience by viewing these video episodes of art teaching with a receptive mind and an attitude of controlled inquiry.

**Viewing Examples of Discipline-Based Art Teaching** The discipline-based construct provides a certain amount of direction for teachers, such as the

Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* is the topic for the high school art class. Working in small groups, they have studied historical accounts of the work and its origins and are taking turns reporting to the class. A student has just finished giving her report.  
Debra Barrett-Hayes: “Does anyone have a question?”  
First student: “What year did he paint her?”  
Reporting student: “It was around 1506.”  
First student: “Because ours said it was in the mid-1400s that he painted her.”  
Reporting student (laughing): “Well, ar r r r r r o u n d. Around, around, around.”  
Second student (to reporting student): “Ours said that he painted from 1503 to 1507, so it agrees with yours.”  
Third student: “Yeah, our sources do, too.”  
Debra Barrett-Hayes: “Thank you. We have one more presentation for today. Be sure to keep referring to your histories that you have, to see if you have points of agreement or disagreement with the person who’s presenting.”  
*Excerpt from Tape 4: “Art History and Art Criticism,” Episode A: Interpreting Contemporary Art*

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inclusion of valid art content and concern for assessment. Following are some of the characteristics of DBAE we might expect to see within the teaching episodes:

- Valid art content is taught, and that content is derived from one or more of the art disciplines. Content for teaching and learning includes knowledge and methods of inquiry, presented at levels appropriate for ages and abilities of students.
- In keeping with the variety of content derived from aesthetics, art history, art criticism, and art production, a range of teaching methods and student learning activities are used.
- Works of art provide the focus for teaching, and students study art through the lenses of the four art disciplines. The subject is art, not the four art disciplines taught separately.
- Students use recognized art materials and processes to make art, and they learn skills for making art that relate directly to ways adult artists work.
- A broad range of art content is provided over the weeks or months of school terms, so that students learn about the fine and applied arts and folk arts from many sources, times, and cultures.
- Students progress in their understanding of art as a part of their own lives and as an essential component within many cultures and societies, including the students' own.
- Teacher and students are responsible for assessing student progress; assessment is an integral part of the art curriculum and classroom instruction.
- The narrative of teaching and learning in the classroom progresses in ways that indicate the teacher's thoughtful planning, preparation, and leadership. Teaching is accomplished with conviction and dedication by a teacher who believes in the value of the subject of art as it is constituted within her or his classroom.
- Teaching is accomplished visually as well as verbally and through a range of learning activities, including art making, response to art works, reading, writing, group work, and others. The teacher appropriately exploits the visual nature of art and students' natural interest in visual images.

We might expect to see all of these characteristics across an entire school term or within a complete art course, but a single classroom session will not exhibit all of them. A lesson might emphasize one art discipline with content and

activities from one or more of the others in support. Many learning activities will integrate concepts and skills from two or more discipline sources. Teachers should not feel obliged to teach content from all four art disciplines in every lesson, but should strive for an overall balance across several lessons that make up a curriculum unit.

**Viewing the Videos for Study and Discussion** Each video features two episodes. At the end of each episode, three lists of topics suggest: 1) teaching methods demonstrated by the video teacher; 2) student learning activities; and 3) topics from general education and art education that relate to some aspect of the episode. These lists also appear with each episode in the viewers guide. As each video episode progresses, a logo appears intermittently in the corner of the screen, referring to comments in the viewers guide. These comments include the author's reflections on aspects of classroom activities, with suggested questions for discussion.

In instances where the videos are used for preservice teacher education courses or inservice sessions with experienced teachers, the viewers guide can be used in several ways. Facilitators of professional development sessions might consider the following suggestions and add their own to the list.

- Preview the particular video episode and the comments in the viewers guide and select the logo numbers on which you will pause for group discussions.
- Preview the video and viewers guide and make a discussion worksheet for your professional development session. Participants might take notes on the worksheet during the video and be prepared to discuss the items you have selected.
- Provide professional development participants with copies of the comments from the viewers guide and ask them to read the comments before (or after) viewing the video.
- Identify the topics and issues in the video episode that you wish to discuss and make your own guide for participants.
- Prepare a bibliography of relevant articles and books for participants in your professional development sessions.

You might consider viewing many episodes, focusing your attention on a single topic such as teachers' questions for students. You might ask your students

or professional development participants to analyze the cognitive levels of questions, comparing teachers at different grade levels. I am confident that creative viewers will find other interesting uses for the video series.

**A Word About the Teachers** I want to express my admiration for the teachers who appear in these videotapes. If you are or have been a teacher, you will recognize the courage required to place yourself in the position of being videotaped and having your teaching analyzed by any person who happens to obtain the video. You probably know that some viewers might not be empathetic or understanding and some will be critical, even if they don't have the prerequisites for criticism suggested by Dewey. These teachers have generously allowed us to enter their classrooms to observe them perform in very unpredictable settings with students of all backgrounds and ages. I hope that the videos will serve the purposes for which they are intended and that viewers will appreciate the significant contributions of these sincere teachers.

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**Lesson Plans**  
Tape 5/Episode A  
Focus on Original Art

Art Teacher: Susan Mudle  
North Port Glenallen Elementary School, North Port, Florida, and  
The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida  
Grade 4, Museum Field Trip  
Seventeenth-Century Comparisons

**Context of the Video Lesson**

These fourth-grade students have been engaged in a six-week study of seventeenth-century Dutch culture, with *Still Life with Parrots* (late 1640s) by Jan Davidsz de Heem (Dutch, 1606-1683/84) as the focal work of an interdisciplinary instruction and assessment unit developed by the Florida Institute for Art Education (see overview of the Comprehensive Holistic Assessment Task [CHAT] under Background). The ten-session unit includes art history, art criticism, art making, and aesthetics as well as connections to language arts, science, geography, and social studies.

The museum field trip was designed as an application and extension of classroom study. During the field trip, students engage in active and interactive learning activities using original works from the collection of the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art.

**Focus**

Works of art often reflect or express ideas and values of the society in which they originate. Dutch still-life paintings of the seventeenth century reveal much about the people, culture, and time, including the Dutch fascination with the marvelous, exotic, exceptional, and unique in both the natural and human-made worlds.

**Objectives**

Students will:

1. apply knowledge gained from study of *Still Life with Parrots* to study of another Dutch Baroque painting, *Still Life with Cats and Monkeys* (c. 1635), by Frans Snyders (Flemish, 1579-1657);
2. interpret *Still Life with Cats and Monkeys* in terms of subject matter, composition, and historical context;
3. express in writing and drawing the most marvelous, wondrous, or exotic aspects of *Still Life with Cats and Monkeys*; and
4. compare the two artworks and debate which one best represents the Dutch interest in the marvelous during the time when the works were created.

**Resources**

Museum collection of original works of art on exhibit.  
Objects to represent discussion categories, with questions attached:

<b>Objects</b>	<b>Category</b>
Silver pitcher and red feathers	Subject matter
Oranges	Color
Dark red velvet cloth	Composition
Conch shell	History
Wine glass	Meaning

Basket to hold the objects.

Mat on which to place the objects.

**Lesson Plans (cont.)**

Tape 5/Episode A

Focus on Original Art

**Resources**  
(Cont.)

Cloth to cover the objects.  
Cards with characteristics of Baroque paintings.  
Time line.  
Poster with information from the museum label and poster of assignment.  
Worksheet showing frame for drawing activity.

**Materials**

Foam boards.  
Pencils and colored markers (obtain museum permission for use in galleries).  
Viewfinders.

**Vocabulary**

balance: symmetrical/asymmetrical  
Baroque  
composition  
elements of art: line, shape, color, texture, space  
exotic

**Preparation**

**Note: Arrangements for the field trip to the art museum were made weeks in advance, and collaboration with the education staff of the museum was ongoing.**

Make preparations in the museum galleries before students arrive. In this lesson, for example, place easel in gallery opposite the painting *Still Life with Cats and Monkeys*.

Place sealed letter from the parrot on the easel (see letter under Background).

Put labeled objects on a mat under the framed poster of *Still Life with Parrots*. Cover the objects. Place worksheets, foam boards, pencils, colored markers, and viewfinders on a mat near the painting.

**Procedure**

**Note: This lesson is written from the perspective of a particular location, museum, and pair of paintings. Teachers can apply the procedures to their own locations and settings.**

1. Students enter the gallery and discover that the painting *Still Life with Parrots* is on loan to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. They also discover a note on the easel from the parrot, similar to other notes they have received in their classroom.
2. A student is selected to read the note, in which the class is invited to examine *Still Life with Cats and Monkeys*. Next, the teacher reads her letter from the parrot. Students are asked to turn their backs to the *Parrots* painting, close their eyes, and listen to the magical words. The objects (that have “spilled out” of the *Parrots* painting) are uncovered and ready to surprise the students when they turn around.

3. Each object has a question attached to it. Individual students take an object and read the question, which is a springboard for discussion:
  - Pitcher or feather: Subject matter
  - What objects do you see in the painting?
  - Orange: Color/Sensory qualities
  - How does the artist use color, line, shape, or texture to lead your eye around the painting?
  - Velvet cloth: Composition
  - How does the artist balance the painting?
  - Conch shell: History
  - What are the essential facts about this painting? (Read the label.)
  - Wine glass: Meaning
  - Is this an everyday scene or is it something extraordinary?The teacher will amplify each part of the visual analysis and guide the students in interpreting the painting (see visual analysis guide under Background).
  
4. Following the visual analysis and interpretation of the painting, the teacher engages students in several related learning activities in the museum gallery.

Writing and drawing: Review with students the use of adjectives to describe the qualities of objects and ask them to apply their knowledge to describe objects in *Still Life with Cats and Monkeys*. Hand out sheets of drawing paper with a border representing a frame and ask students to write descriptions of exotic objects depicted in the painting on the frame. Next, direct students to choose one of the exotic objects and draw it inside the frame, using a viewfinder if they choose (a viewfinder is a four- to five-inch paper square with a three- to four-inch square open center). Remind them to hold it at arm's length. They will use a pencil first to make a sketch and then add color. Share work when finished.

Great debates: Ask students, "Which one of these paintings is the most wondrous and exotic and best represents Dutch/Flemish life in the seventeenth century?" Assign half of the class to advocate *Still Life with Cats and Monkeys* as the best representative and half to advocate *Still Life with Parrots*. Each group will take turns making a case for their painting, pointing out qualities that relate to Dutch life and culture.

Aesthetic decisions: Remind students that museums have curators who make decisions about acquiring paintings for the collection and exhibiting paintings in the galleries. Pose the question, "What if you were a curator at this museum and you were asked to choose only one of these still lifes to put in the museum—which one would you choose? Why?"

Procedure  
(cont.)

After a lively discussion, help students categorize the kinds of reasons they gave for their selections, i.e., quality, subject, preference, artist, color, popularity of the work with the public, etc. Discuss which reasons might be most important considering the painting's contribution to the public. Also discuss more practical issues related to acquisition decisions, such as cost in relation to the budget, place of the selected work in relation to the rest of the museum's collection, condition of the work, and possible expenses for restoration.

5. When the class is back in school following the museum visit, conduct a discussion with students, eliciting their perceptions of the field trip and reinforcing intended learnings.

Assessment

Note students' attendance and participation in activities in preparation for, during, and following the museum field trip.

Collect and review each student's work in the drawing and writing activities. For example, did each student write adjectives that accurately describe the specified parts of the painting? Did students draw selected sections of the painting with an acceptable degree of accuracy, according to the assignment?

Note participation in museum gallery activities. Were students alert and interested? Did most or all students engage in discussions? Did students understand and complete the gallery activities?

If you choose, develop a questionnaire or quiz, possibly using slides or reproductions of selected paintings. The questionnaire might focus on specific facts and basic understandings related to the lesson, organized in short answer form. It could also ask questions that require judgment and generalization in the form of brief written responses.

Note CHAT unit summary under Background and related assessment activities.

Background

Letter to the Teacher from the Parrot

Dear Mrs. Mudle,

I want to thank you for bringing the students to my painting and helping them learn so much about it. Since they did so well with *Still Life with Parrots*, I would like to ask them to accept another challenge. First, turn your back to my painting, sit down, close your eyes, and listen to these magical words about *Still Life with Parrots*.

*Still Life with Parrots* is exotic and fantastic, full of wonder but realistic. Full, so very full, brimming over with luscious colors, delicious fruits, varied textures, and traces of faraway places. You can almost taste the fragrant oranges, whole and part. See the grapes and cherries and pomegranates, rich and juicy. Feel the velvet of the tablecloths and the cold of the pillars. Hear the buzzing of bees and the sound of the distant sea. You are here now. Feel yourself in the seventeenth century, loving the exotic freshness of the still life, the glory of the voyages, the desire to find out more about the wonders of the world!

Open your eyes and look at the still life in front of you. How is it similar to *Still Life with Parrots*? You are right, there are similarities and there are differences. Will you accept the challenge to learn more about this painting?

Now, Mrs. Mudle, have your students turn around to receive their part of the challenge.

[Students will turn around, objects will be on the floor in front of the *Still Life with Parrots* reproduction. Teacher will say: "Look! We mentioned how full the painting appeared and how the objects looked so real that they might spill out. It has happened! I guess that is what the parrot meant by magical words!" The parrot continues.]

Each of these objects from my painting is a symbol of a task that will help you discover how *Still Life with Cats and Monkeys* is similar to and different from my painting. Let's begin our journey into *Still Life with Cats and Monkeys*, c. 1635, by Frans Snyders.

Sincerely,  
The Parrot

### Visual Analysis Guide A suggested sequence for visual analysis

Subject matter: What objects do you see in the painting?

You listed the objects from nature and those made by humans just like we did when we studied *Still Life with Parrots*. Would you say that there are more objects from nature or more that were made by people?

Did any of you think that there were objects that were marvelous or exotic? Which ones? Why?

Background  
(cont.)

When we studied *Parrots*, we talked about how point of view determined whether you thought something was exotic. So if you were a Flemish person living in the seventeenth century, would these things be exotic? Are they exotic to you personally today? Why or why not?

Color/Sensory qualities: How does the artist use color, line, shape, or texture to lead your eye around the painting?

Can you tell me the most important or interesting colors, lines, shapes, and textures you saw? (Emphasize diagonal line and shapes.)

Where are the focal points of the painting? Why did the artist want the viewer's attention drawn there? What did the artist do to lead our eyes there?

Composition: How does the artist balance the painting?

Is the composition symmetrical or asymmetrical? Explain. Can you see examples of repetition? Movement? Contrast? How does the artist use these principles to convey his ideas? What ideas do you think the painting conveys?

History: What are the essential facts about this painting? (Read the label.)

Report about the artist, the time, and the place this work was done. Does any of this sound familiar to you?

Do you think this artist, Frans Snyders, might have known de Heem? Explain.

Do you think this painting is or is not Baroque? Why? (Students will be directed to look at cards that describe Baroque characteristics.)

You have already said that *Still Life with Cats and Monkeys* was done around 1635. Let's see how it fits on the time line we did in class with *Still Life with Parrots*. Where would we put it? Does this help identify it as a Baroque painting?

Meaning: Is this an everyday scene or is it something extraordinary?

Why do you think the artist chose cats and monkeys and the other things to put in a still life? Explain your answer.

What kind of feeling or mood do you think this painting has? What creates that feeling?

What is this painting really about? Is it just a picture of cats and monkeys messing things up or are there larger ideas?

Could the monkeys stand for something else? The cats? The game and fruits? Explain. Would you call this painting marvelous or exotic? Would you interpret the meaning of *Still Life with Parrots* as an example of how people are inspired and fascinated by the marvelous, exotic, exceptional, and unique in both the natural and human-made worlds? Explain your answer.

### Comprehensive Holistic Assessment Task (CHAT)

#### Unit Overview

*Still Life with Parrots* by Jan Davidsz de Heem  
Grades 3-5

Goals of the Unit: The focal work for the CHAT is a Baroque painting from the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art by one of the foremost painters of Dutch/Flemish still lifes in the seventeenth century.

1. Students will interpret the meaning of *Still Life with Parrots* as an example of how people are inspired and fascinated by the marvelous, exotic, exceptional, and unique in both the natural and human-made worlds.
2. Students will interpret *Still Life with Parrots* as a reflection of seventeenth-century Dutch/Flemish society influenced by exploration, trade, and discoveries of new territories.
3. Students will create works of art that convey ideas and feelings about the wonders of nature and the human-made world.

Overview: In the first lesson, students will be asked to imagine that while they are visiting the Ringling Museum of Art they magically travel on the back of a parrot into the painting to respond to the bird's plea to tell everyone why they should stop and "really look" at this intriguing work. After writing about their exploration, they receive instructions for a secret mission to use a viewfinder to select and draw the most fascinating thing in the painting. In the second lesson, students interpret the work through classification and inquiry strategies and learn about the artist. In the third lesson, they discover the characteristics of Baroque paintings by comparing works of art, creating a time line, and listening to Baroque music.

To understand the cultural context of the painting, students look for clues about Dutch life in other artworks and become explorers. In the fourth lesson, they play a board game that takes their ships from the seventeenth-century Netherlands to ports in Africa and the Far East to bring home precious goods

and exotic cargo. In the fifth lesson, they discuss what would be wondrous, rare, or unusual today and what they would bring back from a modern journey. The marvels of the ordinary are revealed in the sixth lesson, as students examine every part of an orange—as an artist, a scientist, and a writer.

In the seventh lesson, students study works by Picasso, Magritte, and O’Keeffe and see how artists have the ability to take something ordinary and make it mysterious, unusual, or amazing. Students bring their own “special” ordinary things to arrange in a group still life and begin a sketch for their own artwork in the eighth lesson. They finish their still life and assess their own work in the ninth lesson. In the final lesson, students receive another secret mission letter, which asks that they write about the painting with added information about the artist, historical and cultural influences, and their own ideas. They also discuss how their work compares to de Heem’s. A culminating activity is for students to present their interpretation as docents to tell visitors everything about the painting and what it means.

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**Lesson Plans**  
Tape 5/Episode B  
Interacting with a  
Contemporary Artist

Teacher: Patricia E. Johnston  
Pine View School, Osprey, Florida  
High school art history—6 class sessions  
Grades 9–12  
Friends, Friendship, and the *Four Friends* Exhibition

**Context of the Video Lesson**

In conjunction with a traveling exhibition at a local art museum, students have the opportunity to interview an artist by means of a telephone conference call. In preparation for the interview, they research the artist's life as well as the body of his work. This enables them to ask questions that elicit answers not found in printed sources.

**Focus**

An artist can provide insights into the creative process from the unique perspective of a practitioner.

**Objectives**

Students will:

1. investigate the life story of a selected artist;
2. view and analyze the works of the artist;
3. select the important political, social, and cultural events associated with the artist's lifetime;
4. create a time line that relates the artist's life with the events taking place in society; and
5. write a series of questions for an interview with the artist that focus on:
  - a) how personal experiences affect the artist's work;
  - b) the artist's intent in creating these works; and
  - c) the artist's views about the creative process.

**Resources**

Books and articles that contain information about the artist, interviews with him, and critiques of his work.  
Exhibition of the artist's work at a local art museum.  
Written materials about and reproductions of art by artists who influenced the artist being interviewed.  
History books, encyclopedias, and Bernard Grun's *The Timetables of History*.

**Materials**

Poster board, markers, glue, etc., for time line of artist's life.  
Computer to compile the results of the research.  
Telephone line, microphone, and loudspeakers for the conference call to the artist's studio.

**Vocabulary**

art conservator  
curator  
installation

**Preparation**

**Note: Arrangements for visits to the art museum were made weeks in advance, and collaboration with the education staff of the museum was ongoing.**

Select an artist whose work is currently being shown in the area and who is willing to discuss her or his art with students.

## Lesson Plans (cont.)

### Tape 5/Episode B Interacting with a Contemporary Artist

#### Procedure

Work in cooperation with the gallery or museum personnel to schedule a field trip to the exhibition of the artist's work.

Make arrangements for a teleconference session with the artist on the day of the field trip. The teleconference setup will be in the gallery with the artist's works.

Collect books and other materials about the artist and assist students in conducting research in preparation for the visit to the exhibition and the teleconference with the artist.

**Note: This lesson is written from the perspective of a particular location, museum, exhibition, and artist. Teachers can apply the procedures to their own locations and settings.**

1. Introduce students to materials about the traveling art exhibition, titled *Four Friends*, at the Ringling Museum of Art, featuring works by four living New York artists. Discuss the possibility of visiting the museum.
2. Discuss the artists—Eric Fischl, Ralph Gibson, April Gornik, and Bryan Hunt—and ask students to collect materials and do research to learn more about the artists and their work. Search especially for photographs of their art.
3. Divide students into groups and ask each group to give a report on one artist. If possible, each report should include biographical information, statements about their work, critical reviews, photographs of the artist, and photographs of the artwork.
4. Spend a class session hearing the four reports and discussing the findings. If feasible, assign students to visit the *Four Friends* exhibition on their own.
5. After students have visited the museum and seen the work, ask them which artist they would like to talk to if they had the opportunity. (This class was especially interested in the work of Eric Fischl and selected him as their focus artist).
6. For the task of learning more about the selected artist, Eric Fischl, divide the class into research groups. Each group will concentrate its studies on a portion of the artist's life, with attention paid to his biography, his artistic output, and events that took place in society during the period under study.

**Lesson Plans (cont.)**

Tape 5/Episode B  
Interacting with a  
Contemporary Artist

7. Direct students to record their findings in outline form on the computer. Guide students in creating a visual time line of the artist's life, works, and related political, cultural, social, and personal events.
8. Visit the museum with students to view and discuss the works by Fischl and the other artists. Invite oral discussion using formal analysis and other approaches to art criticism. Encourage students to associate the results of their research with the works on exhibit.
9. After a class discussion in which they agree on a format, student groups complete their respective portions of the time line on Fischl's life.
10. In preparation for the museum visit and teleconference with the artist, students formulate questions they wish to ask Fischl, review and select the best ones, and choose the students who will start the questioning.
11. Visit the museum, go to the gallery, and interview the artist.
12. If possible, stay in the gallery after the teleconference for a "debriefing" discussion with students.

**Assessment**

Read and evaluate students' research work. Note numbers of sources investigated, accuracy and relevance of selected quotations, evidence of knowledge of library research techniques, and accuracy and correct form of cited references.

View and analyze the time line segments by each group. Check for thoughtfulness in selection of cultural and historical events in relation to the artist's life. Assess relevance of selected events as influences in the artist's life and work.

Observe and note participation by students during group work and museum visits.

Note quality of questions formulated for the artist. Do questions arise from a background of knowledge and understanding informed by students' research? Are questions incisively formulated? Are students able to follow up their questions with additional relevant questions?

Keep track of attendance during the project and at the museum. Plan ways to assist students who return after absences.

**Background**

The *Four Friends* exhibition was initially generated by a special intimate and intense sense of celebrating the friendships between and among these con-

**Background**

(Cont.)

temporary artists. It was along social lines rather than artistic ones that the exhibition was first formulated and understood. What slowly became apparent was that its arbitrary beginnings, emphasizing friendship as an ordinary process, hid an intuition of greater purpose. What became clear was that both art and friendship, when enjoyed thoroughly, can proclaim the fullest nature of human life, that our truest values are felt at the most personal and the most social levels by our friendships and our art.

Friendship bespeaks individuality at its finest moment of freedom and responsibility. It is the subjective version of democracy—the sacred place where democracy would always lead if fulfilled. Friendship is the smallest but most secure moment of sociality, of the desire of the individual body for more than mere fulfillment of needs. Friendship is always authentic and locatable, daily and specific, ordinary and active, mundane and exotic. Friends occupy each other in an unbound contract, renegotiated at every point of contact. Its intimacy is politics without fear; its politics an intimacy of proper distances. It is the essence of empathy and, thus, of a positive and active world.

Art is a friendship with oneself, with one's own fears and desires and hauntings and commitments and longings. And friendship is an art—an art of forgiveness, of advice, and of proper distances. How these skills and dangers inform one another, how they press on one another, how they impinge and support one another is the thread that joins the works in this exhibition together. It is that single thread, offered as a gift.

Bruce W. Ferguson  
Exhibition curator, 1993

Eric Fischl was born in New York City in 1948. He studied at the California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, and received a B.F.A. in 1972. An independent painter, he lived in California from 1972 to 1974 and in Nova Scotia from 1974 to 1978. He has lived in New York since that time and has exhibited extensively throughout the country and the world. His work is in the collections of major museums in the United States and Canada.

Fischl's paintings express the changes taking place in American culture of the 1980s and 1990s. His large figurative pictures depict the most popular motifs of suburban society—swimming pools, family outings, and people, often lonely people, painted with a kind of arresting severity. They appear to be unhappy and hurt, suffering a kind of crisis of identity from the awareness of the fading of the "American dream." These people may be participating in the rituals of the leisure class, but those rituals are without substance. Fischl's painting appears to be narrative in character, although the narrative is never completely

Selected References

fulfilled. The viewer is presented with fragments of the story and is uncertain of what is actually taking place. Even though he uses live models, Fischl's figurative subjects are drawn from a pictorial background of well-recognized stereotypes: illustrations from advertising magazines, snapshots, familiar reproductions, and so on.

*Four Friends* Teacher Package  
Ringling Museum of Art, 1993

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1

■ Field trips for students can be a significant part of their education, as they have opportunities to relate their classroom studies to the real world outside the school. For their study of art, it is important that students have opportunities as often as possible to experience original works of art of the quality that can be found in galleries, museums, private collections, and in public places. Children and young people are often amazed when they see the large size of original paintings, for example, when they are accustomed to seeing art as small color reproductions in books or as slides projected on a screen. Their experience with sculpture, architecture, and all three-dimensional works of art is greatly enhanced when they view the original objects.

**Suggested discussion:** What are the primary constraints for taking students on field trips? How do teachers prepare students for field trip experiences prior to leaving the classroom? What preparations by the teacher are required in advance of taking students to an art museum?

2

■ The teacher has planned in advance with the education staff of the Ringling Museum of Art. She has arranged for an easel, drawing materials, and other requests in preparation for this field trip. Children sit on the floor during this session. When appropriate and available, children can sit on “camp stools” provided by the museum. The teacher has focused on the parrot in the painting as a “character” that can communicate with the students through letters. She uses this device to capture students’ interest and to teach them about the painting and its context.

**Suggested discussion:** In what ways does prior study of art in the classroom enhance students’ experience in the museum? How does it affect their behavior in the museum setting? How does it affect their interest in the art exhibited in the museum and their ability to concentrate on the museum experience?

3

■ With assistance from an adult who accompanied the class, the teacher engages students in another dramatization, asking them to use their imaginations. Her description calls upon all the senses in relation to the painting they have studied. The teacher uses the device of “challenge” repeatedly to keep students focused on the tasks of the lesson and to give them a feeling of accomplishment as they meet each challenge.

**Suggested discussion:** How effective are dramatization techniques for holding students’ attention? Can dramatization assist students in remembering information and concepts related to their studies? Is dramatization equally effective with older students and adults? Why don’t teachers use dramatization techniques more often?

4

■ The physical objects that have “spilled out” of the painting provide another object lesson for students and provide vivid images that will assist them in remembering symbolic meanings. The teacher checks for understanding fre-

quently by asking questions of students and gaining consensus, such as when she says, “Can we all agree on this?” Students are engaged in describing the content of the painting according to categories provided by the teacher.

**Suggested discussion:** These students are attending to the selected work in a structured group situation directed by the teacher. What other instructional methods might be used to accomplish the same educational goals? What are the benefits and liabilities of each method? Are some methods not feasible for use in the museum setting? Could several instructional methods be used during a single field trip?

■ This classroom teacher uses art terms as well as words from other subjects in the curriculum to develop students’ vocabularies. She views art in the curriculum as a means to accomplish goals of general education, such as thinking skills, as well as to teach art content. She incorporates reading, history, and geography with the study of art.

5

**Suggested discussion:** How does the discipline-based approach to art education encourage interdisciplinary studies? How can teachers ensure that the study of art will not be overlooked within an integrated school curriculum?

■ Students are engaged here in formal analysis of the painting, using concepts from the elements and principles of art: line, shape, color, texture, space, composition, balance, contrast, movement, unity, etc. This analysis assists students in seeing how the artist organized the work and provides them with a foundation for interpreting meaning in the work.

6

**Suggested discussion:** At what grade level should students become familiar with the elements and principles of art and be able to use them for formal analysis of works of art? How can formal analysis be informed by interpretation as well as contribute to interpretation? In what ways might formal analysis be overemphasized? At what age should students begin to learn other approaches to interpretation based on the quality of emotion in a work, its social or political meaning, or its mimetic qualities?

■ Students are asked to point to the work under study, being careful not to touch the work, and to read the labels. Museum labels sometimes provide only the fundamental information about a work, as we see in this case. In other instances, labels might provide information about the context of a work, its interpretation, and the circumstances of its acquisition for the museum collection. Museum visitors often are interested in knowing more about the works on display.

7

**Suggested discussion:** What practices make museums more inviting, interesting, and pleasant places to visit? How does the museum visit of this class differ from the typical museum tour? How sophisticated are these fourth-grade students regarding Dutch Baroque painting in relation to most museum visitors? Are these students prepared to bring their parents and families to the museum?

8

■ Using a visual display that outlines six characteristics of Baroque painting that students have studied in their classroom prior to the museum visit, the teacher asks students to apply the characteristics to the painting in the museum.

**Suggested discussion:** How many different ways has this teacher used visual images, including words, to teach? How effective is the use of charts, objects, and reproductions as well as original works of art? Why does the teacher ask students to raise their hands periodically? Is this an automatic response by students or are they responding with understanding?

9

■ The primary reason for teaching students the fundamentals of formal analysis is to enable them to interpret meaning in works of art. The teacher asks students to speculate about the artist's selection of content and possible meanings of the work. Students readily respond and use their imaginations to construct several scenarios featuring the animals in the painting.

**Suggested discussion:** When students are asked to speculate about an artist's intent and to interpret meaning in works of art, their responses might range from relevant, defensible interpretations to speculations with little connection to the work under study. How can teachers help students evaluate the quality of their interpretations of works of art? What criteria for discourse about art might be applied during such discussions?

10

■ The teacher reinforces the idea that one can learn about art through discourse with others. She is interested in having students expand their own views of the work by hearing alternative views from others.

11

■ The teacher engages students in writing about and drawing from the painting as a means of gaining additional understanding of the work. As she describes the activities to students, the teacher is well prepared with a chart, worksheet, viewfinder, pencils, writing pads, etc. She briefly demonstrates and moves students quickly into action.

**Suggested discussion:** How can the study of art be integrated with other subjects, such as history, social studies, and language arts? Why are works of art especially effective subjects for students' written work? What can students learn by drawing from a work of art?

12

■ In this instance the museum has encouraged student learning activities in the galleries, and prior arrangements have been made to allow students to use pencils, markers, and other materials. Students have been oriented to museum expectations regarding behavior and concerns for protecting the works of art. Without explicit cooperation with the museum education department, such activities might not be permissible in the galleries.

**Suggested discussion:** What types of learning activities can be conducted in the museum that would not be possible in the school classroom? How can

teachers assist students in enjoying the unique benefits offered in the museum environment?

■ Most museums of art and other public museums operate under a tax-exempt status and include a commitment to public education as an integral component of their stated missions. Some museums have developed active education programs for the public, with special attention to school populations, which they encourage to visit the museum. In some instances, educational materials are developed by museum education departments to be used by teachers in the schools to prepare students for visits to the museum's permanent collection and for special temporary exhibitions. Some museums provide professional development programs for teachers to assist them in using museum collections and exhibits more effectively. Many museums have taken steps to make the museum environment more welcoming, unthreatening, and pleasant for visitors of all ages.

**Suggested discussion:** What steps can be taken by art museums to make visits by patrons more enjoyable and educational? How do museum professionals show their consideration for patrons through their use of labels, signage, open hours, exhibits, rest areas, and other, sometimes optional, services such as a museum bookstore and shop or a museum cafe? What types of educational materials are available in art museums? What materials for students and teachers are produced by the education departments of art museums?

■ Students are divided into two groups for a discussion/debate that compares the two paintings they have studied according to: a) the exotic characteristics of the subjects, and b) their representations of the interests of seventeenth-century Dutch society. Although we see only a few comments by students in the video, this discussion gave students opportunities to make observations, justify their observations in reference to the paintings, make interpretations, support their interpretations with reasons, listen with respect to the views of others, and make judgments based on observations and arguments. This activity tested the extent to which students had learned enough about the paintings and their context to engage in intelligent discourse about them. Many parents and other interested adults are amazed when they observe students, such as these fourth graders, engaged in such discussions. They often recognize their own inability to match the content or level of discussion about art that even elementary grade students can accomplish with appropriate instruction.

**Suggested discussion:** Why is it possible for many elementary age children to become more knowledgeable about art than their parents? Is this typical with other subjects, such as mathematics, reading and writing, social studies, etc.? How much formal art education have most adults had during their public schooling? In what ways have the content and practices of art education changed during the past twenty years?

13

14

1

■ The staff of this art museum welcomes and encourages collaborative efforts with local schools. In addition to its permanent collection of historical works of art, the museum exhibits contemporary works in traveling exhibitions, such as the one featured in this episode. High school students selected one of the four artists whose work was in the exhibition and studied his life and works in preparation for a teleconference interview with the artist. The educational value for students of viewing original works of art is apparent throughout the video.

**Suggested discussion:** What steps can teachers take to develop innovative art education programs in collaboration with local museums? How do museum visits relate to the regular art curriculum in the school? In what ways might museum educators encourage participation by teachers and students from the local schools? How are collaborative programs between schools and museums funded?

2

■ One of the innovative aspects of this collaborative effort was the use of a telephone conference call set up in the museum gallery. This allowed students to communicate directly with the artist while in the presence of the artist's works. Another interesting aspect was the invitation for the curator of the featured exhibition to participate with the artist. This allowed students to learn more about another art profession and about some of the issues that attend the development, organization, and installation of an art exhibition.

**Suggested discussion:** What other art gallery and art museum professionals might be invited to participate in educational programs for serious high school students? How can students become informed about occupations in art they might consider upon graduation from high school? How expensive is a telephone conference such as the one seen in this episode? How is such a call initiated? What special equipment is needed? What are other possible uses of technology for art education in museums and schools?

3

■ This artist is able to speak very openly with students, at their level, about his work and personal influences in his development as an artist. On several occasions during the video, the curator serves as a mediator between students and artist as he explains some of the artist's practices and concerns. The role of art criticism as an integral aspect of art education is very relevant to this episode. As part of their preparation for the interview, students read the writings of art critics and, in their discussion and interpretation of the artist's works on exhibit, acted as art critics.

As part of the serious study of art at the high school level, students might become familiar with several aesthetic stances or philosophical positions about art. They also might learn about several approaches to the criticism of contemporary art, such as formalist art criticism, Marxist or ideological art criticism, feminist art criticism, and, most appropriate for study of the works of

this artist, psychoanalytical art criticism. As the artist discusses influences upon his painting of personal relationships and important events in his life, and as he discusses the importance of the subconscious in his art, he invites analysis of his work from the perspectives of psychoanalytical art criticism.

**Suggested discussion:** What are the major traditional stances or philosophical positions from the field of aesthetics? Which contemporary art critics are associated with and write within each of these critical traditions or approaches? What other salient critical approaches are relevant for students to study? How can students be encouraged to learn more about works of art by discussing and writing about them?

■ Students will gain more from a visit to an art museum if they are prepared in advance. In this instance, students read about the artist's life, viewed reproductions of his work in art journals and books, read reviews of his work written by art critics, and learned more about the place of the artist in the context of the contemporary art world. As you will note again later in the video, the teacher is an excellent model as a learner. She worked with students to learn more about the featured artist, acting as a participating guide with her own enthusiastic curiosity and interest. We observe students asking questions of the artist on a number of topics, and many additional questions were asked that don't appear on the video. Note the range of topics and questions asked by students. They discuss formal properties, interpretation of meaning, and the artist's creative approach as well as biographical, technical, and stylistic questions.

**Suggested discussion:** Would their preparation for this gallery visit be different if students did not anticipate the opportunity to speak with the artist? Would their research be as valuable? Would they be as motivated to learn? What are some ways that teachers can motivate their students to prepare for visits to galleries and museums?

■ In response to students' questions, the artist comments on his personal processes for painting, his concern for meaning in his work, and his sensitivity to the qualities of the painting materials. This discussion reveals the artist's conscious regard for viewers' response to his work and his awareness of the special relationship between artist and viewer.

**Suggested discussion:** How do different artists approach their work in different ways? Do the artist's comments assist viewers in interpreting his work? What different approaches to viewing art can students bring to their encounters with works of art in galleries and museums?

■ Students respond very positively to the experience of speaking directly with the artist through the medium of the teleconference. In addition to being in the presence of original works of art, students feel the excitement of hearing the artist's voice in response to their questions, and they gain added meaning from his vocal expression.

4

5

6

An important part of any gallery or museum visit is the discussion, or “debriefing,” that takes place following the visit. Here the teacher leads the discussion, eliciting personal insights from students and reinforcing points she feels are most important. Through the discussion process, teachers can assist students in recognizing what they have learned and place their learning in context.

**Suggested discussion:** In what ways might the teleconference medium be employed for teaching and learning in schools and museums? Is the teleconference feasible for other situations where teachers wish to speak with particular individuals whose work is relevant to the subject of their students’ studies? How effective is this artist as a subject for the teleconference? Will all speakers be as effective? How important to the success of the teleconference was the setting in the gallery with the artist’s work on exhibit?

7

■ One of the long-standing issues within the museum community, including art museums, is the perceived role of the museum as a provider of information to assist patrons with interpretation of works on exhibit. In the more traditional view works of art are usually labeled with information such as title, artist, date, medium, size, and sometimes source of acquisition. Art objects are often exhibited according to historical periods or styles. Museum patrons are expected to respond directly to the works in an unmediated manner.

Recently museums have taken a more active stance in providing contextual information about works on display to assist viewers with their interpretations and responses. Art museum educators in many locations provide extended labels for works on exhibit; printed materials in the galleries; study rooms with books, reproductions, and other educational materials; multimedia orientation rooms; videos and related materials on sale in museum bookstores and shops; and packets of slides and written materials on loan for use in schools. Some museums mount didactic exhibits that demonstrate processes for creating the types of objects on display as well as exhibits in response to questions commonly posed by patrons.

In this school-museum collaboration we witness an art museum that takes an active role in assisting visitors to gain more from works on display, to reduce the psychological and contextual distance between viewers and works of art. During the post-teleconference discussion, students express their perceptions of the museum as a lively place for active learning.

**Suggested discussion:** What are the perceptions of students in your area regarding the local art museum(s)? Do they view the museum as a lively, interesting, friendly place to visit or a boring, unpleasant place? What factors within the museum shape visitors’ experiences toward one or the other of these two extremes? How can teachers best utilize the services and resources offered by local art museums? How can teachers influence museum practices and policies with respect to visits by student groups?

8

■ In another effort to encourage active participation by patrons, this museum established a “friendship gallery” in conjunction with the theme of the *Four Friends* exhibition. Museum visitors were encouraged to write messages to real or imaginary friends on the specially prepared walls of the small gallery adjacent to the exhibit. Two college art students were invited to prepare an installation on the friendship theme, using friendship messages created on cards by students from the local public schools. The theme of the exhibit extended into the schools, typifying the potential for school-museum collaborations where both entities might positively influence the other.

**Suggested discussion:** How might this theme be extended to other subjects in the school curriculum? How might the topic of friendship relate to the study of history, politics, music, reading and writing, and other school subjects? What place does graffiti have in contemporary art? What contemporary artists are known for their use of graffiti? How is graffiti different from the rock art of prehistoric peoples? Why is graffiti allowed in the museum in this form? What are the implications of providing a place for writing on the museum walls? How is the museum environment altered by this installation?

9

■ Another educational level is represented in the collaboration with the two college students who were invited to create an installation piece. They constructed a “friendship house,” complete with family members in the rooms, emphasizing relationships of the family. The friendship cards made by schoolchildren became the outside surface of the house. While following the designated theme, the college students were equally interested in making comments about stereotypical views of the art museum. With wry humor they challenged the supposed impersonality, elite status, and propriety of behavior long associated with art museums.

**Suggested discussion:** What other stereotypes about museums can you identify? How valid are they in contemporary art museums? How can art challenge stereotypes of all kinds? What artists have become famous for challenging stereotypes?

10

■ When the artists and curator were invited to the community to discuss the exhibit, students were given the opportunity to meet the artist in person and ask more questions. As a result of their research, students were able to ask relevant questions, and the artist again demonstrated his willingness to speak openly and honestly with students. Students elicited explanations from the artist about his response to negative criticism, his source of ideas for paintings, and his process for creating a painting. As a means to direct inquiry about artists and their work, teachers might pose the hypothetical situation to students: “What would you ask (Artist X) about (her/his) work if you had the chance? In the absence of the artist, whether deceased or otherwise unavailable, how could students go about answering their own questions?”

11

**Suggested discussion:** How effective is this artist in direct contact with students? Do you think all artists might be as effective and at ease with students? What part did students' preparation and study play in the success of this encounter with the artist? Might students learn from visits by less-famous artists? What criteria would you use to select artists for classroom visits or field trip visits?

■ A number of the artist's comments in response to students' questions address his reliance on the subconscious as an influence in his work. Earlier he discussed the influence of his mother's illness and other personal experiences in his work, and he explained to students how the painting speaks to him and guides his efforts as an artist. Here he discusses painting as a language that precedes words and thought and as a means for unlocking thoughts and feelings. All of these dimensions of his work suggest that the psychoanalytical approach to art criticism might be useful for interpreting his often complex paintings. In order to engage in psychoanalytical criticism of the work of any artist, the writer or critic must become very familiar with important events in the artist's life and seek to discover correlations between such events and expressions in the artist's work.

**Suggested discussion:** In addition to the application of elements and principles of art in relation to the formal properties of a work, what other approaches to art criticism might students become familiar with in their high school art classes? What contemporary art critics write from the perspectives of formalist criticism, ideological or Marxist criticism, feminist criticism, or psychoanalytical criticism? What kinds of insights can be gleaned from each critical approach? How can each approach provide a basis for judgment of quality in art?

12

■ The question about placement of the canvases is one of several raised about issues of installing and curating the exhibition. In his answer, the curator discusses some of the choices made by the artist and the curator's responsibilities to act according to them. The roles of curator and conservator as well as that of artist are discussed, providing students with an introduction to some of the occupations they might pursue in the future.

**Suggested discussion:** How and where do students learn about careers in the visual arts? How do they learn about careers in fields such as illustration, graphic design, photography, interior design, industrial design, art history, art criticism, philosophy of art, art education, and the traditional areas of the fine arts? How do students learn about how and where they might pursue careers in the visual arts after high school graduation? What interests, skills, understandings, knowledge, and abilities are required for successful preparation for the various art career fields?

■ The students' time line of the artist's life includes a great deal of contextual information, including personal, biographical, cultural, political, and educational events. Much of this information is useful in interpreting the artist's works.

**Suggested discussion:** How might this type of study correlate with other studies in the students' curriculum at school?

■ This teacher provides encouragement for her fellow teachers to pursue their dreams of better educational opportunities for their students. In her case, the result was this collaboration with the art museum and the establishment of a good working relationship with museum personnel for future efforts.

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Episode A

Special appreciation to *Susan Mudle* and her 4th-grade class

North Port Glenallen Elementary School, North Port, Florida

*Johanna McQueen*, Principal

Susan Hazelroth

Director of School and Family Programs

The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art

Sarasota, Florida

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## Episode B

Special appreciation to *Patricia Johnston* and her 9-12th grade class  
Pine View School, Osprey, Florida  
Steve Largo, Principal

Bruce Ferguson, Curator, *Four Friends* Exhibition

Eric Fischl, Artist

Susan Hazelroth  
Director of School and Family Programs  
The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art  
Sarasota, Florida

Artwork

## Episode A

*Still Life with Parrots*, late 1640s  
Jan Davidsz de Heem (Dutch, 1606-1683/84)  
Oil on canvas; 15 1/4 x 46 1/4 in.  
Bequest of John Ringling (SN 289)  
The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida

*Still Life with Cats and Monkeys*, c. 1635  
Frans Snyder (Flemish, 1579-1657)  
Oil on canvas; 29 1/2 x 42 1/2 in.  
Bequest of John Ringling (SN 235)  
The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida

## Episode B

Works by Eric Fischl  
Collection of the artist, New York  
Courtesy: Mary Boone Gallery, New York

*Scarsdale*, 1987  
Oil on linen; 96 x 93 1/4 in.

*Portrait of an Artist as a Woman*, 1990  
Oil on linen; 68 x 58 in.

*Girl with Doll*, 1987  
Oil on linen; 70 x 50 in.

*Manhattoes*, 1985  
Oil on canvas; 115 x 221 in. (triptych)

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## About the Getty Center for Education in the Arts

The Getty Center for Education in the Arts is dedicated to improving the quality and status of arts education in the nation's schools. The Center was founded in 1982, following an intensive yearlong investigation of arts education during which the advice of a wide variety of professionals in the arts, education, and related fields was actively solicited. The results of this investigation set the Center's course and helped shape its programs.

The Center's programs are primarily concerned with the visual arts and are guided by three premises. First, because a knowledge of the arts is a principal means of understanding human experiences and of transmitting cultural values, the visual arts should be an essential part of every child's education.

Second, if art education is to become a more meaningful part of general education, its content must be broadened to include instruction based on four foundational disciplines that contribute to the creation and understanding of art: studio art, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics—an approach known as discipline-based art education (DBAE) and now reflected in the voluntary national standards, national assessment of educational progress, and numerous state frameworks.

Third, the most effective art education programs are based on working partnerships among teachers, school administrators, museums, universities, parents, community leaders, and others; these programs are more likely to succeed when the partners assume responsibility for supporting them.

For more information about the Getty Center for Education in the Arts, write to the Center at 401 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 950, Santa Monica, CA 90401-1455.

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