THE OVERALL EFFECTS OF CHOICE-BASED ART EDUCATION ON FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

In this autoethnographic study, the long-term effects of students who have been exposed to a Choice Based Art Education approach, also known as CBAE, at some point in their kindergarten through college academic career were investigated. The effects CBAE has had on teachers during their first year of teaching were also investigated. The participants in this study included two teachers who have incorporated CBAE in their first year of teaching art and a former student participant who was exposed to a choice-based method throughout most of their kindergarten through twelfth grade experience. Data was collected through interviews, a weekly journal, and the collection of artifacts. Collecting data through these methods allowed an insight into the importance of CBAE and the support it provides for students in the art classroom. The results of the study found countering, yet most times, similar outcomes when it comes to classroom environments, student behaviors, student outcomes, and teacher implementation. Overall, students found a CBAE classroom to be a comfortable environment, but some still found it difficult to come up with ideas for their art projects. As with everything in education, no approach runs flawlessly in the classroom. These participants shared their successes but were not shy in expressing their difficulties.

Key Terms: Choice-Based Art Education, CBAE, choice, art education, art teachers, first-year teachers, first-year art teachers, CBAE experience

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Background to the Problem

This study addresses how Choice-Based Art Education, hereinafter referred to as CBAE, can support first-year art teachers and impact student's long-term outside of the art classroom. As research continues to show, the arts can engage students in the learning process and provide equitable experiences for different learners. This study connects the learning process and choices students make as they develop an understanding of the ways they learn best. Personal prior connections to this topic relate to my academic career from kindergarten to as recent as the present day. I frequently reminisce about all of the times I entered the art room throughout my academic career after doing poorly on an assignment in my other classes. When entering the art room, it felt like all of my doubts about myself went away. In the art room, there was a feeling of capability, which was a rare feeling for me in school. There were many struggles, ranging from difficulty comprehending reading passages, to never fully understanding how to properly complete a math problem; but art was so different for me.

Reflecting on these struggles, I pondered on what made the art room so special for me. It was evident that experimentation with materials and the feeling of being free made art stand out. There was never a right or wrong answer. There was always the encouragement of my teachers to try new things, and they inspired everyone to make their projects unique. The push to try new things without fear is what made me love art so much. When reflecting on my success in the art room, the victory was because the learning process was like no other; it was my own. In other subjects, there was always struggle and blame for not understanding the content. When entering the art room, there were struggles at times, but my battle was different. There was still support on my good days and bad days because I knew I was going to figure it out one way or another.

As a first-year teacher, I aspire to walk in the footsteps of all the teachers before me that have introduced a choice-based approach into their classroom and incorporate this knowledge into my pedagogy. Having completed my first year of teaching, I have confident that I am filling those shoes.

The lack of opportunities to demonstrate self-determination throughout my academic career became more prominent after my student teaching experience when witnessing other students during this experience struggle. I related to seeing students strive in the art room and discussing their difficulties in other subjects. This experience brought up memories of my school years and the anxiety that overcame me when entering a classroom that was not art. These students were so bright in the art classroom which made me realize that I am not alone in my struggles and that many students would benefit from a choice-based method.

This research shares that not everyone can benefit from the same teaching style. Lecturing, reading, and solving one-answer problems are not sufficient for all students. With a choice-based strategy, students can succeed both academically and in life. They are capable of problem-solving independently and pushing themselves to be the best learner they can be, it is just a matter of them figuring that out with the guidance of their teacher. Having the students develop their learning process allows the potential for students to strengthen their problem-solving skills. Students do not necessarily come to us already having these skills well-developed, but the art room can be an excellent place for them to strengthen these skills because it is a different learning approach. It is a learning approach that, unlike other subjects, emphasizes play-based inquiry, low-stakes modes of assessment, and collaboration.

In terms of my relationship with CBAE as a first-year educator, it has been evident that once you give students the encouragement they need, they feel they can take on anything. Being

there not just as a teacher, but as a mentor, in my opinion, has created a safe environment. An environment where students are allowed to truly be themselves and express themselves through their artwork is what CBAE entails. Students are excited to be in the art classroom and have a moment to relax. My relationship with implementing CBAE into my classroom has had its difficulties, however, the outcomes make it all worth it. This study proves how CBAE made me feel capable and how a first-year teacher can instill that in their future students.

Problem Statement

John Dewey, a philosopher, a populist, and a socialist, believed that a changing America needed different schools (Gibbon, 2020). He believed that education should focus on learning through doing and that a teacher should act more as a guide and as subject matter experts instead of instructing the students all in the same direction (Gibbon, 2020). Dewey highlights the importance of having the students being the ones to experiment. A more thorough investigation into Dewey's theories will be presented in the *Theoretical Framework* section of this chapter. However, Dewey connects with CBAE due to his belief that teachers should act as subject matter experts and students should be taught useful tools in schools, which mimic the core beliefs of CBAE. In a CBAE method, the teacher acts as a guide in the classroom and assists students as they experiment (Andrews, 2010). As the educator, wanting to promote an appreciation for the subject and have student's problem solve, the educator must provide students with that opportunity in their classroom (Andrews, 2001).

CBAE allows students to be active in their learning through experimentation and experiences. It also encourages students to work together and help one another figure out how to solve problems instead of racing to complete the task at hand. Gibbon (2020) states,

> He insisted that the old model of schooling—students sitting in rows, memorizing, and reciting—was antiquated. Students should be active, not passive, and have compelling and relevant projects, not lectures. Interest, not fear, should motivate them. They should cooperate, not compete (p. 57).

CBAE aligns with Dewey's method of education because it goes against the norms of a standard educational approach. The typical learning style that is preeminent in the school system was outdated then and is now outdated (Gibbon, 2020). CBAE is crucial because it allows the students to experiment, which can enable them to make connections between what they learn in school and what happens outside the school building.

What is unclear is the practicality of a CBAE pedagogy and how it compares to other education strategies. As art teachers, if we allow students to believe that there is a one-way approach to do art, those students who say they are not capable may continue to feel overwhelmed in the art room. Students can see that their artwork does not compare to others' and become reminded of their lack of confidence in the art room. It is vital to investigate the benefits of a CBAE style compared to other methods, as CBAE is such a unique method, and it is important to see the comparison between other approaches in the field.

Other strategies, such as a Discipline-Based Art Education approach, hereinafter referred to as DBAE, can leave children with little to no room for creative choice. Stabler (2018) defines this style as: "extolling the values of formal aesthetics, canonical artworks and traditional techniques from the primary art classroom onward, DBAE represents an attempt to restore an aura of academic legitimacy to the study of art" (p. 378). In comparison to a CBAE pedagogy, this approach is more teacher centered. The teacher provides the information for students to

retain, instead of the students being the ones to understand this knowledge at their level with guidance from the teacher.

The lack of choice provided in the public education system has been prominent since Dewey published the pamphlet that made his name dominant in education entitled, *The School and Society* in 1899 (Gibbon, 2020). Despite this publication, the education system still follows the same thought process as it did in the late 1800s. In the context of a traditional school system, Gude (2013) implies that students would not be able to make good use of freedom without a great deal of support. Choice-Based Art Education takes that next step to allow the students to experiment in the art room and get out of the norm of educational expectations.

Research Question

With the above problems in mind, I ask the following questions:

Given that Choice-Based Art Education (CBAE) gives students the opportunity to develop their learning process through experimentation, and that Leslie Gates (2016) suggests that CBAE allows students to explore and execute their ideas by demonstrating to students the process an artist in the real-world experiences, how might a first-year art educator who has experienced Choice-Based Art Education in their Kindergarten through college experience incorporate these ideas into their teaching pedagogy or philosophy? Furthermore, how might the artistic behaviors learned in a CBAE classroom present themselves outside of the art classroom? Lastly, what are the overall positives and negatives of implementing CBAE into the classroom?

Theoretical Framework

When it comes to a student-centered method, Dewey's theory aligns accordingly with a CBAE approach's values. Dewey believed in setting students up for real-world scenarios, taking what they learn in the classroom, and applying it to their everyday lives (Gibbon, 2020). Dewey's theories can be connected to Barbara Andrews' student-centered strategy in the new art class being offered at her school. In Andrews' new course at their school, a CBAE approach shifted the teacher's role as students were the ones learning from one another. The course in Andrews' school resulted in students becoming more engaged in the art-making process. One of Andrews' students wrote, "Weird things happen in here that baffle my mind. People care about art; they have long conversations about it, and to me, that's different" (Andrews, 2005, p. 39). In Andrews' (2005) classroom, a choice-based approach went beyond the walls of the art classroom into students' personal conversations, and students were able to find connections in this approach, so much so that they were eager to have in-depth conversations about art.

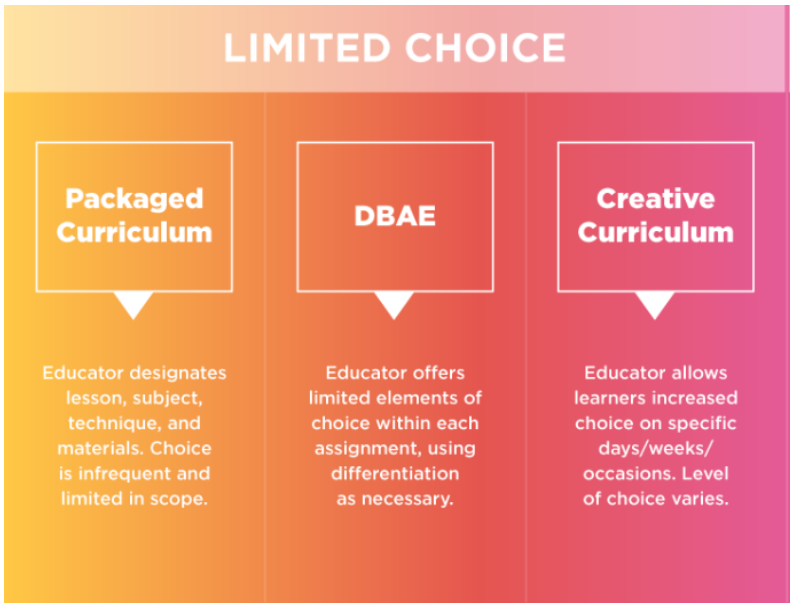
Turk's (2012) belief in a hands-on strategy in education aligns with this study's theory and shares similarities with Dewey's philosophy. According to Turk (2012), art experiences in the education system that are inclusive and collaborative in approach take the curriculum even further, as they are rooted in establishing cultural meaning, social values, norms, and truth in which these values can begin to be established in the art room (p. 51). Eisner (2002) supports this idea by stating that the arts are different from all the other subjects because art allows students a variety of answers, teaches students to make decisions, and gives students multiple ways to solve a problem. This study adds to these pre-existing studies by incorporating new experiences in CBAE through interviews with various art teachers that have used CBAE in their classrooms and students who have experienced this style of teaching.

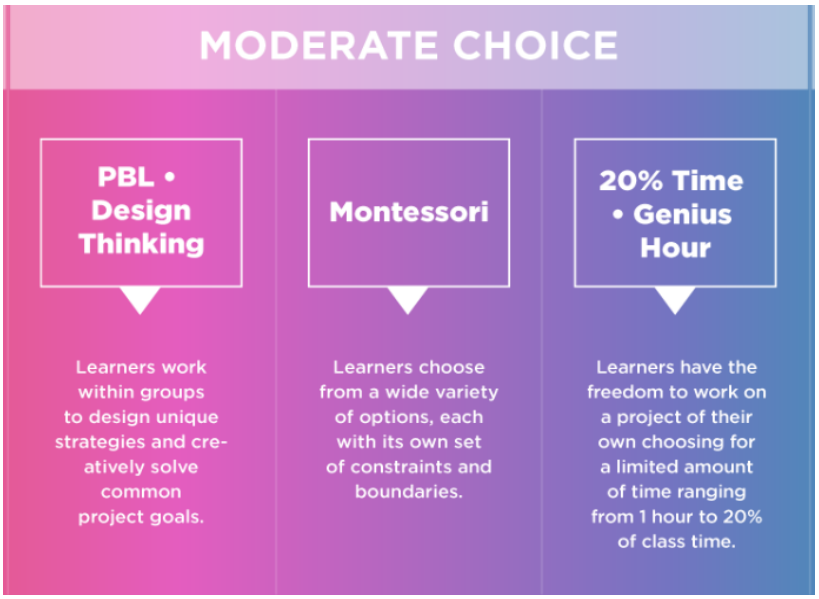
Turks, Dewey, Andrews, and Eisner may have had similar ways of incorporating a choice method into their classrooms. However, there are multiple ways a teacher can implement choice into their classroom. In Nan Hathaway's article, *10 Teaching and Learning Strategies*, they share different techniques teachers can use in their classroom to adjust a CBAE method to their students' needs (2008). *Figure 1* and *Figure 2* shows two spectrums to demonstrate the variety of ways choice can be utilized in the classroom.

Choice-Based Art Education Spectrum
Teacher-Delivered Whole Group Mini-Lesson- Class begins with a brief lesson, a demonstration of new material or technique, or introducing a new artist or style. Lesson addresses concerns of interest or importance for the whole class but is kept short for maximum studio time (Hathaway, 2008)
Teacher-Delivered Small Group Lesson- Students with similar needs or interests work together on a single project where they divide the work amongst themselves. Specific lessons can be designed to support the students' specific learning needs in a small group setting (Hathaway, 2008).
Teacher-Delivered Individual Lesson- The teacher will notice the particular student's interest and target lessons for that individual student (Hathaway, 2008).
Informal Peer-To-Peer Teaching- When a student becomes an expert with a certain material and can "peer coach" students with less developed skills (Hathaway, 2008). When the classroom is set up as a studio, artists can naturally learn from one another (Hathaway, 2008).
Student "Experts" Teaching Whole Group- This allows a student with a specific skill or knowledge to take over a group lesson (Hathaway, 2008). Allowing the student to offer insight and advice to a group of students; the students create artwork, then after they discuss the artwork as a whole group (Hathaway, 2008).
Classroom as "Silent Lesson Plan/Teacher"- The classroom is set up in numerous distinct areas, in each area there are material and tools that students will use to make art (Hathaway, 2008). There are resources at each area to inspire students' work and instructions for cleanup (Hathaway, 2008). The centers are available for students year-round after each area has been introduced, leaving them to take ownership and control in the classroom (Hathaway, 2008).
Guest Experts- Based on student interests, guest artists are invited to speak about their artistic practice (Hathaway, 2008). Targeting specific guest speakers can validate the student as an artist (Hathaway, 2008).

Field Trips- Planning trips to art museums and galleries expose students to the greater world of art (Hathaway, 2008). Putting the teacher in the same position as the students, as the teacher may be seeing the art for the first time in person (Hathaway, 2008).
Individual Inquiry- Through unique exploration, practice, research, and presentation, students may act as their guide and teacher (Hathaway, 2008). Students can master their craft as they can work with the same medium, idea or tools over an extended period (Hathaway, 2008).
Class Discussion/Reflection- Students can talk about their work at the end of each class during the "artist's share" at the end of class (Hathaway, 2008). Allowing students to show off their day's work and celebrate their ideas, while allowing students to give each other helpful feedback (Hathaway, 2008).

Figure 1. Choice Spectrum. (Hathaway, 2008, p. 36-53).





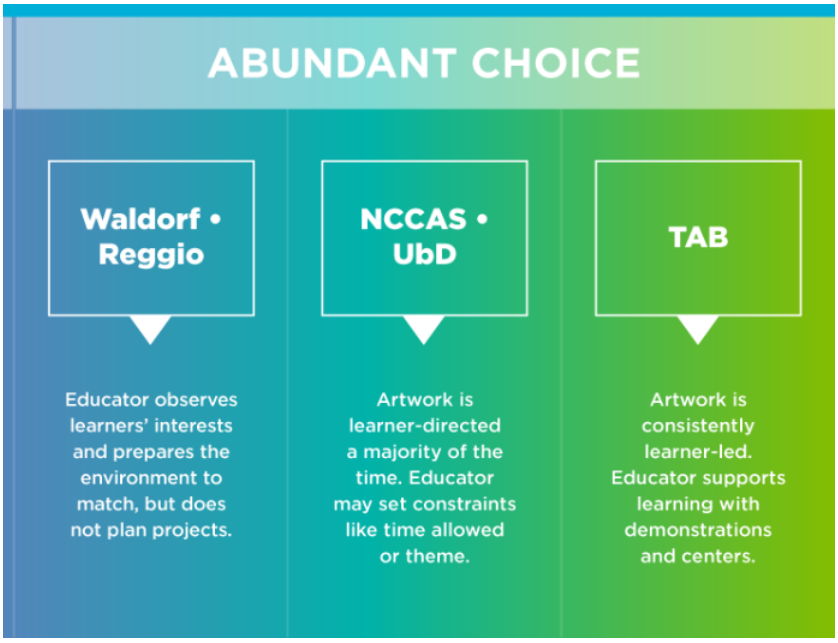


Figure 2. Choice Spectrum Two (Balsley, 2015).

Figure 1 and *Figure 2* highlight the wide range of ways choice can be incorporated into the art room. Choice can range from simply allowing students to rarely choose in the art room, where this would be towards the DBAE side of the spectrum, to being as open as having the classroom be completely learner-led.

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study is to show how Choice-Based Art Education allows students to develop their unique learning process through experimentation while preparing students for experiences outside of the art classroom. Furthermore, this study informs first-year art teachers how they can incorporate a CBAE approach into their teaching pedagogy and philosophy. This research also educates teachers on the positive and negative outcomes of incorporating a CBAE method in their classrooms and compares this method to other methods seen in the education system. This study also touches upon how exposure to CBAE throughout my academic career has impacted my teaching philosophy as a first-year art teacher. This study benefits not only first-year teachers but also teachers ready to make a change in their classrooms. As the target audience for this research is not only art teachers, but I also aspire to reach all educators who would be interested in transitioning to a CBAE method.

Classroom environments have a major impact on students. If the learning environment is stressful, students will be anxious and fail. It is pivotal for educators to evaluate teaching approaches and use one that best fits their classroom. This study does not aim to imply that one strategy is better than others but rather informs how CBAE compares. This study shows that there is more than one way of teaching students. Allowing the student and teacher to have freedom in the art room creates a comfortable classroom environment where there is an acceptance that projects may not always go as planned. The art room provides students with opportunities to experiment with the way one feels comfortable is something that the art room can aim to supply. As a first-year teacher, my desire is to educate others on the importance of allowing students the opportunity to experiment and problem solve. My study supports the idea

that other subjects can learn something from the arts and encourages more choice-based strategies to be incorporated into classrooms.

Limitations of the Study

As the chief researcher, my views on this topic may be skewed because I have only experienced beneficial outcomes in a CBAE strategy. With a lack of a negative experience from CBAE, it was challenging to address the negatives of CBAE due to such a positive personal experience, but I stayed objective. Overall, since I have had no negative experiences, I will not discuss how I overcame the challenges that CBAE might have. However, as an educator teaching this approach, I will share the negatives when implementing this approach into my classroom. This issue is addressed through research and collected data on an array of strategies teachers can take when implementing CBAE into their classrooms. Conducting interviews allows people to explain their experiences, and by analyzing different environments and approaches, this study shows the outcomes of CBAE in different settings and methods.

Data was collected through interviews and the documentation of artifacts. COVID-19 limited me since I was not able to meet with participants in person. Not conducting interviews in person could have been a limitation as those whom I have never met could have been uncomfortable and held back vital information. In-person conversations can be more personal, where meeting online can come off as impersonal to some people. In-person interviews also allowed for the participants to be in an environment where they were the most comfortable. Not being able to be in their space may also had the participant hold back artifacts that they would candidly share in person.

Choosing to use my findings throughout teaching was a limitation because I switched jobs halfway through the school year. I started the school year in a long-term substitute position

from September to December, then moved to a full-time position at a different school. During the long-term substitute job, I was unable to go in-depth about my experience with those classes because those classes were conducted online for most of the school year, making me unable to see the full impact this technique had on students. CBAE translated virtually by still allowing students to choose what they want to do, but they were using whatever materials they had. For my full-time position, students were in a hybrid model of school. Being online hindered my ability to understand my students' particular learning styles, how they interact with the material, have candid conversations that occur in the classroom about the projects, and overall does not compare to the conventional in-person learning. The hybrid model of teaching had a possibility of interfering with data collected, however, it candidly showed the struggles of implementing CBAE online.

The possible limitations faced regarding my participants' perspectives, conversational meanings, and subjective views had the potential to drastically impact my study. Having a teacher who had only taught a CBAE method, their opinion is biased when compared to teachers who have attempted various approaches. Since that was the only approach they knew, they might have been unable to see the benefits of other strategies in their classroom. Participants' perspectives could have been skewed simply because they wanted to benefit the research and not say something that they felt would hurt the research or what went against my belief of a CBAE approach. Participants were asked to be honest when it came to their interview, say how they truly felt about a CBAE method and how other classes may benefit from such a teaching style.

This study was situated in a specific setting that stressed both the interviewer and the interviewee's comfort due to COVID-19. My social identity and experiences throughout my academic career were discussed. At the time of the study, I was shifting my perspective on

CBAE from student to educator. This was a limitation because it took some time to get properly adjusted. However, the purpose of this study was to be candid with my struggles as a first-year teacher implementing CBAE.

Key Terms

Choice-Based Art Education. Considers students as artists and offers them real choices for responding to their own ideas and interests through the making of art (Gates, 2016, p. 16). This spectrum in choice plays a part in this study because allowing students to respond to their ideas and interests prepares them to make discussions beyond the classroom.

Learning Process. The interplay between external regulation and self-regulation of learning (Cate et al., 2004).

Explore. Provide students with a launching point for their own artistic investigations and execute their own ideas (Gates, 2016).

Experimentation, anchored in Dewey's theories. He reminded his educational disciples that students should not be allowed to do whatever they please, that planning, and organization must accompany freedom, and that teachers should be guides *as well as* subject matter experts (Gibbon, 2020, p. 62).

Collaboration. In a larger scope, it is the foundation on which we citizens work and live and form an understanding of self and others (Adams, 2015). This same concept translated into a classroom is the acts of sharing, critiquing, and welcoming new ideas through physical and intellectual exchanges (Adams, 2015).

Engagement. These process-built communities of practice because it was the investment in what we do and the relationships we create with other people (Wenger, 1998, p. 192). Collaboration is a form of engagement.

Student-Centered. Aid students in conceptualizing their ideas and visual art production. Projects can be interpreted and executed in numerous techniques, all of which provide our students valid learning opportunities (Andrews, 2010).

Assumptions not to be Debated:

- Given that funding for the arts varies depending on the school, and it is assumed that CBAE can take place regardless of the budget a school provides, whether or not a CBAE technique can be implemented in any school will not be debated.
- Given that there are various other teaching approaches in education, and it is assumed that there is no right or wrong teaching approach, which approach is better will not be debated because there can be benefits to other teaching approaches as well.

Assumptions to be Debated:

- Given that collaboration is vital to CBAE, and the teachers' role can be unclear when implementing this method, the teacher's role will be debated.
- Given that CBAE is geared towards treating students as real artists, and that it is assumed that this approach prepares students to implement artistic behaviors into real-world situations, artistic behaviors will be debated because it is crucial to understand how students implement this behavior beyond the classroom.
- Given that CBAE focuses on students' work being unique to their artistic style, and it is assumed that with a CBAE approach no student's work is to look the same as their peers, the uniqueness of their projects will be debated to test the effectiveness of a CBAE approach.

Summary

Many art educators are still unaware of what a Choice-Based Art Education is and how it can be properly implemented. The coming chapters will touch more on how the CBAE approach can be implemented to reach diverse learners through supportive literature. The themes that will be explored in the next chapter are; reevaluating teaching habits to suit present-day student needs, Choice-Based Art Education, how CBAE compares to other methods, outcomes of a Choice-Based Art Education technique, effects of a Choice-Based Art Education approach beyond the classroom, and the gaps in existing literature. This is to provide an insight into the outcomes other art teachers have experienced in their classroom, and student outcomes after experiencing this type of strategy. The next chapter will look more in-depth at the literature provided for CBAE and how this thesis fills the gaps of the missing literature in CBAE.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter is categorized into five different sections, beginning by discussing how teachers can reevaluate their teaching habits to meet students' present-day needs. A section will provide tips on when to reevaluate lesson plans to suit students. A Discipline-Based Art Education approach will be discussed, hereinafter referred to as DBAE. With these two approaches being commonly used in classrooms, it is crucial to understand how they compare not only with each other but with other strategies as well. Other topics that will be discussed include the definition and outcomes of CBAE, the effectiveness of CBAE beyond the classroom, and gaps in the existing literature. This chapter focuses on the positive and negative outcomes of CBAE and also provides an in-depth insight into whether or not CBAE could be beneficial in a teacher’s classroom.

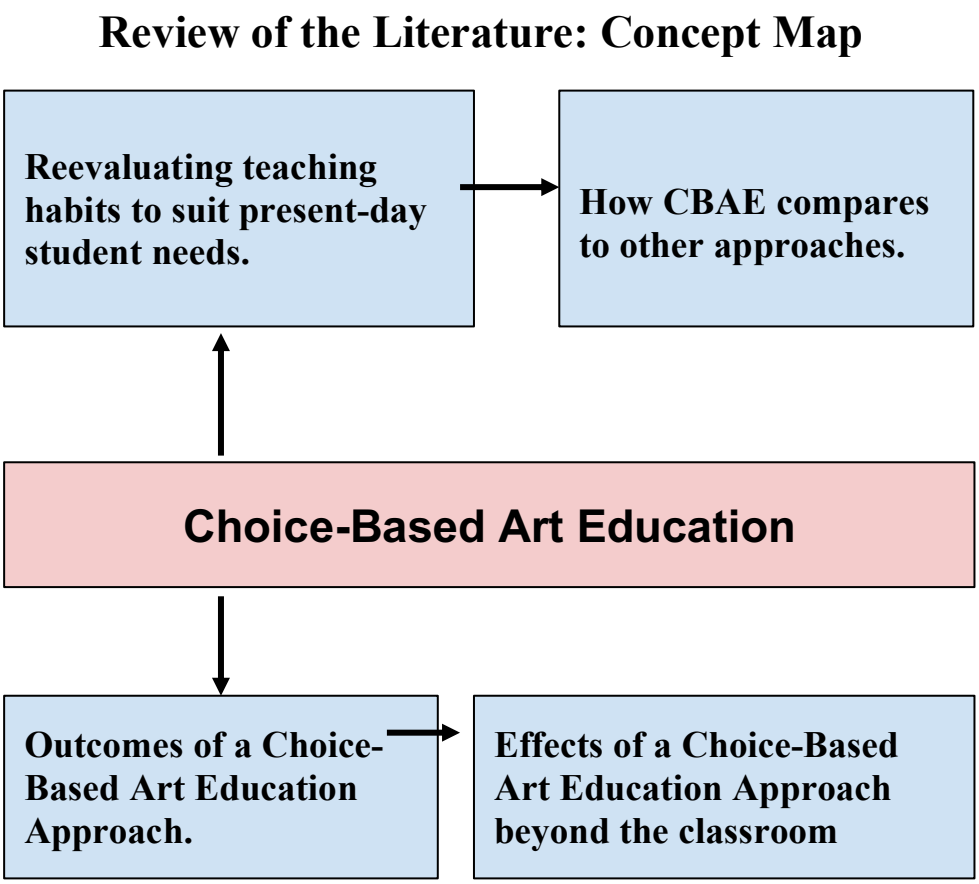


Figure 3. Concept Map.

Reevaluating teaching habits to suit present-day student needs. *New Project Art Styles: The Project of Art Education* by Olivia Gude (2013) does not touch on a specific choice-based approach. Gude does discuss the beliefs of Arthur Efland's theory. Efland, the writer of *The School Art Style: A Functional Analysis*, stresses that art created in schools lacked meaningful variations for students (Gude, 2013, p. 6). Gude (2013) states,

> Efland's conclusions that many of the art activities in schools do not actually support creative self-expression and that they are not effective in teaching students about methods of artmaking outside of school contexts, echoes in the literature of art education over the ensuing decades (p. 6).

Almost five years after this theory was proposed, art teachers have started to reevaluate if their lessons truly allow their students to explore and think for themselves. Art teachers can stick with the same lessons as the academic years go on. The habit of keeping the same lessons is common, however, teachers should question if using the same lessons is genuinely benefiting their students. When lesson planning, it is also essential to keep in mind Dewey's belief that children need an authentic education, as in geared towards students' needs beyond the classroom and allows them to grow mentally, physically, and socially by providing opportunities to be creative and critical thinkers (Heilig, et al., 2010, p. 137).

Gude collected data for this article by scanning suggested projects located in popular project-sharing art education magazines and websites (Gude, 2013). Many projects in modern magazines were similar to those in magazines from the 1970s, which raised some questions as to how these projects can fit into today's society (Gude, 2013). Some may argue that art classrooms should act as a free studio class for students, as they would be the ones to create independently, but this approach may not be realistic for all classrooms.

To make sure students have creative freedom in the classroom, Gude (2013) suggests that teachers should take a fresh look at the old and familiar projects they have been using in their classroom. When observing these lessons, it is crucial to be both skeptical of an art project's current worth and non-judgmental of your own past choices and pleasures (Gude, 2013, p. 13). New questions should be asked when reviewing lesson plans. Think about how relevant a project is, whether the skills the students will be learning in a project are something that they can apply outside the art room, and how students understand art in contemporary life (Gude, 2013, p. 13). Like Gude, Dewey also believed that teachers should act as a guide and allow for group activity and social connections (Gibbon, 2020, p. 64).

Gude's (2013) article uses the Cubist moment as an example of an outdated lesson plan. Cubism is something most teachers decide to teach, which is a movement that is not currently happening nor are most artists today relying on this technique. With a movement such as Cubism, Gude (2013) proposes that teachers ask themselves if there are any significant artists currently making work in this manner and suggests that the answer is no (p. 12). Abstract, expressionist, and representational artworks that are more current, all with long histories that artists are still inspired by today (Gude, 2013). Even though it is important to guide lessons into a more current-day approach, it is also essential to have students understand the aesthetic and conceptual questions that this practice is used to investigate (Gude, 2013, p. 12). Keeping lesson plans and critique questions up to date allows students to relate to the class and apply what they learn in their day-to-day lives (Gude, 2013).

As a first-year teacher who was mentored by teachers who have been in the field much longer than myself, Gude's article has given me a fresh perspective that sometimes teachers who are more experienced can lack the connection to the present day in their lessons. Gude's article is something that first-year teachers can be inspired by when evaluating their teaching pedagogies. For example, in my student teaching experience, I borrowed the ideas for my projects from a teacher who had been at the school for quite some time, and they used the same projects taught by the teacher they replaced. It is possible that first-year teachers would be able to more easily provide a more current lesson compared to experienced teachers who may be set in their curriculum.

Art Education throughout the years has changed drastically. In the sixties, art-making was so important that "President Kennedy appointed August Heckscher as Special Consultant in the Arts. The U.S. Office of Education established its Cultural Affairs Branch in 1962, providing

important support for arts education" (Wygant, 1993, p. 139). The first state art council was legislated in New York in 1960, and by 1967 all fifty states had created an agency to administer the new federal funding and stimulate the growth of community art organizations. For example, of projects in the sixties, printmaking began in kindergarten with sticks, erasers, or vegetables (Wygant, 1993, p. 177). In the late sixties, sculpture was the most prominent art form to use in the art room. It was so popular that welding even took place in schools (Wygant, 1993, p. 177). Skills, such as welding, relate to Gude's belief that students should take what they learn in the art room and apply it to their day-to-day lives. Welding is a profession that is very common. For students to learn this at such a young age in the art room may encourage their career path for the future. This information might be hard to believe for art teachers who struggle to show their administration the importance of the arts every day and struggle to keep their programs alive.

In the past, there was a lot of attention on the arts. Before World War I, many art projects were linked to the upcoming holidays with little student thought (Wygant, 1993). This is something that I have noticed coming back. This research strives to steer art teachers away from these one-way approaches.

Choice-Based Art Education. The article *Smoke and Mirrors Art Teacher as Magician* by Hathaway (2013) stresses the effects a teacher-centered classroom can have on students versus a student-centered method. Hathaway (2013) says,

> The magic act in which many art teachers perform is well-intentioned but ill-conceived. The art lesson, upon closer examination, may have more to do with manipulation than with artistic or creative endeavor. The prestige, which results from exquisitely crafted and elegantly displayed artwork, holds a seductive allure for art teachers and is leveraged as evidence of expert instruction. Eye-popping, adult pleasing art displays in school

> hallways are a proud testament to the ingenuity and expertise of skillful art teachers who blithely guide children through the steps and techniques required to produce this exquisite work. In this way, in art room after art room, year in and year out, well-meaning, creative art teachers engage in lively, imaginative chicanery at the expense of the creative development of their pupils. (p. 12)

This quote stresses that while teachers may have good intentions for a project, focusing on their desired result does not benefit the students. The product of artwork that is teacher-driven may come off as eye-popping in the hallways but can take away from the students' creativity because they are following the teachers' process of creating work instead of focusing on the students' learning process throughout the art-making process.

In contrast to a teacher-centered technique, there are student-centered approaches. As defined by *Engaging Learners Through Artmaking: Choice-Based Art Education in the Classroom* (2018), Choice-Based Art Education began in the 1970s as a methodology to provide large numbers of students with choices in media and technique (p.1). With this method, students can come into the classroom and experiment with given mediums, as teachers act more as a guide for the students as they create. This aligns with Dewey's belief in education (Gibbon, 2020, p. 64).

As Joseph F. Kett (2018) states in his article, *John Dewey and Adult Educators in Historical Context,* "Contrary to a powerful body of contemporary opinion, Dewey thought that intelligence could become habitual if constructed on "the development of the possibilities inherent in ordinary experience" (p. 15). Dewey connects strongly with the strategies of CBAE. As stated previously in the *Theoretical Framework* section, Dewey believed that the old model of schooling is not beneficial (Gibbon, 2020). CBAE focuses on making students excited to

learn, which Dewey states “Learning a subject has educational value only if the act instills “a desire to go on learning” (Kett, 2018, p. 9). If students do not have the drive and willingness to learn materials, they will most likely not have the motivation to continue learning. Kett (2018), continues to share, “Dewey never wavered in his faith in the democratizing effect of building education on the everyday activities of children” (p. 10). Dewey believed that making better citizens begins in public schools (Kett, 2018). This connects to CBAE, as CBAE sets students up for life outside the classroom which was something Dewey felt strongly about.

A choice-based art education method does not have to be done in one way. As mentioned previously in the Theoretical Framework section, there is an abundance of ways to implement choice into your classroom, ranging from full choice where students are the ones making most of their artistic decisions, to being able to choose some or few outcomes of the final project. Douglas and others (2018) state that choice can be small, like allowing the students to choose the colors for their given project. Or it can be a full-choice approach, where students are the ones with the most say in how their projects will look (Douglas, et al., 2018). As Douglas and the other authors stress, students need time to explore materials, techniques, and concepts in ways that are meaningful to them (Douglas, et al., 2018). Having the student make these decisions allows the student to grow confidence in themselves which will result in artistic growth (Douglas, et al., 2018).

Engaging Learners Through Artmaking: Choice-Based Art Education in the Classroom (2018) stresses that with CBAE, a curriculum can emerge from student-directed learning, which accommodates all students’ needs, and allows students to understand how to observe their artwork and discover something they did not know before (p. 4). In this method, the student is the artist. Building a student's confidence leads to student action in the classroom (Douglas, et

al., 2018). A choice-based method sets students up to understand the artistic process by allowing them to play with various materials, imagine, ask their peers for artistic input, showcase their beliefs, and most importantly, accept their mistakes (Douglas, et al., 2018, p. 5).

In a CBAE approach, teachers want students to truly feel like professional artists. In CBAE, the students should have their own studio space in the classroom. This space should be a comfortable place for students to make mistakes, reevaluate, and take risks (Douglas, et al., 2018, p. 12). Most importantly, a choice-based approach can reach all learners. With this method, it is important to understand the student by discussing their artwork with them, learning about their passions, families, values, and responding to their interests (Douglas, et al., 2018, p. 13). As you observe students, think about the curriculum, and make sure it is a good fit for them (Douglas, et al., 2018, p. 13). Dewey also believed in this type of teaching. As stated by Gibbon (2020), “The words authority, discipline, deferred gratification, tradition, hierarchy, and order, were not part of his vocabulary. He favored community, equality, activity, freedom” (p. 8). Also in support, Gibbon (2020) states that “he reminded his educational disciplines that students should not be allowed to do whatever they please, that planning, and organization must accompany freedom, and that teachers should be guides as well as subject matter experts" (p. 62). This aligns with a CBAE approach because it is a common misconception that with a CBAE method comes little work for the teacher, and students are free to do as they please. However, implementing a CBAE approach properly requires proper planning, expertise in a wide range of artistic mediums, and practice of how to consider all students’ learning needs when choosing art lessons.

There are many ways to implement CBAE into a classroom. Art educators can provide choices such as creating studio centers by medium, such as drawing, collage, painting, or

whatever the students are interested in (Douglas, et al., 2018, p. 13). Teachers who are new to a choice-based strategy are encouraged to start slowly to get their students used to this teaching method by starting with a simple studio center first and gradually adding more throughout the year (Douglas, et al., 2018, p. 14). Due to this approach being different from others, students may not be used to an approach like this, gradually introducing this method may allow students to be more comfortable.

CBAE can be challenging to implement into the art classroom for teachers who are used to a more disciplined teaching style. To fully understand the effects choice can have on students, it is important to know how this technique compares to others. This supports the research in which, to implement CBAE into the classroom, it is important to have a foundation of knowledge on a wide range of artistic mediums and practices. It is important to understand CBAE in order to implement it into the classroom properly.

How CBAE compares to other approaches. In reference to the Choice-Based Spectrums located in the *Theoretical Framework*, it is evident that a Discipline-Based Art Education approach falls under the *Limited Choice* category. In comparison to the *Moderate* and *Abundant Choice* categories, a DBAE teaching practice does not provide the students with a wide range of choices. In the article *The Evolution of Discipline-Based Art Education*, Delacruz and Dunn (1996) state that a DBAE technique that emphasized a formalized structure and sequence were contrary to the unique, dynamic, and multifaceted processes of making and responding to art (Delacruz & Dunn, 1996, p. 70). They continue by stating that some critics found this method too technocratic, too narrowly defined, and too abstract (Delacruz & Dunn, p. 70).

The DBAE style became known in the 1980s, focusing on teaching students about folk art, the applied arts, and art from non-Western cultures (Delacruz & Dunn, 1996, p. 71).

According to Delacruz and Dunn (1966), DBAE failed to incorporate a balance of the art of Western exemplars with arts from diverse and ethnic cultural groups, along with failing to address artistic accomplishments that have been ignored and aesthetic perspectives of minorities and women (p. 73). This information is not to discourage any teacher from implementing this type of strategy into their classroom; but rather to show the difference between a student-centered and teacher-centered approach.

There are many strategies to compare CBAE to, including a DBAE, Community-Based Art Education, and a Growing a Garden-Based strategy. There are risks with every educational method. McElhany (2017) discusses the challenges she had with implementing a DBAE approach in her classroom when students could not understand why they simply could not do just what they wanted. After staying true to her DBAE method McElhany (2017) had come to this conclusion, “I not only directed the subject matter, but I told my students what materials to use and how to use them, stripping their potential for student individuality and voice. The result: a classroom of apathetic learners with meaningless projects" (p. 30). Making the transition from a DBAE approach to a CBAE technique did not come easily. With the change to CBAE in the classroom, students were hesitant to begin, continually asking for reassurance. Overall, they were too nervous about relying on their judgment (McElhany, 2017). McElhany (2017) also found that time became a factor in a way that it was not when implementing a DBAE approach in her newly student-centered classroom. With DBAE it is more practical to be on a schedule, as students are expected to work at a certain pace with set due dates. This is not always the case with CBAE. Time can be such a large factor in implementing a CBAE strategy is a significant risk because most art teachers only see their students for a limited part of the day. Some teachers only see their students once per week or less, making time scarce. Implementing this approach further in

the year may set lesson plans back. As McElhany said, it takes some students time to grasp an understanding of a CBAE method.

Literature highlighting how CBAE compares to other methods is crucial to my research to develop a well-rounded understanding of what CBAE entails. Creating a basic understanding of what CBAE is will further this research to move forward and notice the characteristics this teaching style requires. McElhany's literature supports this research's goal by demonstrating the difficulties teachers may have when using this approach in their classrooms.

Outcomes of a Choice-Based Art Education Approach. As stated by Hathaway (2013), "Art teachers do a disservice to students when they assume too much control over their students' work and perform a sort of magic act in the name of art education" (p. 9). Supporting art educators such as Leslie Gates (2016) and Janelle Turk (2012) stress the importance of enabling students to have creative freedom in the art classroom and discuss the outcomes this has had on their students. Leslie Gates (2016), an art educator, considers the impacts of two different art education approaches in her article, *Rethinking Art Education Practice One Choice at a Time*. In the article, Gates highlights students' outcomes when exposed to a Choice-Based Art Education method and a Postmodern Big Idea Approach. A Postmodern Big Idea Approach focuses primarily on re-envisioning an art education curriculum based on big ideas consistent with themes present in postmodern art (Gates, 2016). The research included teachers who have experienced a curriculum based on big ideas found in postmodern artists' work and practice a choice-based studio model approach (Gates, 2016). The data collected in this research relies heavily on her peers' outcomes, excluded from her research is a recognition of her own experiences with these strategies. Leslie Gates collected data for this study from a collaborative

action research group that she facilitated during the 2013-2014 school year, which was primarily funded by the National Art Education Foundation (Gates, 2016).

Douglas (2018), along with other authors, discuss that there is not a one-way method when it comes to implementing choice in the classroom. Gates (2016) frequently mentions her peer Nate, who adapted a postmodern technique into his classroom. This strategy was modified in his classroom by negotiating his evolving ideas about acceptable teaching practices with what he knew about his students, the district's curriculum, and administrator expectations (Gates, 2016, p. 16). The changed outcomes of the students were substantial. Switching to this new strategy, Nate noticed that students' commitment to their work was like nothing he had seen before (Gates, 2016). Gates (2016) states the following about Nate's students,

> They were asking if/when they would get to finish it, not throwing it away after receiving the grade, and returning to his room to pick up work that was left behind to dry. He also described the ways that adopting a different approach was engaging more students, and students who were typically subject to disciplinary consequences or uninterested in art, were now more invested in the project. (p. 17)

In Nate's class, students were more engaged and enthusiastic to pick up their artwork, than before when students usually just threw the project away. Nates' experience demonstrates how students can feel connected to their work through a CBAE technique to art education.

Gates (2016) states that there is consistency between teachers who implement this CBAE approach. Those teachers share that there has been increased student engagement and ownership in student artwork and decreased behavior and motivation issues (Gates, 2016, p. 17). Like Nate, another peer of Gates', Julie, decided to change her role as a teacher in the classroom. By transferring the power of choice over to her students, she found new ways to assist her students

in developing skills and confidence to be self-determined in the classroom (Gates, 2016, p. 18). Janelle Turk (2012) discusses teachers' experiences with implementing this method in a community art setting.

In *Collaboration, Inclusion, and Empowerment: A Life Skills Mural*, Janelle Turk (2012) discusses research conducted through a community mural project. The students in her study came from many different backgrounds and grade levels. The study was a qualitative action research study and collected data through observation. In the study, students were presented with real-life problems through authentic instruction. Turk (2012) states, "our mural project was based on authentic instructional practices in that it engages students in higher-level thinking, active inquiry, and real-life problem solving" (p. 52). This quote aligns accordingly with the beliefs of a CBAE style, which encourages these students to think of conclusions on their own instead of being instructed by a teacher to complete the task at hand in a particular manner.

This study focused on students ranging from sixth to eighth grade, ranging in backgrounds from economically disadvantaged homes, Autism, and Multiple Sclerosis (Turk, 2012, p. 50). Participants in this study reported their immediate reactions to their experiences after each session (Turk, 2012, p. 51).

This study by Turk (2012) focused primarily on student choice. Early on in this project students worked together to compare ideas, decide how much paint will be needed, how much wall should be painted, and how much time this project will take (Turk, 2012). With this project, students had to face real-world experiences, such as working together, developing social skills-- especially with students from different backgrounds-- their desire to volunteer, and self-esteem (Turk, 2012, p. 52). This project aspired to have the students grow the courage to take what they

learned from their experience and create a social change within their school environment (Turk, 2012).

The outcome of this student-choice project was that all students worked together in harmony. The more experienced students helped the younger students, younger students kept the conversation going, and the older students demonstrated effective leadership (Turk, 2012). Not only did these students work together verbally, but they also worked together to consider each other's physical needs. The students in wheelchairs were able to work on the lower part of the mural, while the students who were able to climb ladders worked on the higher areas (Turk, 2012). Collaboration happened naturally as students color mixed and prepared for the next session. As each day went on, collaboration and art appreciation became more apparent (Turk, 2012).

Shifting the focus on the students' needs is a crucial component of a CBAE approach, which can drastically impact student confidence. This research will expand upon the existing literature by showcasing the application of CBAE in various other art rooms and the implementation by an array of different teachers. Gates (2016) and Turk (2012) emphasized the outcomes of a student-choice approach, even if teachers are not in the art room.

Effects of a Choice-Based Art Education Approach beyond the classroom. Focusing on how students are able to take the skills CBAE equips them with and incorporate this into their everyday life, Barbara Andrews' discusses how this has affected her students beyond the art room. In Barbara Andrews' articles, she highlights the importance of allowing students to have a choice. In Gates' (2016) article, she touches upon Nate and the drastic change he saw in his students' behavior towards the arts. Turk (2012) expressed how they imposed real-world

scenarios in their mural project. In Andrews' classroom, she dives deeper by having her students take what they have learned in a CBAE approach and apply it to their everyday lives.

Andrews has written three articles throughout the years touching upon her experience with a student-centered method, including *Art and Ideas: Reaching Nontraditional Art Students* (2001), *Art, Reflection, and Creativity in the Classroom* (2005), and *Student Ownership: Learning in a Student-Centered Art Room* (2010). The data in these three articles was collected through her experience as an art educator. She collected data through observation, student artwork, artist statements, and interviews and had a diverse range of students, many of whom did not enjoy art before taking her class.

Andrews (2001) was tired of hearing students say that they did not take art classes because they did not want to damage their grade point average. This inspired Andrews to develop a new art class, titled *Art and Ideas*, which featured a student-driven curriculum geared towards art and nontraditional students (Andrews, 2001, p. 33). Andrews states that "as educators, if we believe that all students benefit from art, then our art classes must address the needs of all students, not primarily those of the artistically gifted" (p. 33). *Art and Ideas* was created with five goals in mind: to increase students' global awareness, connect art to other curricular areas to promote interdisciplinary learning, attract nontraditional art students, promote a student-driven curriculum, and use multiple assessment methods (Andrews, 2001, p. 34).

In *Art and Ideas*, students chose which art project suited them best, allowing the artistically gifted students to complete their portfolios for college or art scholarships and nontraditional students to connect art with other subjects (Andrews, 2001, p. 35). Andrews (2001) encouraged students to discuss how they connect art to other subjects with their other teachers. Having students make connections between art and their everyday lives allowed

students to see how art can go beyond the art classroom. One student even shared this statement with Andrews (2001): “If more young people can be reached through this class, then we will all have a better appreciation for the arts. Art is not just a class you take in school; it is part of your everyday life” (p. 36).

In Andrews’ other articles, she showcases how students went beyond the art room in this class. The administration approved students to create murals in hallway wings related to that hallway subject area (Andrews, 2005, p. 36). English teachers used these murals as inspiration for a writing prompt, and other curricular areas were now coming to the art room with ideas for additional student work (Andrews, 2005, p. 36). This made the students enthusiastic to research artists that connected best with the other subject areas. Not only did this class show students how art relates to other subjects, but it also took students beyond the classroom walls to showcase their artwork with fellow businesses.

Students started off the class by painting murals for their school. Next, the students located a business or civic organization to paint a mural, such as credit unions and daycare centers. The students were required to be the ones to initiate the discussions (Andrews, 2005, p. 37). Once the agreement was complete, the students sketched their logo, presented their idea to the business representative, and executed the art project (Andrews, 2005, p. 37). Andrews (2005) states that students were excited to see their artwork in the real world. The businesses wanted to be more involved in the school’s art department, and the students had something to add to their resumes. Not only did this student-driven art course allow students to make outside connections with other subject areas and make connections in the business world, but it also helped students’ mental state. One of Andrews’ (2005) students wrote,

> I had a lot of problems at home and in my head. These problems led me to bulimia and depression. No matter what other people took from me mentally or physically, I always had my art to hold onto. I never trusted people, so I need something; that something was art (p. 38).

With a CBAE strategy, students can feel connected to art in a personal way. For this student, art was an outlet to relieve personal challenges.

Andrews (2010) reiterates the class's goals and expresses how students compared her teaching from a DBAE approach to a CBAE approach. Students expressed that with the DBAE style of teaching, they saw her more as a commander and judge; with CBAE, they saw her as a guide (Andrews, 2010, p. 44). Andrews strived for students to make these out-of-school connections just as Dewey desired to make connections in his classes at the University of Chicago.

After spending more than ten years at the University of Chicago as a professor, Dewey put his theory about hands-on learning to the test; that is when he and his wife ran the Lab School and the University of Chicago (Gibbon, 2020). This school was special because it was different from all the others, in terms of hands-on instruction. As Gibbon (2020) writes,

> In these schools, students visited fire stations, post offices, and city halls. They grew plants, cooked, cobbled shoes, and tutored younger students. They staged plays dramatizing historical events. Reading, writing, spelling, and calculating would be acquired naturally in conjunction with projects (p. 60).

As a result, in today's society, progressive schools such as the Lab School are few and seem most effective in small schools staffed by "true believers" (Gibbon, 2020, p. 64). In some schools, however, see a change.

I believe my theory is that art could inspire non-art classes as these classes can learn from the arts and incorporate art into their lessons. Andrews has highlighted what is possible for students when they are less restrained in the classroom. This research will build upon these findings by sharing my experience with a CBAE technique and how this has affected me in my everyday life. With Andrews' success, I wonder why other schools do not adopt such a class. Andrews incorporated everyone into the art classroom, regardless of artistic background, which showcased that being successful in the art room does not mean being a perfect artist but being able to connect with art you never thought was possible.

Gaps in Literature

When researching, it was crucial to find as much information about Choice-Based Art Education, first-year art teachers implementing this approach, how this approach affects students beyond the classroom, and the overall outcome of students who have been exposed to this style of teaching. While researching, it became evident that there was limited literature regarding first-year art teachers implementing this method and how first-year art teachers who have experienced CBAE throughout their academic career have implemented this into their teaching philosophies. As a first-year art teacher implementing this type of strategy into their classroom, this research aims to fill this gap.

There are scarce resources for first-year teachers in the art room. This study in particular covers first-year art teachers applying CBAE to their art pedagogies, in which there have been no findings in literature in comparison to this. However, there were findings on how a CBAE

method has helped students beyond the art classroom, which was a significant part of this research. This research aims to fill these gaps by researching the intersectionality of first-year teachers, CBAE implementation, and CBAE reviews. Additionally, I will be sharing my own experiences and that of participants through an autoethnographic approach.

Summary of the Literature

For an art teacher to provide a comfortable learning environment for their students, it is important to understand the approach that they are implementing in their classroom. A thorough understanding of their method also allows teachers to better understand their teaching philosophy. A lack of awareness of the outcomes of the method can determine whether students understand the material.

Referring to Gate's (2016) article, her peer Nate changed the technique used in his classroom. Nate understood that to see the outcome he wanted to see from his students, he had to have a better understanding of various approaches. After Nate considered what he knew about his students, the curriculum of the district, and administrator expectations, he saw a drastic change in the outcome of his students (Gates, 2016). Changing his strategy to focus more on the students' needs made them want to finish their projects and come back at the end of the day to collect them.

Nate was not the only one who saw a positive outcome in his students. Andrews' school created a completely different art class dedicated to students' needs and attracting students who never thought of themselves as artists. A student of Andrews' (2010) even stated, "you know that I hated this school. But after a while in this art class, I really started to enjoy things and I guess you could say that I actually started to think for once" (p. 45). This statement highlights the

primary purpose of this study; to study the implementation and outcomes of CBAE so that students can practice thinking and solving problems independently.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Design of the Study

Setting. Due to COVID-19 impacting the safety of in-person gatherings, interviews took place via Zoom, and participants were asked to be in a comfortable location. If the interviewee was comfortable enough to meet in person, the interviews would have been held outside at an appropriate distance. However, there were no participants who wanted to meet in person. Since the interviews ranged from forty-five minutes to two hours, it was a priority that each participant sat and was comfortable for that amount of time. My location was the desk in my bedroom with appropriate lighting, which provided a sense of security for the participants, as this is a quiet place in my home with few distractions.

All participants had access to video chatting, however, they were provided the option to talk through the phone or with their cameras off if that allowed them a better connection. There were no participants that took advantage of this option.

Participants. Since this is an autoethnographic study, I am a participant along with the other three participants who agreed to be part of this study. I chose two art teachers and one former student participant who has been exposed to a choice-based teaching style since middle school. This former student participant also remembered some choice being presented at the elementary level as well. The other two participants in this study were art educators who have been in the field for under five years. Both of these educators have implemented a CBAE technique since their first year of teaching and continue to implement this practice today. My participants' ages ranged from the early twenties to the early thirties.

The former student participant was chosen for this study because they were able to provide crucial input on how they implemented what was learned from CBAE into their

everyday life. It was important for me to gather information on CBAE from someone who was exposed to this as a student and compare how this style of teaching affected us both differently and similarly. I chose the two teachers because they implemented this style of teaching in the first year of their careers and were able to be candid with their struggles and successes. I felt if I had chosen a teacher further in their career, they would not have a specific recollection of their first year of teaching.

Researcher Role. As a participant and the head researcher of this study, I was mindful of my words and actions to ensure an unbiased study. My goal was not to interfere with the participants' thought processes and to allow them to freely express their opinions of Choice-Based Art Education. As the researcher, I asked questions during the interviewing process, along with asking to see artifacts when it seemed appropriate.

Interviewees were encouraged to provide as much crucial information as possible. The interviews were semi-structured with questions based on their personal experiences with CBAE, and authentic conversations were frequent in all interviews. A strategy that was taken into strong consideration during the interviews was to listen more than talk. To gather the needed information for this study, it was important to keep the focus on the participant during the interview.

In hopes of being objective during the interviewing process, my role was to not voice my opinion on the questions that were being addressed during the interview but to help guide the interviewee in answering the question in full. Biases were avoided by focusing on using neutral language and staying away from sharing my personal experiences with a CBAE approach. Asking for more in-depth answers during the interview helped guide the

interviewee to reflect more in-depth into their own genuine experiences. My participants understood that their experiences on this matter were crucial to help develop my research.

Research Procedures. The goal of this study while conducting interviews was to build a trusting relationship with the participants. The participants were asked to be comfortable and intervene if they ever felt uncomfortable throughout the interview. The participants were able to intervene by verbally expressing their concern with me. If the problem was something unfixable, the interview was finished, and data was destroyed. However, this did not happen in either interview. Participants were made aware that the interviews may go over the given forty-five minutes.

Ethical Considerations. In order for my participants to know what they were agreeing to, there was an assent letter, found in Appendix A.3, that needed to be signed before the interview process. In the assent form, A.3, it states that none of their personal information will be shared and none of the recorded interviews will be shared unless they are for the sole reason of being transcribed. They knew that nothing they shared would be held against them and that my goal was to make this as comfortable as possible for them. The interview's permission was granted by the person being interviewed, as everyone being interviewed was over the age of eighteen. The data was stored on Google Drive and my personal computer.

If someone had changed their mind about participating after data had already been collected, the data would have been erased, and another participant would have been found. However, this was not the case. As the researcher, it is crucial to respect my participants' needs and privacy. Color names were used as pseudonyms for the participants, and their names were never written down. The interviews were audio-recorded, and video recorded,

with participant consent (Appendix A.5). There was no payment to the participants for participating in this study.

Research Methods

Type of study. According to Heewon Chang (2008), an autoethnographic study can mean different things to different people. However, she defines her approach to an autoethnographic study as combining cultural analysis and interpretation with narrative details (Chang, 2008, pg. 46). She continues to state that an autoethnographic study is reflected upon, analyzed, and interpreted within its broader socio-cultural context fraying away from the performative storytelling approach (Chang, 2008, pg. 46). This technique is beneficial to my research due to my first-hand experience. I have experienced the importance of CBAE and how the lack of classroom choice can affect a student's confidence in school, along with knowledge of the benefits and challenges of teaching using this method as a first-year teacher. This study explores authentic CBAE experiences while showing that other classes can learn from the art room and their successes.

An autoethnographic study allows me to collect the necessary data for my research questions through reflecting on my personal data that is geared towards answering my research question. Previously discussed gaps in research are addressed through research of existing literature and data collection from participants.

Context of study. To make my participants feel at ease, I communicated with them before the interview to answer any questions they might have had. This reassured them that their comfort is important and hopefully relieved any stressful thoughts they might have had. Communication was also important before the interview process to build a connection with the participants. My teacher participants did not have too many concerns before the

interview. My former student participants had an abundance of questions, in which we spent time going over each question they had.

For my participants to give all of themselves to this study, it was important they were in a comfortable environment. To facilitate a safe space for them I enabled participants to interview from their home where they could sit anywhere comfortably.

I had reached out to two teachers who have taught CBAE their first-year teaching, along with my one former student participant. They were very willing and excited to be a part of this study. We communicated back and forth to set a date. Once the date was set, there was a Zoom link sent to these participants. At the beginning of the interview, they were reminded that this is not to be a stress-inducing interview and to answer the questions to the best of their abilities. The interviews were semi-structured. I split my computer screen, so I was able to see the participant on half my screen and the questions on the other half. As the interviews were happening, there were natural questions that arose, along with candid conversations. Notes were also taken to highlight the most important parts. Having the Zoom call video recorded, and audio recorded on my phone gave me two different ways to collect the data.

During an interview with one of the teacher participants, they candidly showed me a technique they use in their classroom for one of their stations. Another participant texted me images of their artwork from High School for my data collection. This type of data collection allowed me to collect data both through interviews and collecting artifacts.

Literature Sources. Gates (2016) method of collecting data has inspired this research. As previously mentioned in the *Literature Review* section, Gates (2016) did not touch much upon her own experiences with a CBAE approach and relied heavily on the data collected from her peers. She discussed their outcomes with them and was able to use that

information for her research. This method allowed her to gather a range of inputs of this teaching approach, which informed my decision to use this method as well. However, I am altering her methods slightly by allowing for artifacts that will serve as examples from a CBAE technique.

Chang (2008) defines autoethnography as systematically collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data, and producing scholarly reports (Chang, 2008, p. 48). Autoethnographies attempt to achieve cultural understanding through analysis, interpretation, and interviews (Chang, 2008, p. 48). Chang states that autoethnography is not about focusing on the self alone but searching for others' understanding through self (p. 48-49). These research methods match the type of study chosen because I have included data from art educators in their field as well as my personal experiences.

Data Collection

Interviews. Interviews were conducted with two art teachers who taught CBAE their first-year teaching and throughout their teaching careers, along with one former student participant who was exposed to a CBAE teaching style at some point in their academic career. Interviews were needed to candidly understand the effects of a CBAE approach in someone else's classroom. These interviews ranged from forty minutes to two hours. The interviews were recorded through an iPhone voice memo app and iPad voice memo app, as well as through the Zoom software. During the interview, there were notes taken on important statements from the participants.

The protocols can be located under the Appendix section of this thesis, identified as A.6 and A.7. Interview questions for the teacher participants focused on how effective a CBAE technique is, the difficulties of implementing this method, the impact on the students,

whether students have applied what they learned in the classroom to their everyday lives, and other information that the participants were willing to share to support this study. Whereas for my former student participant, their questions were focused primarily on how CBAE has affected their everyday life, if CBAE was beneficial to them, what the day-to-day was like in a CBAE classroom, along with candid questions that occurred naturally throughout the interview.

Artifacts. Artifacts include two artworks created throughout my schooling. Images were also gathered in support of this study from my former student participant. My artwork from school highlights the confidence found in my work as a student becoming more comfortable with a CBAE approach. I will be comparing these artworks together, along with coding my former student participants' artwork together with the same criteria in mind. When observing these artworks, it was important to take into consideration the elements and principles of art, and the overall confidence the artists had gained. It determined how comfortable my former student participant and I were to think outside the box in the art room. My former student participants and I's beginning works, both created in different classes, show a safer technique to art, whereas as the years go on, it is evident that our artwork gets more depth to it. The feeling of finally taking risks as the years went on in school is evident in the artwork. The artifacts include my artwork and my former student participant's artwork, for this, the artifact protocol form A.8 was signed.

Journaling. Journaling is another form of data collection used in this study. I kept a journal to document my weekly experience with CBAE. While journaling, I gave myself specific prompts to fill out weekly along with writing down candid experiences with CBAE. The protocol this falls under is the artifacts protocol, A.8. The purpose of the journal is to see

a more authentic experience and see a more in-the-moment thought. This is helpful because it shows the reader a raw experience, as journaling more than likely happens soon after an event. See appendix, A.9 and A.10 for the protocol form for this collection of data.

Limitations. COVID-19 has impacted this research in many ways. Since social distancing and masks are required for in-person interaction, interviews were only conducted safely through Zoom. Boundaries were set based on the CDC guidelines and due to my precautions of making sure everything is being conducted safely. Since this research happened during the colder months, it was unlikely that someone would be comfortable enough to sit outside in the cold. Interviews outside did not happen, even though that was an option.

If interviews were cut short due to connection issues, we would have had to meet at a different time to continue the interview. Thankfully, this was not the case. To add, my former student participant who was interviewed may have felt too comfortable and perhaps chose false information to feel they are benefitting the research, even though they were asked to give reliable information. Lastly, relying on technology to gather research is also a limitation; recordings may not save, and some parts may get deleted; technology is not always reliable. Luckily, this was not the case.

Data Analysis

Organization of Data. The interviews conducted with both my former student participant and art teachers were recorded through Zoom, an iPhone and iPad voice memo app, along with various notes that were taken. Recorded interviews were transcribed through an app. After transcriptions were looked over by myself, this allowed me to feel confident that information is accurate and adjusted, when necessary, after it was color-coded. The

coding addressed the positive and negative effects of CBAE on both students and teachers, teacher participants' implementation of CBAE, the outcomes of CBAE, as well as other categories.

Data was separated into themes found throughout the research. I found themes while coding, there were no set themes before starting coding. This type of coding is considered a combination of thematic and axial coding.

Organization of data in terms of data for my journal and artifacts have similar themes as the interviews. Artifacts, such as my journal and artworks, were collected by myself primarily after the interview process. If there were specific questions on the artwork received, questions were asked separately by myself to my participant outside the interview setting.

Coding of Data. To maintain the agreement of confidentiality in the research, there was no name identification throughout the study. Each participant was coordinated with a specific color. Significantly important information was handwritten and highlighted in a private folder on my iPad. New themes emerged throughout the data collection process. All data was examined and coded with the research question in mind. While coding, I looked for natural repetitive themes throughout the data that were crucial to the research. The data collected from the interviews was coded through thematic and axial coding for interviews to establish patterns throughout the interviewing process. Similar coding was applied to artifacts as well.

Methods of Analysis. Data was analyzed through analytic induction. During the examination, answers were color-coded with my research questions in mind. A peer examined my findings, as we listened to the voice recording and read the transcript together.

When coding, it was crucial to keep my research question in mind. When analyzing data, it was important to have the transcription tell me, as the researcher, what codes to look for. When analyzing my journaling data, I continued to allow common themes to emerge naturally when coding. Since I asked myself the same questions that I asked my participants during the interviewing process, there were similar themes that emerged while journaling. In terms of coding when it came to participant artifacts, natural themes emerged after studying all artworks individually, allowing me, as the researcher, to develop an understanding of the commonalties these artworks shared amongst each other.

Timeline of Study

After gaining IRB approval, I reached out to my former student participants and various art organizations to seek participants for this study. I found all participants by the end of February, and I sent them all consent forms (Appendix A.2) that had to be signed before beginning our interview. Once forms were completed, we set dates on when interviews could take place. Interviews happened through February and March. Once the interviews were completed, data was then analyzed, and specific patterns were observed. Chapters IV and V were written after all data was collected and coded. The thesis will be finalized in July and presented in August 2021.

Month	**Process**	**Steps to Accomplish**
December-January	Proposal Hearing	● Participate and present in hearing that is on December 5th ● Complete all necessary tasks for AEGR 618 ● Pass the hearing

	Gain IRB Approval	• Submit full proposal by December 8, 2020
	Search for Potential Interview Participants	• Contact fellow former student participants about their interest in participating in this study • Send recruitment letter out to interested participants • Contact art organizations for potential art educators who implement or had implemented CBAE and are willing to participate in this study
	Collect Artifacts	• Gather supporting artifacts for this study • Personal journals, artwork, writing critiques, photographs, etc.
	Write Interview Questions	• Begin to finalize interview questions for potential participants.
	Seek Participant Permissions	• Once approved by IRB, contact interested participants with recruitment letter,

		participants rights and assent forms
	Finalize Interview Questions and Coordinate Interview Times with Potential Participants	• Start to finalize interview questions and prepare them for future interviews. • Collect assent and recruitment letter forms • Determine what date/time coordinates with each other • Determine how this interview will be conducted
February-March	Coordinate Interview Times with Potential Participants	• Continue to coordinate times with participants for interviews
	Write Interview Questions	• Begin to finalize interview questions for potential participants.
	Start Conducting Interviews	• Once times and dates are set, interviews with participants will start to be conducted • Continue working on literature review
	Start Collecting Data	• Artifacts will start to be collected from participants
	Start Analyzing Data	• Data will be analyzed through a coding

		method, finding patterns through each interview and artifacts presented
April-May	Complete Data Collection	• Data collection is completed, if second-round interviews were needed they should have been conducted by this time
	Analyzing Data	• Continue to code collected data for recurring themes
	Begin Writing Chapter IV and V	• Start writing Chapter IV and V using the data and artifacts found through interviews
	Write Chapter IV	• Complete writing for Chapter IV
	Write Chapter V	• Begin and finish writing for Chapter V
June	Editing	• Add edits and review the thesis. Prepare thesis for submission
July-August	Continue Editing	• Continue editing chapters to be prepared for submission
	Finalize Thesis	• Prepare for thesis presentation • Finalize literature review

Figure 4. Timeline for the Study.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

Choice-Based Art Education (CBAE) gives students the opportunity to develop their learning process through experimentation. Leslie Gates (2016) suggests that CBAE allows students to explore and execute their ideas by demonstrating to students the process of being an artist in the real world. This research investigated the effectiveness of CBAE in order to dive deeper into understanding how CBAE works, ways CBAE can be taught in the art room, and overall if CBAE is an effective learning strategy for students.

For art teachers who aspire to incorporate CBAE in their teaching philosophy, it is important to have a basic understanding of what CBAE entails. This may include common ways students have reacted to this teaching style, what the positive and negative long-term effects are of CBAE. Having this familiarity will allow teachers to have a deeper understanding of whether or not this approach is suitable for their students. Having been exposed to this type of approach throughout my academic career, I have been predominantly focused on the positives this method has to offer. However, focusing on the larger scope of what CBAE is has allowed me to explore different techniques on how this approach can best suit my teaching practice.

Data Collection and Organization

Interviews with two different art teachers, who have taught CBAE their first year of teaching, answered the question of how a first-year art teacher could incorporate this approach into their teaching pedagogy. The long-term effects of CBAE were investigated through an interview with a former student participant. A collection of a personal reflective journal, artifacts from a former student participant, and interviews all supported this study's findings.

Interviews were conducted in order to receive straightforward information about CBAE, and allowed for me, as the researcher, to witness the participants' reactions when discussing CBAE. The interviews allowed for a personal approach to data collection and for me to understand the course of where my data is coming from. Allowing for each participant to answer the same questions, yet have some questions naturally asked throughout the interviewing process allowed questions I did not think to ask beforehand, to be answered. These interviews were then transcribed through a transcription website, downloaded onto my iPad, color-coded in order of natural themes that had occurred while coding, and stored in Google Drive under each participant's pseudonym folder.

A personal reflective journal allowed me to compare experiences between my participants and me. This allowed me to collect straightforward thoughts and answer questions my participants were being asked during their interviewing process. This process happened through Google Docs, in which I was able to candidly access the document in order to write down my thoughts and was able to access the data through Google Drive. Participant artifacts were collected to see the development of the participants' artistic styles. Analyzing closely how their confidence in strokes, colors, elements and principles, and other factors developed throughout the course of their academic career. These artifacts were collected through text messages, where my participant had texted their artifacts along with minimal information. These were later stored, as well, in their desired Google Drive folder along with being saved on my laptop.

At the beginning of the interviews, I stated their rights, what I am researching, and that was when the questions began. After I began recording the interview both on my iPad, phone, and through the Zoom app. Once the recording was on, I began asking my set questions. In my

interviews when a participant answered a question, to remain unbiased, my frequent response back was a neutral word, such as, “yeah.” There were very rare occasions where I engaged my participants after answering a question or sharing information. This helped tremendously to keep my biases on track. Sometimes I validated my participant by saying "nice answer" or "very good", but that was solely to make them aware that they fully answered that question, then we would move on. There was never any talk about how I particularly feel about CBAE nor where the exact direction my thesis was heading.

A strategy I had during the analysis process was to have my interviews naturally guide the coding process, instead of going into the coding process with set goals in mind for what I was looking for. If there was any part that was unclear to me, reflecting with someone who was unbiased on this topic was also helpful. After collecting data, it was critical to keep the goal of this research in mind and to provide the most accurate information possible. Being that I am a participant and a researcher in this study, it can become difficult to differentiate between the two. When I was a participant in this research, I intentionally did not remind myself of my participants' responses in order to remain unbiased with my contributions.

In terms of organization of data, each of my participants had a specific folder located in my Google Drive and in the album section of my iPad. This is where permissions were stored, transcripts, artifacts, and any other information that related to that participant. After the interviews were completed, they were transcribed through an online service. Once they were transcribed through the service and reviewed, they were stored in both folders. Having each participant have their own specific folder allowed data to remain organized.

When I was interviewing my participants, I am in my mind piecing it together with what others have said in my interviews and how this information is corresponding to my literature. My focus has and always will be to provide an unbiased thesis to my readers, hence why I never force interviews to go a certain way or only focus my literature to benefit my viewpoint on CBAE. Being open to others' viewpoints is crucial.

Changes in the Field

To gather participants at the beginning of this study I reached out to various organizations, including Art Educators of New Jersey (AENJ) and Pennsylvania Art Education Association (PAEA), in hopes they would be able to recruit participants from their organizations. After reaching out to these organizations, they had shared they were not able to share members' personal information. I then became a member of AENJ in order to communicate with their members. I also was not aware of how heavily I would rely on Facebook to gather participants; however, Facebook became a place for me to reach out to a larger community of art educators.

At the beginning of my research process, I was thinking of whom to interview and how many participants would be necessary in order to have strong research. My first thought was to interview a few of my former student participants who went through a CBAE classroom. I wanted to use a minimum of four of my former student participants and a minimum of three teachers. During February I joined an array of different Facebook groups and even reached out to different Art Education Associations. I posted on Facebook walls, joined these associations, and posted on their discussion walls as well. I explained that I am a graduate student and am looking for candidates who taught CBAE in their first year of teaching. There were a few people that reached out, then cut communication after one email. I asked the participants who seemed like

they wanted to follow through with the research basic questions, including where they work, how long they have been incorporating this approach, and a few other questions.

After changing my research from focusing on first-year teachers to overall teachers who taught CBAE their first year of teaching, I eliminated some potential participants. There was also consideration of having a maximum of three former student participants. Later I concluded that having one former student participant and myself would be efficient. This decision was made to have three participants total after reflection on whether I would rather have quality in my research rather than quantity. Allowing me to strategically choose participants I felt will substantially impact my study for the better and help guide me to answer my research question.

For data collection, I was certain that I would rely heavily on artifacts and participants' journaling. However, artifacts were scarce, and journaling was not a data collection method that was used for my participants. This research relied heavily on interviews, which provided an abundance of information regardless of the lack of artifacts or journaling. Lastly, interview questions were supposed to be geared towards all participants, regardless of being a teacher participant or former student participant. During my first interview, it became evident that having the interview happen naturally became the most effective. Leaving me to change some questions to suit my individual participants and encouraging natural conversation. Throughout my data collection process, there were many different changes. Before beginning my research, my opinion on CBAE was stagnant because the only input on this approach I had was my own. Through collecting data, my opinion on CBAE was ever-changing.

Entrance and Function of Researcher

Entering the field, I joined various Facebook Groups and reached out to Art Education organizations. I posted the same information that stated,

> Hello everyone! I am currently a graduate student at Moore College of Art and Design and am looking for participants who incorporate/have incorporated a Choice-Based Art Education approach into their classroom for my thesis. Any experience is welcomed! My thesis also targets first-year art teachers and their experience with this approach as a new teacher. If you or someone you know may be interested, please message me for more info! Thank you, everyone!
>
> From here, there were multiple emails and messages that were sent to me.

I then sent out the forms to those who were interested and gathered those forms from whoever had sent them back. From there, I strategically went through who would be the best fit for my research. Overall, it came down to who taught CBAE their first year of teaching, and which grade levels these participants taught. Throughout this process, it was crucial I remained unbiased. I continued to keep my research questions in mind while making these decisions. Lastly, I functioned as the researcher as I strived to make my participants comfortable.

In this following section, data will be presented primarily through matrices, explanation of matrices, and participant quotes. The section begins with teacher participants' reactions to a CBAE method and is followed by former student participants' reactions. Matrices were chosen in order to provide a visual and written understanding of the data that was collected. This also allowed for data to remain organized and focus primarily on specific themes that were researched.

Order of Research Data

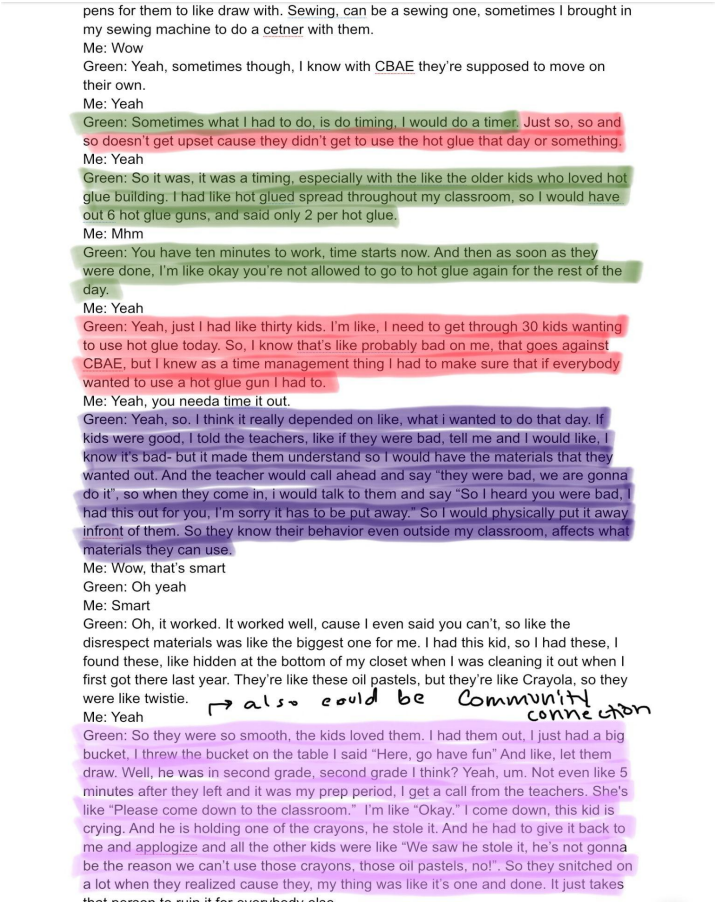
In the following sections, the data that is first being presented is collected from the teacher participants. This will give a thorough understanding of the backgrounds of these participants, how they conduct CBAE in their classroom, and their overall outlook on CBAE.

Teacher participants were chosen to be presented first as the information they provided flows appropriately into the former student participant's data. Understanding teachers' intent first, then hearing how former students received the intent of a CBAE classroom will provide a well-rounded understanding of CBAE.

Allowing teacher participants to share their experiences first allows a thorough understanding of what it takes to incorporate this approach in the classroom. In the section following the teacher participants is the section for the former student participants where they give insight on how their experience truly was after being exposed to this type of classroom environment, I am one of these two participants. To follow, the former student participants' artwork from a CBAE classroom is shared, in which it was coded and shows how these former students grew throughout a CBAE classroom.

Presentation of Data

Teacher Participants. Each participant's interview was geared to answer certain questions that would allow for a well-rounded understanding of what CBAE entails. Data is presented in *Figure 5* to demonstrate a coded transcript. Through axial and thematic coding, an array of themes emerged naturally.



pens for them to like draw with. Sewing, can be a sewing one, sometimes I brought in my sewing machine to do a cetner with them.
Me: Wow
Green: Yeah, sometimes though, I know with CBAE they're supposed to move on their own.
Me: Yeah
Green: Sometimes what I had to do, is do timing, I would do a timer. Just so, so and so doesn't get upset cause they didn't get to use the hot glue that day or something.
Me: Yeah
Green: So it was, it was a timing, especially with the like the older kids who loved hot glue building. I had like hot glued spread throughout my classroom, so I would have out 6 hot glue guns, and said only 2 per hot glue.
Me: Mhm
Green: You have ten minutes to work, time starts now. And then as soon as they were done, I'm like okay you're not allowed to go to hot glue again for the rest of the day.
Me: Yeah
Green: Yeah, just I had like thirty kids. I'm like, I need to get through 30 kids wanting to use hot glue today. So, I know that's like probably bad on me, that goes against CBAE, but I knew as a time management thing I had to make sure that if everybody wanted to use a hot glue gun I had to.
Me: Yeah, you needa time it out.
Green: Yeah, so. I think it really depended on like, what i wanted to do that day. If kids were good, I told the teachers, like if they were bad, tell me and I would like, I know it's bad- but it made them understand so I would have the materials that they wanted out. And the teacher would call ahead and say "they were bad, we are gonna do it", so when they come in, i would talk to them and say "So I heard you were bad, I had this out for you, I'm sorry it has to be put away." So I would physically put it away infront of them. So they know their behavior even outside my classroom, affects what materials they can use.
Me: Wow, that's smart
Green: Oh yeah
Me: Smart
Green: Oh, it worked. It worked well, cause I even said you can't, so like the disrespect materials was like the biggest one for me. I had this kid, so I had these, I found these, like hidden at the bottom of my closet when I was cleaning it out when I first got there last year. They're like these oil pastels, but they're like Crayola, so they were like twistie.
↳ also could be community connection
Me: Yeah
Green: So they were so smooth, the kids loved them. I had them out, I just had a big bucket, I threw the bucket on the table I said "Here, go have fun" And like, let them draw. Well, he was in second grade, second grade I think? Yeah, um. Not even like 5 minutes after they left and it was my prep period, I get a call from the teachers. She's like "Please come down to the classroom." I'm like "Okay." I come down, this kid is crying. And he is holding one of the crayons, he stole it. And he had to give it back to me and applogize and all the other kids were like "We saw he stole it, he's not gonna be the reason we can't use those crayons, those oil pastels, no!". So they snitched on a lot when they realized cause they, my thing was like it's one and done. It just takes

Figure 5. Coded Transcripts.

Data codes from data collection were organized into the themes presented in no particular order; years using CBAE, how participants personally apply choice, other classes that include art, misconceptions of CBAE, collaboration with other subjects/community, class the participants teach, personal past experiences with CBAE, student abilities, how CBAE compares to other approaches, school teaching at/overall school environment, type of learner the participant is, lesson planning, negatives of CBAE, classroom setup, long-term effects, positives of CBAE, years teaching, and personal experience with CBAE. These themes have been color-coded and placed in color-coded matrices. The color coordination's for each theme can be found in *Figure 6*.

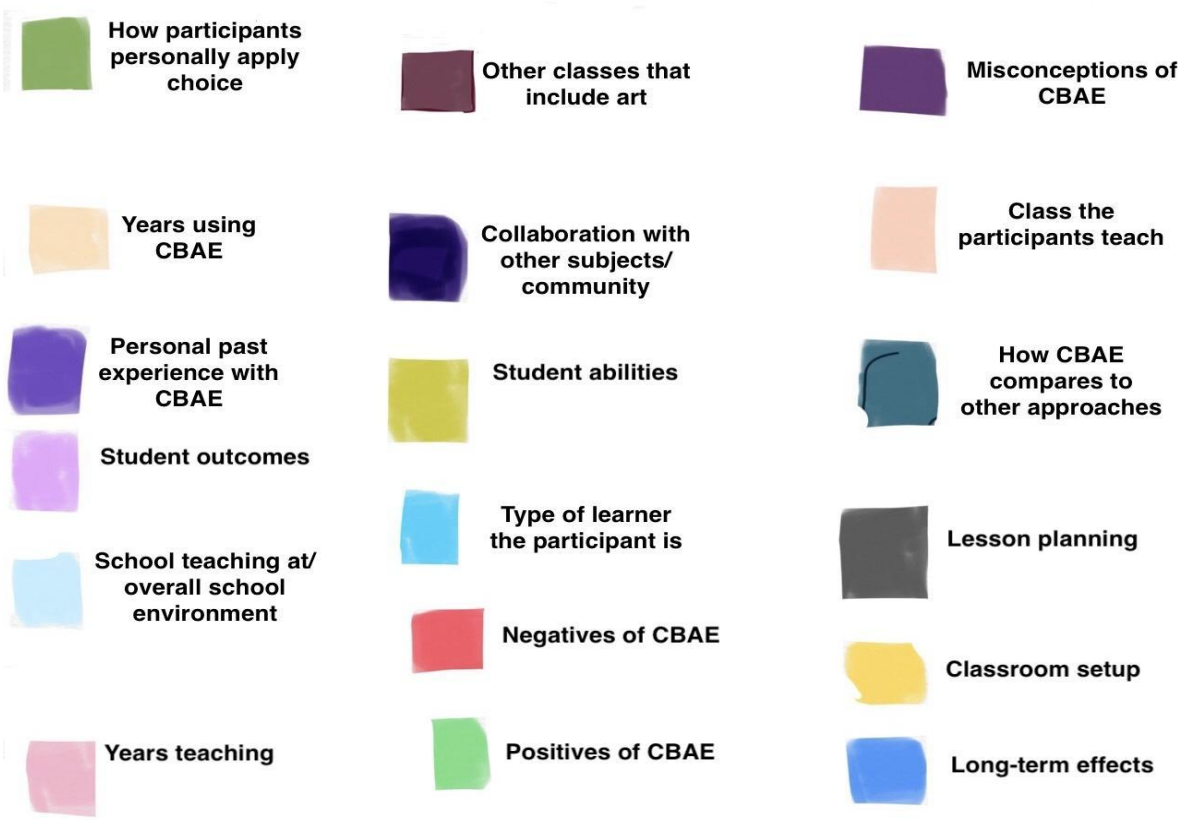


Figure 6. Teacher Participant Themes.

Participants' Backgrounds. All teacher participants in this research began their first-year teaching using CBAE. Below is an introduction to each teacher participant.

Green. Green shared that going into their second year of teaching, due to COVID restrictions, they were unable to completely allow for a CBAE environment. However, what they shared throughout the interview about their experience this year gave the impression that they were still holding true to the morals that CBAE encompasses. Such as, teaching a lesson, then having students choose various parts of their project. Green has been teaching at the elementary level for two years. The school they teach at has little diversity and at one of the schools they teach at they share the art room with another teacher. There is little support from the head of

their department, as they wish the art teachers would strictly enforce DBAE. This participant was not exposed to CBAE throughout their academic career.

Blue. Blue has been using CBAE their entire teaching career, which has been three years. They were never exposed to CBAE throughout their academic career and only heard about this approach through close friends. This teacher participant teaches at a school that is Kindergarten through twelfth grade for students with learning disabilities. Overall, there is a good amount of support from the administration. Blue also is teaching a wide range of mediums to their students.

Yellow. For the rest of this chapter, I will be referring to myself, the researcher, as Yellow. Yellow is the pseudonym I have chosen in order to be a participant in this research. Yellow states that this is their first-year teaching and that this is their first year implementing CBAE. They are a High School art teacher and state that there is a great deal of support from the administration. In the past, they were exposed to CBAE throughout their academic career, which inspired them to incorporate their approach into their teaching career. This participant is a visual learner and states that they are currently teaching an Art I and Art II class.

Years Using CBAE

Participant	Response
Green	"It is weird now because we are kinda having to change our curriculum, again. So, for this school year we were not allowed to. We had to switch back to DBAE because they were like, you cannot do the centers. So, along with CBAE, we were also focusing on TAB. Which is Teaching Artistic Behavior." Yellow: "Okay, so your first year was one-hundred-percent CBAE?" Green: "Yes." Yellow: "But this year is kind of fifty-fifty?" Green: "Kind of, yeah."
Blue	"Three years ago, I actually started using CBAE."

Yellow	"This is my first year using CBAE."

Years Teaching

Participant	**Response**
Green	"In this area this is technically my second year."
Blue	"Three years total."
Yellow	"This is my first-year teaching."

School Teaching At/Overall School Environment

Participant	**Response**
Green	-"Happyville is like my main building that is, I am their art teacher there, so at Corner Street I share it with another art teacher." -"Ninety-nine percent white community with like a one percent black community. They are very country, very conservative." -"And also, the head of our department, so he is one of the high school art teachers. He absolutely despises it (CBAE). So he is actually trying to get us back to DBAE 100% fully. He absolutely hates it."
Blue	-"It is a K through 12 school for students with learning differences." -"I think my, my head of middle school, head of upper school, like all about it. Like there, you know, my head of upper school is really just like a great, great human and is very open. And like, my school is so small and the students have such diverse needs that it is like, they are really open to like just whatever works for that population. Um, I do not think my head of school has any idea of what I am doing in my room. Just, I do not think she has a clue."
Yellow	-"I am currently at a High School, grades 9-12." -"My administration is filled with very artistic people. My curriculum and unit plans are very broad that I follow and all they want is for the students to have awesome projects. If these projects are interesting, that means students will take the class, which means more attention towards the art program. They have been very supportive, especially being a first-year teacher."

Personal Past Experience with CBAE

Participant	Response
Green	Yellow: "Were you exposed to a CBAE approach throughout school?" Green: "No. Never was, never was. Strict DBAE. Now I did, if I remember in like elementary, I think she might, the art teacher might have been dabbling into CBAE."
Blue	-Was not exposed to CBAE through K-12 experience. -"Um, I actually only heard CBAE through, um like our educators that I was friends with or, um, that I knew personally." -"Yeah and that was really one of those things that when I heard about those approaches, I was like, that just sounds so much like an, like an adult art studio or like an art college. That I was like, well that was one of those, uh, like learning about CBAE like made me want to go into art education."
Yellow	-"I was taught using a CBAE approach throughout my K-12 academic career. In my art classes the projects were mostly open and allowed us to have choice in the outcome of our projects. When I got to college, I was taught about CBAE and what it is. This encouraged me to want to use this in my teaching career."

Type of Learner

Participant	Response
Green	Not applicable.
Blue	Yellow: "Were you always a structured type of learner?" Blue: "Um, absolutely not. No, definitely not, no. I just like I, I did not enjoy a lot of the academic components of school. So like anything related to art, I was just like, was better than nothing to me."
Yellow	-"I am mostly a visual learner. I learn by seeing people do certain things and I learn through images. I never learned well when the class was strictly lecturing, and we had all assigned seats in rows."

Class the Participants Teach

Participant	Response
Green	-"Now for the two elementary schools."

Blue	-”It is all mixed media. The only class that I teach that is like media specific is like ninth grade is just like all two dimensional and then tenth grade is all three dimensional. Then all my other grades are, um, are mixed. I teach like for my middle school class, I teach like a guided art class and then like an independent art class. And like the guided art is like a little bit less choice, and then the independent art is a little bit more choice.”
Yellow	-”I teach an Art I class which is a beginner course for artists. I also teach an Art II class, which is a bit more advanced. I am not teaching this class this year, but there is an option for an Art III class which is almost like an open studio class. These classes primarily focus on mixed media, drawing, painting, and ceramics.”

Figure 7. Teacher Participant Backgrounds.

Difficulties that come with implementing a CBAE approach. With every approach comes improvements that need to be adjusted throughout the school year, however, some issues seem to be consistent regardless of how long the participant implemented an approach. This was a realization with all participants. As stated in Chapter II, according to McElhany (2017) they shared that with the changes to CBAE in the classroom, students were hesitant to begin, continually asking for reassurance. Overall, they were too nervous about relying on their judgment. In comparison to one participant in this research, who stated that students can become too attached to certain centers, making it difficult to remove the student from that given center.

Time becomes a common factor when implementing CBAE into the classroom. Blue stated, ”Timing, transitions, scaffolding, like how much is too much? Especially with younger students, like where they just want to try something and move on” (Interview, 2021). Yellow even followed with,

> I have found through my teaching of CBAE so far that when they say CBAE is time-consuming, I have to agree. It has been difficult ranging where students are on projects. Some students get work done literally the next day. Some students hand things in a

> couple of days later after spending class time working. It has been difficult with the hybrid model of teaching to kind of keep track of everyone and timing (Interview, 2021).

Leaving McElhany's (2017) statement to stand true, they found that time became a factor in a way that it was not when implementing a DBAE approach in her newly student-centered classroom. Whereas Green states the strong negative with CBAE in their classroom is,

> They do not know when to stop. And, so, that is the biggest issue that they will keep going, and going, and going. And wasting the materials and then they will say, 'Oh, I hate it' and throw it away (Interview, 2021).

Since CBAE is a flexible approach geared towards the individual learner's needs, it can make students feel rushed or allow them to have too much downtime in the classroom.

Negatives of CBAE

Participant	Response
Green	-Students' emotions might become hurt because they were not able to go to a certain station that day. -"It's the younger kids that need the boundaries for CBAE, big time. Not like boundaries as in what materials to do but how to respect them, how to clean them up, and when to clean them up. That was my biggest thing I had to enforce with them." -CBAE is preferred with the older students. "They do not know when to stop. And, so, that is the biggest issue that they will keep going, and going, and going. And wasting the materials and then they will say, "Oh, I hate it" and throw it away." -Students at times will refuse to leave certain stations/centers. Due to this, stations/centers will have to be removed. -In group settings there can be bickering because one student wants to be the alpha in the group.
Blue	-"Um, the students who do not like art, I think that on one hand, I think it is a little tough for them." -Some students choose to do the bare minimum. -"I think for me personally, timing and transitions are hard because everybody

	is essentially doing a different project. People finish at different times." -"Timing, transitions, scaffolding, like how much is too much? Especially with younger students, like where they just want to try something and move on." -"There would be like, at least a handful of students when I rolled it out that were just like, I do not, I have no idea where to start." -"Tough to keep up with the resources and assessments throughout the school year."
Yellow	-"Teaching a CBAE approach can be very difficult. I feel most teachers feel it is an easy way out. But that is not the case. It takes a lot of patience, a lot of asking your students if they need any help, etc." -"I have found through my teaching of CBAE so far that when they say CBAE is time consuming, I have to agree. It has been difficult ranging where students are on projects. Some students get work done literally the next day. Some students hand things in a couple days later after spending class time working. It has been difficult with the hybrid model of teaching to kind of keep track of everyone and timing."

Figure 8. Negatives of CBAE.

Positives that come with implementing a CBAE approach. Freedom became a common factor with the given participants. All participants have also shared a different level of engagement found in their students; whether that means students are solely just working to the best of their abilities, students are just overall engaged in the class, or if it is evident that students who tend to get distracted easily are now more in the zone with their projects.

Green shared that they even love the freedom that they have, which allows them to write lesson plans rarely, but also lets them teach lessons that they feel will best benefit their students. Blue shared that making the projects relevant to their students has been helpful and that students are present in their space.

Overall, the commonality between these participants is that their students enjoy the environment that CBAE provides. Green stated that their students are more engaged with the art lesson. Whereas Blue went further in stating that their students are present when they are in the

art room. Yellow went on to say that their students even come into their classroom during their off periods to work.

Positives of CBAE	
Participant	**Response**
Green	-"They enjoy centers, they really do. They love that freedom." -"Definitely more engagement with things." -"I love the freedom of it. I love that I can just write one lesson plan for a month and a half for first through fifth grade, that is awesome." -"I love that I could go a little bit more in-depth with some lessons. I love that, like, I just wanted to teach them about embroidery, then I just did it." -"So when it is done correctly, it helps them grow to become better problem solvers and better like, just more interesting members of society. It helps them understand things, interpret things."
Blue	-"I do think it's like, choice gives them a way of, of making it relevant to them. Um and I think that has been helpful." -"I definitely do think that it is successful. I think it means engagement. I think that like everybody is doing something to the best of their abilities. Like being present in this space, I think that is successful. Just like everyone, like nobody feeling like they are not welcome there. Like in that space, like I just cannot stand when people say they are not artistic." -"But then just like really realizing that everybody has some kind of potential, has something to share, something to offer. And then just like finding that versus like, telling them what they are supposed to be doing or like that, that like a pinnacle they are supposed to be reaching. Like, you know, maybe their pinnacles, like are an inch tall, you know? Um, and really like digging for that."
Yellow	-"My students for the most part have been sharing how much they have enjoyed the freedom that comes with the art room." -"Students have been enjoying the environment, being that they come to my class on their off periods." -"The students could all have the same ideas for a project and yet they could all turn out completely differently. I will give the students a general prompt for example, and they will just run with it." -"Students, for the most part, have been excited about the projects. There are students who will act out, but when there is a project, they are able to be completely free with, they zone into their project."

Figure 9. Positives of CBAE.

How participants lesson-plan, set up their classroom, and implement choice in their classrooms. As stated in Chapter II, to make sure students have creative freedom in the classroom, Gude (2013) suggests that teachers should take a fresh look at the old and familiar projects they have been using in their classroom. There is an abundance of different ways to apply choice in the classroom, which can be referenced in both *Figure 1.* Choice Spectrum (Hathaway, 2008, p. 36-53) and *Figure 2.* Choice Spectrum Two (Balsley, 2015).

Lesson planning for the participants, for the most part, varied. Two out of the three participants shared that they try to relate their lesson plans as much to the students as possible, suggesting that they focus on planning accordingly. Green shared that they decide what they will do for the day spontaneously when the day comes. There are no set plans when it comes to Green's lesson planning.

Similarly, two out of the three participants identify with the middle choice category. This is where the teacher is still there to provide some instruction, such as teaching the student about a given artist or material, then leading them into the next project. One participant's focus is primarily on centers. Centers in the classroom refers to tables that have a different medium to work with at each. Which allows students to go from table to table, experimenting with different art materials. This shows the various ways CBAE can be incorporated into the art room.

Lesson Planning

Participant	**Response**
Green	-"I just would write in my lesson plan to my principal like: "Centers, it is going to be different every day. I cannot tell you what is going to happen because I am going to find something, it is just going to be centers." There usually is going to be five to seven centers open." -"All I had to write in my lesson plans was some of the standards I followed. Like it was the simplest, simplest standards."

Blue	-Lesson plans are created “every year.” -”I think last year I was doing a better job, relating it more to social issues.” -”Um, but I think that usually my projects have more societal meat to them. I think this year I had to claw that back a little bit.”
Yellow	-”This year we have not turned in any lesson plans formally due to the pandemic. However, I always try to gear my lessons in a direction that my students will be interested in. Whether contemporary artists, relate to something that is happening in the world, or anything like that. I always have my students interests in mind.”

How Participants Personally Apply Choice

Participant	**Response**
Green	-”Sometimes if they remember their Chromebooks, they can do stop motion animation stuff.” -”I will do centers in different ways. So, I will always have things like, oil-based clay, drawing, collage, building blocks, Legos, those are my five biggies that I will always have open.” -”Now the ones that kind of switch are hot glue building. Sometimes if they remember their Chromebooks, they can do stop motion animation stuff. An awesome center I do is chalk printing.” -”After we do those lessons and stuff then we can have center days. So, like, last year I was having like three months of centers. But I would have a different center open. Like some days, I would have painting open, some days I would have clay open, some days I would have printmaking, it would depend on my day I guess.”
Blue	-”But usually I found that it was best I guess what I was doing was partial choice or like middle choice. It was not a full choice. Um, so it would be like, you know, within this material do this, within this idea, you can, you know, experiment within there. Having something that was constant or consistent, whether that was material or, um, yeah, an idea.”
Yellow	-”Usually I will teach a lesson about different artists. The artists I show vary depending on the lesson, but I usually always try to show at least one contemporary artist. I will show the students videos, lecture, have them take notes, and things like that. Then for the project it can be completely open, or I will tell them they have to follow a certain medium or a certain prompt. But they can do and create whatever they want based on that information. It has made all students create something completely different.”

Classroom Setup	
Participant	**Response**
Green	"I always keep the drying racks behind the printmaking and painting center."
Blue	-"Um, so yeah, normally my classroom is set up where it is like groupings of tables. Or I did a U format, which was pretty nice too. So, everybody has their own workspace and then materials are in centers around the classroom for that student to access."
Yellow	-"This year has been difficult to set my room up the way I would prefer due to COVID restrictions. Students are required to be six feet apart from one another. However, my ideal way to set up the classroom would be a U shape. This would allow students to candidly interact with one another as they would be facing each other."

Figure 10. Classroom Environment and Implications of CBAE.

Collaboration between community and non-art classes. Based on the teacher participants' responses, it is evident that there are little to no general or non-art classes in these respected schools that incorporate the arts. Blue shared the excitement other classes can get over their art walls, where other participants had little to nothing to say on this matter.

In terms of how the artist collaborated with other subjects or the overall subjects in their schools, there was a mixture of responses. Green shared that they collaborate with their school not in an artistic manner, but in a behavioral manner. That there is constant communication between themselves and the elementary school students' main teacher. If students misbehave in their main classroom, they are also disciplined in the art room. The other participants did not have too much to share on their collaboration with other subjects or their communities.

Other Classes That Include Art	
Participant	**Response**
Green	Not applicable.

Blue	-"There are definitely teachers that have hosted their own like art walls too, which is nice. Yeah, so like that is something that the people get pretty stoked about at my school."
Yellow	-"There is a videography course, graphic design course, photography course, and a culinary course that students can take in my school. To my knowledge, these are the only other subjects that provide art opportunities in their classes."

Collaboration with Other Subjects/Community	
Participant	**Response**
Green	-"I think it really depended on, like, what I wanted to do that day. If the kids were good, I told the teachers. Like if they were bad, tell me. I would like, I know it is bad- but it made them understand, so I would have the materials that they wanted out. The teacher would call ahead and say, "they were bad, we are going to do it." So, when they come in, I would talk to them and say, "So, I heard you were bad. I had this out for you, I am sorry, it has to be put away." So I would physically put it away in front of them. So they know their behavior, even outside my classroom, affects what materials they can use."
Blue	-"I have not collaborated. Well, we like, we have done like the Martin Luther King, like mural project. But I do not like that, it is just kind of like tradition and like, just like a cool event." - "As far as collaborating with other areas of the school, we kind of have it facilitated like individual students collaborating with people like either to do the cover of the yearbook, or do portraits of somebody, or something like that. It is more like an individual basis, not as much, not so much as like an orchestrated collaboration."
Yellow	-"Being that my first year teaching is during COVID, we have been unable to collaborate with other subjects or the community. Our hope for next year is to create murals throughout the school and work with local hospitals."

Figure 11. Art Inclusion.

Participant's students' outcomes and abilities. This is a broad section that primarily focuses on students' outcomes with a CBAE approach. Responses to this section ranged from students solely enjoying the freedom, to how to clean up the art room, how students make art relevant to them, and how students' end results are unique to them.

Green stated, ”There are some kids that enjoy the freedom, but then there are some kids that need that structure” (Interview, 2021). Green even goes as far as stating that when there are group partner projects, if there are too many in a group, there can be bickering. That is primarily because someone in the group wants to take control of the direction of the art project. Blue is able to have students enjoy art by asking them what they are interested in and relating their projects to the students. Yellow has a range of student outcomes. Some students want to quickly do the project to be done with it. However, there are a fair number of students who take their time with their projects and are proud of the outcome.

Student Outcomes

Participant	**Response**
Green	-”There are some kids that enjoy the freedom, but then there are some kids that need that structure.” -”Now I know like for my centers, I will have one main activity like that other one they already went through the process and they already got approved. Or, in my book, checked off means that you know how to do that stuff. So, in my book, if they know how to paint, that means in my book they know how to clean paint brushes and clean up properly.” -”They understand now my dynamic as a teacher and what I expect of them with the centers in these choices.” -”I see a lot more group partner projects. Um, if it gets more than two, that is where I noticed that a lot more bickering and fighting happening because you are going to have, because it is like, they are going to, if there is usually more than three, there is going to be a top dog.”
Blue	-”Um, the students who don't like art, I think that on one hand, I think it's a little tough for them, but like giving specifically students who don't like art more choice, because if anything, they would like choose to do nothing. So, um, I think that, uh, but once you get past that, I think like really giving them a lot of choice is nice because like, you can kind of get that buy-in because you're like, well, what do you care about? Like, if it's not this, so I do think it like choice gives them a way of, of making it relevant to them. Um, and I think that that's, that's been helpful.”
Yellow	-”Students have created some very unique artwork. I feel it depends on the

	project. Some students just want to quickly do their work and be done with it. Most students really enjoy taking their time to complete their artwork to the best of their ability. Some students even like to keep their artwork in my classroom so others can see it and admire it. Students seem to be proud of their work and will go the extra mile to make it stand out."

Students Abilities	
Participant	**Response**
Green	-"So, my Happyville kiddos, a lot more of them grow up on farms. They are very much used to doing chores and stuff. Now my other kiddos are not very good at helping." -"But even like my life skills and multiple disability kiddos, they do really well with choice. They do well with centers."
Blue	-"But a lot of students I teach have health impairments, so they are like there, a lot of them are compromised."
Yellow	-"I teach a wide range of students with various different types of abilities."

Figure 12. Participant Students Background.

Participants' interpretation of CBAE. There can be a lot of different misconceptions when it comes to a choice-based approach to teaching. Some may think the approach is taking the easy way out, some may feel it is an unorganized free-for-all, or some may truly have little knowledge on the topic. Being an outsider looking in, CBAE can be confusing with how it functions and how it overall helps the students learn. Each participant shared the misconceptions about CBAE that they have collected over the years. A common factor amongst these opinions was that CBAE can be seen as a free for all where students do as they please, which is simply not the case.

Participants also shared what they believe the long-term effects of CBAE are. Green shared that the students are the ones doing the problem solving which helps them when handling situations. Green also shared, those students are able to realize that people are going to do things differently and teach them that that is okay. Yellow was similar by stating that students are able

to make a mistake and learn from it. To add, Blue stated that it is beneficial to put students in uncomfortable situations when it comes to learning because it allows students to develop new behaviors.

Misconceptions of CBAE

Participant	Response
Green	-"I think some art teachers might take a CBAE approach like a cop out, I guess. Like they do not want to do the work, so they will just let them do whatever and run amuck. No, CBAE has a point, it has choice. It is a philosophy. It is a style."
Blue	-"I just think that like, there is a misconception about choice-based art, which means like a free for all." -"Um, I mean, it's not like a cure all. Right. Um, it's not like if, if we could be the best, CBAE like art teachers in the world, but like, those kids are still going to go to, you know, a structured class after, you know, um, so like for me, I do think that it is like I'm old. Like, like I, I go on, if you get me in a room of art teachers, like I will ramble about educational reform, like for days. And just like, you know, I, I wish that that approach was being applied to like the, like the school system in general, you know? Um, just cause I think that, yeah, that's, I don't want to go on a tangent, but I think that it's not a cure all it's like, it's, it's a great way of opening up. Um, you like the art room. Um, and then, yeah, just that it's not, it's not a free-for-all. Um, it's, you know what, I think it was really challenging to introduce choice because, um, students, students aren't used to choice. They're told what to do almost every hour of their lives. Um, and there was a lot of anxiety and discomfort about that. So not to think that the kids are gonna want it. Um, not everybody wants choices. Some people are used to being told what to do. Um, and that's like sad, but, you know, that's, that's where like, you're like, that's what I'm teaching you actually right there. So that was, yeah."
Yellow	-"I feel the misconceptions that come with CBAE is that people think it is a free pass to not teach for the day. Having students do as they please for a project or center. When that is completely not the case. You truly have to be a master at your craft and know how to adapt to any given situation."

How CBAE Compares to Other Approaches	
Participant	**Response**
Green	-"Which, maker space is kind of like a, more about the, but the thing is it is the same thing as CBAE okay. So it is all about the process rather than the end product. They do not have restrictions. And they get to do things they do not typically get to do in a normal everyday classroom. That sounds like CBAE."
Blue	-"Yeah, I mean, well, community-based, I feel like there is like a huge link between CBAE there because you are like meeting where they are. Um, and I think that there is not like this expectation. Um, so I am definitely inspired by community practices. Um, and like, you know, treat my classroom like as a community space and like, wish it was like even more of a community space." -"As far as like DBAE, I think it is just that expectation and that judgement of being, like, treating everything as a learning experience versus like having this hierarchy of like good and bad."
Yellow	-"CBAE is such a unique type of learning environment that it is difficult to compare it to other approaches. In comparison to DBAE, for example, DBAE is a very one way of doing art. Where students more than likely are copying someone else's artwork. There are stricter rules with DBAE, such as, what materials should be used, how students can move throughout the classroom, and so on. CBAE has been a major influence on my teaching philosophy as I focus on the classroom being like a community. I want to teach students about a wide range of artists and experiment with different mediums. I feel CBAE aligned accordingly, where other approaches, in my opinion, do not compare."

Long-Term Effects	
Participant	**Response**
Green	- "It is very much a process rather than an end product." - "But the whole philosophy of it is that we are here to assist. It is you who has to do this problem solving, this thinking and going through it. So it really helps them." - "With multitasking, I think because if they see a lot of things happening, it helps them understand that other people are going to do things differently than you. Not just as an artist, but as a person. That is my biggest philosophy is I want them to learn who they are as a person in my class, not by becoming an artist, but by learning things and problem solving." -"So, when it is done correctly, it helps them grow to become better problem solvers and better like, just more interesting members of society. It helps them

	understand things, interpret things."
Blue	"I just think it is so important to teach kids that (artistic behaviors, creative problem solving, curiosity and flexibility) and the only way they can learn it is by just practicing it and like being put in the deep end a bit. Like making them uncomfortable and developing new behaviors they would have never practiced on like an institutional level."
Yellow	-"I believe that the long-term effects when it comes to CBAE is that students learn how to make mistakes and are okay with that. I believe that students really grow independently but also learn how to work well with others. I feel this approach is the most realistic to real-life situations. It is just like at work, your boss will not be there to hold your hand through every situation. They act as a guide and are there for you when you need. This approach is just like that."

Figure 13. Conceptions on CBAE.

Former Student Participants. The different questions that were asked in the former student participant interview, and the direction natural conversations took, made different themes emerge from the teacher participants. There were some similarities between my teacher and former student participants' answers, however, it was not sufficient enough to keep their information in the same matrices. After using thematic and axial coding, looking for themes naturally allowed for completely different themes to appear after coding my former student participant's transcript.

The matrices were created through coding my former student participants' transcription and input from my researcher reflection journal. Themes that emerged included exposure to CBAE, how aware they are of CBAE, the overall interest in the arts, preferred classroom setting, art classroom settings, students' project outcomes as a class, the overall opinion of CBAE, community/other subject connections, level of comfort in the art room, art teacher's role, pressure/stress/anxiety with art, art projects/expectations, negatives of CBAE, collaboration/work with other former student participants, and long-term effects of CBAE.

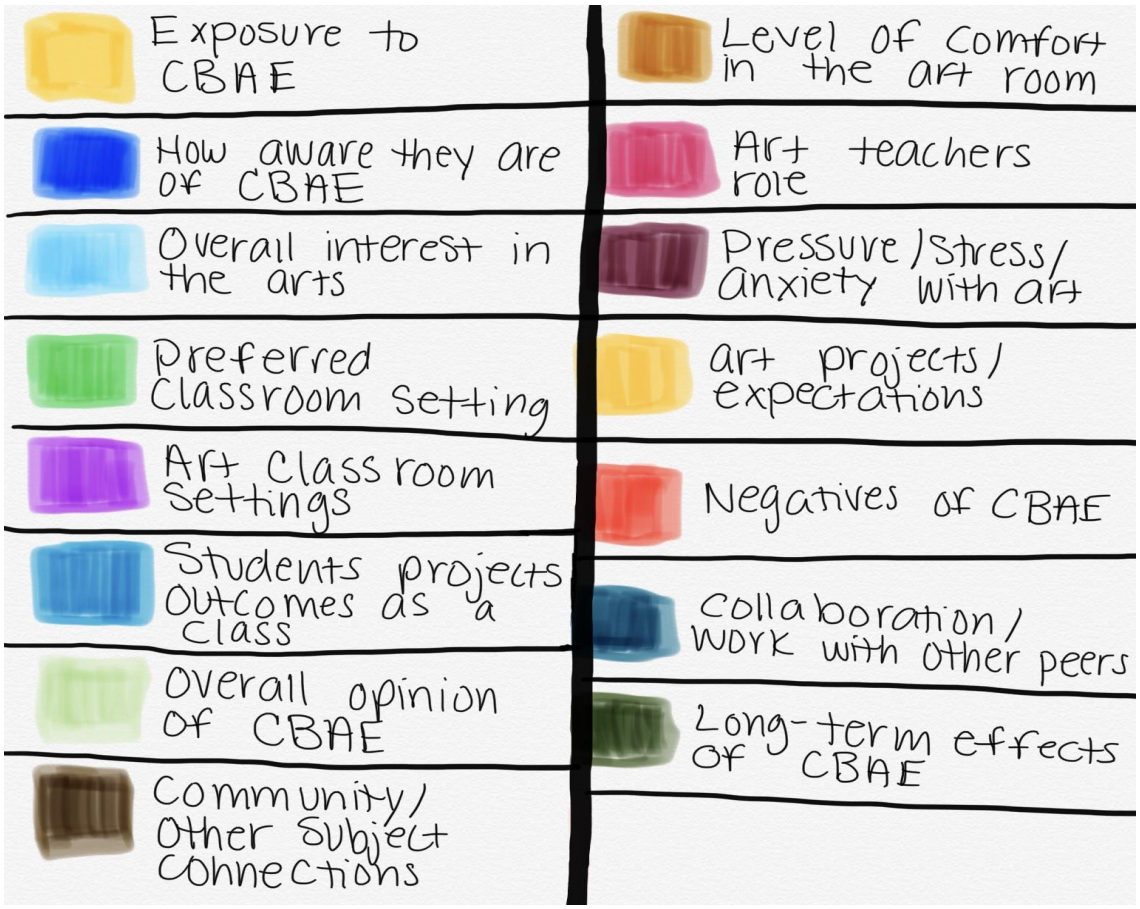


Figure 14. Former Student Participants Themes.

Former Students' Participant's background. The participants listed below were both exposed to the same art teacher during their High School careers. However, they were not exposed to the same CBAE approach during their elementary and middle school careers because they went to different schools. Their High School experience was similar in the sense that they had the same teacher and took the same classes but did not have the same classes together. It is evident that these two participants have different learning styles, overall interests in the arts, and in general, shows that someone can be exposed to the same approach yet have different interpretations.

Understanding the background of the participants in question allows for a general understanding of how different learning styles can react to this approach. I can be identified as the Yellow participant. Yellow stated that their preferred learning environment is when there is a

large number of interactions between peers, which allowed this participant feeling very comfortable in the art room. Orange stated that they enjoy more of a structured environment and only having to share a large table with one other former student participant. However, they still strived in a CBAE classroom as they enjoyed the fact that there was no pressure to be perfect. When Orange was asked if they were aware of CBAE beforehand, they stated they were not because they just assumed all art classes ran openly. It also shows that some students who have only been exposed to a CBAE approach think that there is no other way art can be taught.

Yellow Participant	**Response**
Exposure to CBAE	-"I have been exposed to CBAE for as long as I could remember. There were at times in elementary school when we had to follow exactly what the teacher presented. But as an artsy student, I usually went outside the box anyway. My teacher never really cared about that. I was really exposed to this approach during my High School career. This was when I basically had complete freedom and saw everyone's projects look different on critique day."
How Aware They are of CBAE	-"Honestly if you had asked me what CBAE is during my kindergarten through high school career I would have no idea what you were talking about. It took me until about my sophomore year to realize the type of teaching approach I was exposed to. I knew this was what I wanted my teaching philosophy to encompass after learning about this approach."
Overall Interest in the Arts	-"I have a very strong interest in the arts. It started from as early as four years old when I knew I wanted to be an art teacher. I teach art now and plan on enjoying the arts for many more years in the future."
Preferred Classroom Setting	-"I definitely strive when there is a large amount of interaction between students. I am not someone who likes to sit in there, sit all class and be lectured at. That is simply not how I learn. I like group settings and being able to sit wherever I want. The more interactive the better."
Overall Opinion of CBAE	-"I believe that CBAE works. It teaches students in a way that they are not used to learning. It takes students out of their comfort zone which is something I enjoy. It teaches students how to work collaboratively and it also helps them get an understanding of who they are as a learner. It makes them think outside the box and be unconventional."
Level of Comfort in the Art Room	-"Very comfortable. The art room was somewhere I always enjoyed. I spent many lunches and study hall periods in the art room."

Pressure/Stress/Anxiety with Art	-"If anything, art was and is the reason I have minimal stress or anxiety in my life. I have not once felt overwhelmed by the art room."

Figure 15. Yellow Participant Background.

Orange Participant	**Response**
Exposure to CBAE	-"I am trying to think back to elementary and middle school. Like, we kind of had choice in middle in elementary and middle school, it was definitely more structured, like, okay. Here's the example kind of going based off of the example. But as we got older, like in six to eighth grade, we did have more choices when it came to, um, like our projects. Like you would have like the example, you didn't have to do exactly what she did. And my art teacher always said like, there's no mistakes in art. So, like, if it was something that she didn't necessarily tell you to do, it wasn't like wrong or anything, she would just let you continue doing it. Um, so probably I would say more since like sixth grade was probably more choice-based and then into high school was choice-based definitely."
How Aware They are of CBAE	-"Honestly, no, because, well, because I thought that that's just how our class was because that's really the only type of art classes I've ever had. Like my teachers weren't super strict on what we had to do, but I just assumed that that's how all art was that you kind of like had a general guideline and then, you know, did your project kind of like it, but you could do kind of whatever you wanted at the same time."
Overall Interest in the Arts	-"Honestly, I do love art, yeah." Yellow: "Do you do art in your free time?" Orange: "Not so much anymore? More like in middle school and high school? Definitely. I mean, with being in college, I don't have a lot of free time, but I did order that paint by numbers for the summer. So I'm really excited."
Preferred Classroom Setting	-"Okay. Yeah, I like it more when there's like two people at a desk and you can choose who you're sitting with because the worst is when you're always paired up with somebody who like either you're not friends with or like don't get along at all. It kind of makes class miserable at times. So, and, but then also only having one other person at the same, like a big desk as it gives you enough space to do your own work, but there's also somebody there to like chat with during class, or like ask a question if you're confused. So I definitely like that better than like sitting totally isolated by yourself."

	(Response in regard to liking a structured environment) -"Yes and no. Yes, because I'm somebody who I like to know exactly what I need to do. And I, I like to be given directions and know like, okay, first you're going to do this. Then you're going to do that, blah, blah, blah, or like, um, you know, okay, here's the PowerPoint, we're going to learn about it. And then we're going to apply it. Like, I like that kind of stuff, but I also do like learning at my own pace. So now with like virtual school, having a lot of asynchronous lectures, I like to be able to watch the lecture on my own time, pause it, rewind, go back to that kind of stuff, and then get into class and actually apply it. I'm like, yeah."
Overall Opinion of CBAE	-"Yeah. I liked it a lot because it did take a lot of pressure off of being perfect because there wasn't like a specific thing you had to live up to. So I liked that. And then I also liked just the freedom to kind of do whatever I wanted with whatever medium I had to use, because in a lot of other classes, it is so like regimented on, like, you have to do this and you have to meet this criteria and this, this and that, where like having more of a choice in art kind of made it more enjoyable and allowed you to be more creative because if it didn't turn out the way you wanted to, well, that's okay because that's kind of just how art is not like you're not held to, okay, well you picked this at the beginning, so it has to look exactly like this at the end. So I definitely liked having more of a choice when it came to like, um, the different like aspects of the project and things like that. It definitely made it more fun and not inspiring. What's the word like create creative, like a lot more creativity with it. Yeah." -"I liked it. Honestly. I remember one year I had art first period. It was like the best way to start your day because you kind of just got to like, hang out, do some artwork, like super relaxed. You kind of, you were working on a project that you wanted to work on because you got to choose parts of it to make it like your own. And if you didn't like it, you could change it to something else. So it was like a really nice way to just start the day, like really relaxed and not being stressed out. Like, Oh my gosh, I have to take all these notes. Or like I have a test next period or something. Like, I never worried about my other classes while I was in art. It was kind of like an escape from the rest of the day."
Level of Comfort in the Art Room	(Response to if they were comfortable in the art room) -"Yeah, definitely. I felt like I could just like, kind of get up and get whatever I needed whenever, and it wasn't like a super formal environment. Like a lot of other classes are where it's kind of like you

	stay in your seat unless the teacher tells you, you can like get up. So, it was definitely a lot more casual, and I definitely felt very comfortable in the art room."
Pressure/Stress/Anxiety with Art	-"I kind of felt like, I mean, I probably put more pressure on myself because I knew what level I could, you know, do it to. But the teacher never made me feel like my artwork was bad, kind of. But as long as you put in effort and it showed, and you showed him that you were putting in effort and you were obviously doing the project during class time and like trying your best, um, then like I never really felt pressured to like, be perfect or do the perfect piece of art or anything like that. No." -"And then like, probably the one thing that was like stressful, if you could even call it stressful was like, meeting a deadline. Like only a week or two weeks or something. If you did not like, get the project to where you wanted to be, but you had to hand it in anyway. So, like mainly just like timeframes."

Figure 16. Yellow Participant Background.

What CBAE entailed with their experience. Teachers implement CBAE differently in their classrooms. Even though these participants shared one common teacher throughout their academic careers, it did not always mean their interpretations are the same. These former student participants were never in the same class, being exposed to different classroom environments and peers. Each shared what day-to-day life was like inside their CBAE classrooms.

Yellow shared that their classroom was set up in a U-formation. This allowed for students to be able to see one another from across the room, which brought in a community feel. The outcomes of the projects were, for the most part, all different. Maybe in the beginner classes there were some similarities with the end results. Yellow went on to say that the teacher acted more as a guide and that the expectation for each project was maybe to either follow a certain medium to use or follow a certain prompt. This means the teacher was using a medium-range CBAE approach.

Orange stated that in their experience, their classroom had big tables that were set up in a U-formation. There was always supplies out to grab and the more expensive materials were in the art closet. Orange stated that everyone's project was different and that there was never an example they had to follow. They stated that their teacher made everyone feel calm and comfortable, but there was still an understanding that they were the teacher, not their friend. They went on to state that their art projects were open, in the case where if you made a mistake, you could follow where that mistake was leading the art piece. Lastly, Orange stated that they never got up to ask peers around the room for artistic help. Yellow stated that is something they did frequently in the art room.

Yellow Participant	Response
Art Classroom Setting	- "In our class the desks were set up in a U-formation. This is so students were able to see each other when they looked up, which I felt made the classroom feel like a community setting. Then in the middle of the U was tables for art supplies. There were four sinks and there were your basic art supplies in the front of the room."
Students Projects Outcomes as a Class	-"Maybe in the beginner classes the artwork could look similar. But once the school year went on in those classes the artwork started to all look very different on critique day. There were no two projects that looked exactly alike."
Community/Other Subject Connections	-"This happened very rarely. Maybe there would be a connection to math every now and then, but it was never like the teachers planned for that to happen."
Art Teachers Role	-"My art teachers, if we had a question on how to do something, would never just do it for us. They would always be there to act as a guide and help us to get the results that we wanted."
Art Projects/Expectations	-"We had so many different types of art projects. We had a pointillism one, a zoomed in charcoal drawing, a plaster project, then there were clay projects, the list was endless. Maybe the expectation was to follow a certain medium or a certain art prompt, but the expectation was to create your own individual piece."
Collaboration/Work	-"I frequently went around the classroom to see what peers were

with Other Peers	doing. Regardless of who I was sitting next to we would always bounce ideas off one another. There was a community feeling in the classroom. Students would always be open to sharing input.”

Figure 17. Yellow Participant CBAE experience.

Orange Participant	**Response**
Art Classroom Setting	-”Yeah, there was definitely always art supplies available. I know, like, I think there were some things that you had to ask for because they were just more expensive or more dangerous, like an Exacto Knife. Those weren't just like lying around or anything, but like colored pencils, erasers, like I remember there were like stacks of magazines you could go to if you needed them for an assignment.” -”Um, in like middle school, it was like big tables, just kind of all lined up in like an L shape or, or U shaped. And there were kids on either side and you kind of just sat wherever you wanted. And then in high school it was like that U shaped, but kids were only on one side of the table. And then like the instructor, like art supplies was in the center of the room. Um, and there were only like two kids to like one of the tables that were next to each other. Like, it kind of was like all one big long table, I guess you could say.”
Students Projects Outcomes as a Class	-”No, not really. Because everybody's project looked so different. Like nobody had a project that looked like somebody else's in the class, even though we were all doing like stippling, or we were all doing watercolor, like everybody's looked so different. So, there wasn't pressure to be like, there wasn't like an example. And you had to be exactly like the example. So, like there wasn't any pressure for that. No.”
Community/Other Subject Connections	(Response when asked about community or other classroom connections) -”Not in any of the classes that I took with the specific teacher, because it was more like, entry-level art classes. So, um, like we did some projects that had to do with like geometric shapes and stuff, but it was never linked directly to like math in any way or like, um, there was one project about like your heritage, but it was never really centered or connected around like a history class or lesson. So, like not, not really no.”
Art Teachers Role	-”Um, he really wanted to make everybody feel calm, comfortable, and kind of like the art room was like a safe space I felt like. Um, and not that he wanted to be friends with us, like we still understood that he was our teacher, like there was still that line there. But he really made you feel comfortable to just kind of like,

	joke around, have fun in art, like not take yourself super seriously." -"Just because again, he was more of a relaxed teacher and there was not that pressure to be like, perfect. Basically, like if you put in the effort, he could tell you put in the effort and your assignment was done on time, you are not going to fail the class."
Art Projects/Expectations	-"But then also it being more of a choice based like we got to pick what type or what, like, like if it was a landscape we could pick the landscape. You could kind of always change it to suit the way you wanted to do it. Or if something got messed up, you could then just change the art piece to be more of like what it is turning into."
Collaboration/Work with Other Peers	-"Um, you could definitely, like, I definitely ask the people next to me for help or advice on like what to do or if I was like doing the technique. Right. Kind of thing. We never like got up and walked around in the classroom, like during the actual, like working on the project. But I remember at the end, once we, like, on the day you handed it in, they would all be laid down, like without the names on them. And he would just call on like a random person to pick out whichever one, they liked the best for like, whatever reason, as long as it wasn't their own. And then kind of do like three things you really liked about it. And then three, like critiques, not things they could do better, but maybe like, if it was like, um, some type of like, what's it called? Like when you take the pen, like you're just using lines to like create the picture. Yeah. So maybe if like their line work wasn't as good or they didn't touch all sides of the paper. Maybe like the proportions were off on something like that kind of stuff. So, we got critique and like group work that way. But I would say during the actual class, it was mainly just with whoever was sitting right next to you and then like the teacher walking around."

Figure 18. Orange Participant CBAE experience.

Opinions after being exposed to a CBAE approach. The former student participants in this research shared what they felt the negatives and long-term effects of CBAE are after being exposed to such an approach. Yellow states that their prominent negative they remember from art was wondering when the due date would be for their next project. This is because they wanted their project to look good, in which they hoped they would receive a significant amount of time. Where Orange stated a similar negative by stating; "And then like, probably the one

thing that was like stressful, if you could even call it stressful was like, meeting a deadline. Like only a week or two weeks or something. If you did not like, get the project to where you wanted to be, but you had to hand it in any way. So, like mainly just like timeframes". This aligns with the teacher participants when they share timing as a negative when it comes to implementing CBAE.

Since these participants are out of their kindergarten to high school academic careers, their response to how this approach has affected them beyond the classroom is crucial. Orange stated that it is difficult to say they do specific things due to a CBAE approach. They did follow up by saying when they are doing art projects on their own, they are not too hard on themselves to get their art project specifically right. Where Yellow was significantly impacted by a CBAE approach, they are able to have unique input on citations and are more open to peer suggestions. This approach gave this participant the confidence they felt they needed in themselves.

Yellow Participant	**Response**
Negatives of CBAE	-"I felt there were very little negatives after being exposed to a CBAE approach. The one thing I remember was it was always so nerve racking finding out when the due date for the next project would be. Since we all wanted our projects to look good, we always hoped we would have a lot of time. But sometimes that was not the case."
Long-Term Effects of CBAE	-"I feel there are plenty of long term effects when it comes to CBAE. I believe because of CBAE I know how to have unique input in situations, I am more open to peer suggestions, and also learned what kind of learner I was. I realized that being different is a good thing and makes you unique. It overall just gave me the confidence I needed in myself."

Figure 19. Yellow Participant CBAE opinion.

Orange Participant	**Response**

Negatives of CBAE	-"And then like, probably the one thing that was like stressful, if you could even call it stressful was like, meeting a deadline. Like only a week or two weeks or something. If you did not like, get the project to where you wanted to be, but you had to hand it in anyway. So like mainly just like timeframes."
Long-Term Effects of CBAE	-"Yeah. I mean, there are a lot of things that I do that are similar to like a choice-based approach, but I don't know if it's because of the choice-based approach. Like, I like the asynchronous lectures that I'm in now because I get to choose like when I'm doing that and stuff like that, the problem is, is a lot of stuff in my life is not choice-based like, especially with my major right now it's very like regimented and stuff. So, I don't have a lot of choice. Um, and that kind of stresses me out at times, but yeah, I don't, I don't know if anything has been specifically influenced by taking a choice base or yeah. Choice-based approach art class other than maybe like how I view art in general." -"Like if I'm to do like, cause I do like doing, you know, my own little like craft and like art projects and stuff. Well, I'm not very hard on myself to get it specifically right. Or do it a certain way. And it's kind of like, however it ends up is how it ends up. So that I guess has been influenced by it because that's kind of how I've always thought art is supposed to be just kind of like, it is what it is. Like you start out one way, it might end up totally different, but that's okay because it's art, like that's how it's supposed to be."

Figure 20. Orange Participant CBAE opinion.

Former Students' Participant's Artifacts. Artifacts were collected solely from the two former student participants who were exposed to CBAE throughout their kindergarten to High School experience. *Figure 21* and *Figure 22* shows artworks that the former student participants completed during their High School careers.

The artwork shown on the left in *Figure 21* is what Yellow had completed at the beginning of their High School career, and the artwork on the right in *Figure 21* was completed at the end of their High School career. On the right in *Figure 21* is an artwork that was done in a

more advanced art class, in comparison to the artwork shown on the left, which was done during a less advanced art class. The beginner class was taken their sophomore year of High School and the advanced artwork was taken their senior year of High School. In *Figure 22,* the artwork shown on the left was completed during Orange's freshman year of High School and done in a beginner class. Where the artwork on the right was taken during their junior year in a more advanced art class. These artworks will be compared through observing the use of elements and principles of design and the overall confidence the artwork shows. Size and the overall use of the composition will also play a factor. The artworks were chosen to be observed using these factors because the elements and principles of design are a crucial part of the arts. It is crucial to have an understanding of these in order to truly understand the artwork you are creating.

Figure 21. Yellow Participant Artifacts.

Yellow Participant Artifacts. The left image in *Figure 21* shows the participants' artifacts from the beginning of their academic year. It is evident that this student is not new to the art room and that they have taken art previously. That is stated because due to the use of the elements and principles, the bold colors, and the overall line work of this piece, it shows that it took practice. It seems that the composition is taken up nicely, as the viewer's eye always has something to focus on. There is a contrast between the use of color in some areas and with some areas the lack thereof. However, the composition is not completely unique.

The artist more than likely has seen a peacock before, leaving them to come up with the idea of this piece. There may have been a reference photo as the participant worked, where on the right, there is a composition that we never might have seen before. The colors are vibrant, and the composition is unique but what stands out the most is the attention to the viewer's interpretation of the piece. There is meaning behind this piece. When an artist makes a meaningful piece that makes something as strong as a political standpoint, that takes courage, as it is easy to receive backlash. Yellow stated that it could be due to a CBAE approach that they were able to build up the courage to make a political piece. However, this artist's use of color and line was strong from the beginning, but they are used in a completely different way towards the end of their High School career.

Figure 22. Orange Participant Artifacts.

Orange participants artifacts. The left image in *Figure 22* shows the Orange participant's beginning of the year artwork where on the right is the end of the year artwork. These artworks are drastically different from Yellow's artifacts. On the left, the composition is not as inviting. The colors are stagnant, and the use of line is at a beginner level. The elements and principles are strong, but not as strong as the artwork that was completed at the end of the year.

In the image on the right in *Figure 22* there is a strong use of color, contrast, and line work. Strong line work is evident in the coral in the background. In the artwork shown on the left, it is clear that the linework appears shaky. There is confidence in the piece shown on the right that does not shine through as strongly in the piece on the left. The participant went for a composition that will grab the viewer on the right, it is clear primarily through the colors this artist chose. Again, this confidence grew as the year advanced, which was shared in a candid conversation.

Data Analysis

Coding Strategies

The data analysis process began with thematic and axial coding. This type of coding was used for my interviews, researcher-reflection journal, and artifacts that were collected. When coding my interviews, I read through each interview and provided each common theme with a specific color. As I went through the transcriptions, I looked for themes that related to one another, also known as sub-themes. This allowed me to pull direct quotes from my participants and place them in their specific matrices.

Thematic coding allowed me to break a large amount of information about my research into small categories. These small categories allowed me as the researcher to thoroughly understand the commonalities and differences each participant shared. Breaking the data into themes allowed me to create matrices which made it easier to comprehend my data.

Axial coding was another form of coding used to break down each theme in order to gather a thorough understanding of how these themes relate to each other. This allowed me to compare themes that emerged naturally during the coding process with each other.

Coding Strategies Revealing Information

The coding strategies discussed above allowed the reader of the transcripts to guide the natural themes that emerged. Before starting the coding process, there were set themes in my mind that I thought would emerge, however, I primarily allowed my data collection to show the emerging themes. Having the interviews, for example, be semi-structured allowed for themes the participants encouraged to emerge. Using these coding strategies allowed me to find these themes and draw attention to them. Having these themes emerge naturally, also known as inductive analysis, from the transcriptions allowed me to compare what was written in my researcher-reflection journal to see if there were any similarities.

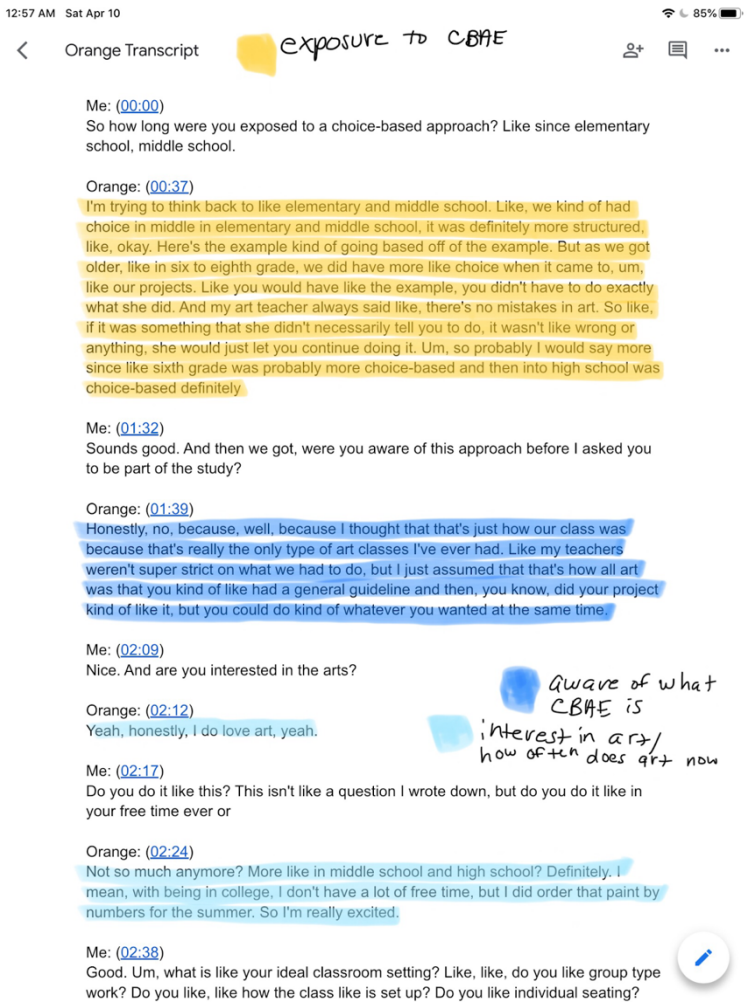


Figure 23. Coding example.

As shown in *Figure 23,* as coding took place, there were natural themes emerging. *Figure 23* shows natural color coordination taking place as the transcript is being coded. There were notes taken as to what these themes can be categorized as.

Connection of Data Sets

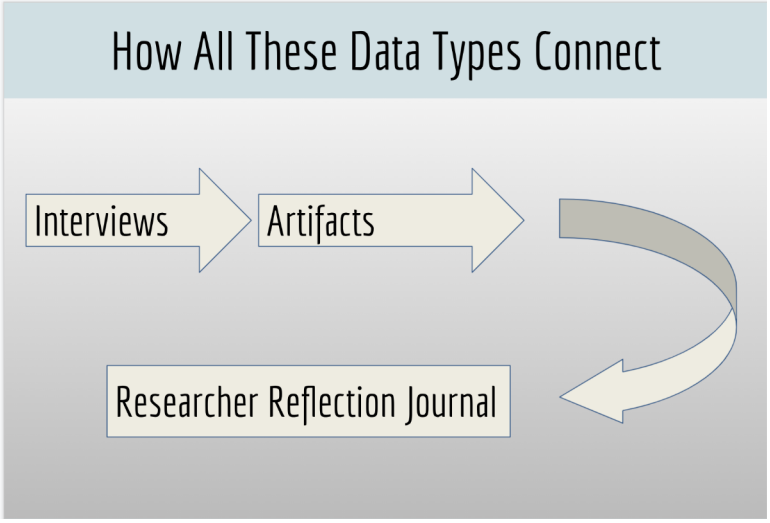


Figure 24. How All These Data Types Connect.

These data types were intentionally used in order to all connect. The interviews took place in which that supported the artifacts I collected, which allowed me to reflect on both the interview and artifact experience in my researcher-reflection journal. A researcher-reflection journal was intentionally used to answer questions asked in the interview process in order to connect these data results. Former student participants' artifacts were used in order to create a visual of what was discussed during the interviewing process. Themes discovered in artifacts overlapped with the ones found in the interview questions as the art pieces show the confidence the artist developed in the art room. These participants shared their level of comfort when it came to the art room environment during the interview process and the end product of their artwork shows the confidence they had. Even though each form of data collection was used to support one another, interviews were the primary source of data collection. Allowing my researcher-reflection journal and artifacts to act as a support.

Left to Complete by Way of Analysis

There is still an abundance to be found about CBAE. Ways that more information can be found is through going into art teachers' classrooms who use this teaching style and observing their class. This will allow the researcher to witness firsthand students' reactions along with analyzing the overall classroom environment. Observations was a data collection method I was unable to employ due to the global pandemic. There can also be a deeper understanding of what the long-term effects of CBAE are by interviewing a large population of those who have been exposed to this approach.

Summary of Findings

Through journaling, I was able to compare the similarities and differences my participants and I shared. I was able to answer the same questions I had asked my participants, allowing me to find common themes naturally. My results from these findings were that even though I share the common factor with my participants of being exposed to CBAE, either as a student or teacher, that we all have different relationships with this approach to teaching.

The result of sharing different experiences of CBAE with my participants is for the sole purpose of how diverse the implication of CBAE can be. Not one teacher teaches CBAE the same. This result became evident after my former student participant interview. The former student participant chosen for this research experienced the same teacher as I during our high school careers. After leaving this interview, I realized we had plenty of differences when it came to our interpretations of CBAE. This result is likely because this participant interpreted the approach differently. This may have occurred because, due to the choice spectrum, choice can vary on how it can be portrayed in a classroom. This teacher may have had different approaches of CBAE to use in each class.

When I began collecting data for my research, it became clear right from the beginning that there is more to CBAE than I had initially thought. It is a method that is more time-consuming to implement, there are positives and negatives to sort through, and overall, my participants taught me that CBAE may not work for all students due to the openness of this approach. I strongly believed that there would be little to no negative reactions to CBAE, after my first interview, my perception of this approach changed. As a teacher implementing CBAE in their first year of teaching and hearing from other teachers who did the same, it is evident that these teachers are masters at their craft.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FIELD

Introduction to findings.

The findings that are shown throughout this chapter are provided through data collection of interviews, artifacts, and a researcher-reflection journal. Themes in the interviews were found after transcription, then using coding methods which allowed themes to emerge naturally. The next step of coding was my researcher-reflection journal after artifacts were coded. Data was analyzed in this particular order because the interviews were the main source of data collection. Allowing the interviews to show the natural themes that emerged allowed me to be familiar with themes that may emerge in the rest of the data to be coded. In the following sections, to make claims stronger where needed, there will be data to support the claim.

Presentation of findings.

Context of research question. Initially, when starting this research, it was evident that CBAE was a topic that I wanted to explore further. However, it was puzzling for me how to exactly study this subject in depth. When reflecting on my teaching philosophy, it overcame me how other teachers, like myself, incorporated CBAE into their teaching philosophies. As I was reflecting on CBAE as a student, another subject overcame me, as I was wondering if there were other students who were able to grow outside the classroom specifically due to a CBAE approach. After reflecting on my candid experiences in my researcher-reflection journal and being part of these interviews, it became clear that there are many people just like myself who notice the benefits CBAE entails.

The first research question presented puts into question, how a first-year art educator who has experienced Choice-Based Art Education in their Kindergarten through college experience might incorporate these ideas into their teaching pedagogy or philosophy. Aside from my own

experience, my teacher participants were able to provide information regarding how a first-year teacher is able to incorporate this approach into their teaching practices. Even though both participants, Green and Blue, were not exposed to this approach Kindergarten through college, they were still able to share their experiences as first-year teachers. Where I, as the researcher, was able to provide a different perspective being that I was exposed beforehand.

Looking at the context of the question in regard to how first-year teachers can incorporate this type of approach into their teaching pedagogy, Green shared that their teaching practice focuses on having students be well-rounded individuals, in which they believe CBAE will teach them just that. Green stated, ”So when it is done correctly, it helps them grow to become better problem solvers and better like, just more interesting members of society. It helps them understand things, interpret things” (Interview, 2021). Not only did Green center their teaching practice around having students become more interesting members of society, but it was also important for their students to understand how to be well-rounded artists as well. Green stated “I love that I could go a little bit more in-depth with some lessons. I love that, like, I just wanted to teach them about embroidery, then I just did it” (Interview, 2021). Even though Green was not exposed to this approach throughout their academic career, they still had a strong understanding of what CBAE entails, which was primarily what I wanted from participants.

Blue shares the potential that they see in their students. Eliminating teacher control and having students show their potential is an important factor in implementing CBAE in their classroom. Blue adds to Greens statements by sharing,

> But then just like really realizing that everybody has some kind of potential, has something to share, something to offer. And then just like finding that versus like, telling

> them what they are supposed to be doing or like that, that like a pinnacle they are supposed to be reaching. Like, you know, maybe their pinnacles, like are an inch tall, you know? Um, and really like digging for that. (Interview, 2021)

Blues teaching philosophy was focused primarily on having students find their own interests in the art room. They would prefer their students to make mistakes and learn from it, rather than have them be in a learning environment where that is not acceptable.

Yellow has been exposed to CBAE during their Kindergarten through college experience. Green and Blue may not have been exposed to CBAE earlier, however, it is an approach they have been able to learn quickly and adapt appropriately. Yellow shared that,

> CBAE is such a unique type of learning environment that it is difficult to compare it to other approaches. In comparison to DBAE, for example, DBAE is a very one way of doing art. Where students more than likely are copying someone else's artwork. There are stricter rules with DBAE, such as, what materials should be used, how students can move throughout the classroom, and so on. CBAE has been a major influence on my teaching philosophy as I focus on the classroom being like a community. I want to teach students about a wide range of artists and experiment with different mediums. I feel CBAE aligned accordingly, where other approaches, in my opinion, do not compare. (Journal, 2021)

Yellow took what they have been exposed to in their previous academic career and mimicked that in their teaching practice. The yearn to want students to experiment and feel like a community, in their opinion, is what CBAE is all about. Regardless of exposure to CBAE beforehand, teachers are able to incorporate CBAE into their teaching philosophies with their

desire to want students to feel like the art room is a safe space for them. This is where they are able to make mistakes and ask questions, hence why these teachers stand true as CBAE art educators.

This research also put into question how the artistic behaviors learned in a CBAE classroom might present themselves outside of the art classroom. My former student participant, Orange, was able to provide insight on how art has impacted them outside of the classroom. Having myself be an art educator, and my former student participant does not have a path in the arts, allowed for a diverse perspective on this outcome.

Orange was able to share how CBAE overall affected them and how they incorporate this approach into their everyday life beyond the classroom. Even though Orange did not feel comfortable in stating that they do specific actions specifically due to a CBAE approach they were comfortable in stating,

> Like if I'm to do like, cause I do like doing, you know, my own little like crafts and like art projects and stuff. Well, I'm not very like hard on myself to get it like specifically right or do it a certain way. And it's kind of like, however it ends up is how it ends up. So that I guess has been influenced by it because that's kind of how I've always thought art is supposed to be just kind of like, it is what it is. Like you start out one way, it might end up totally different, but that's okay because it's art, like that's how it's supposed to be. (Interview, 2021)

Even though Orange was not able to specifically comment on further areas CBAE claims to support students beyond the classroom, Orange was still comfortable in stating that they still have a love for art because of CBAE. Due to CBAE, this participant is able to rely on art as a stress-free hobby. Even though I wanted an in-depth explanation on how CBAE affected this

participant beyond the classroom, they were still able to answer the question as to how CBAE has impacted them. Regardless of CBAE leaving a small impact on this participant beyond the classroom, it was overall still able to leave its mark. CBAE, however, left a different mark on myself beyond the classroom.

To follow, my comment on the long-terms effects of CBAE is,

> I feel there are plenty of long-term effects when it comes to CBAE. I believe because of CBAE I know how to have unique input in situations, I am more open to peer suggestions, and also learned what kind of learner I was. I realized that being different is a good thing and makes you unique. It overall just gave me the confidence I needed in myself. (Journal, 2021)

I am able to state that due to a CBAE approach, I have noticed myself voicing unique input in certain situations. CBAE not only taught me how I learn best but has also prepared me for how I can adapt my learning environment in order to retain the most information. Lastly, due to the abundance of critiques given in the CBAE classroom, I am now more open to peer suggestions. In the CBAE classroom, peer feedback was viewed as a positive, leaving me to not be insulted by constructive feedback.

Lastly this research addressed the overall positives and negatives of implementing CBAE into the classroom. This is both from the teacher participants' and the former student participants' perspectives. In order to have a well-rounded understanding of the approach, it was important to hear both sides of implementing this method. Positives and negatives will be shared by all participants.

Green shared that CBAE can help students become better problem solvers, better interpreters, and become more interesting members of society. There is a freedom for both the

student's and the teacher with a CBAE approach. Green stated, "I love the freedom of it. I love that I can just write one lesson plan for a month and a half for first through fifth grade, that is awesome" (Interview, 2021). To continue, Green shared, "They enjoy centers, they really do. They love that freedom" (Interview, 2021). Freedom was a word that was frequently used throughout Green's interview.

Green also shared the negatives of implementing this approach by sharing,

> It's the younger kids that need the boundaries for CBAE, big time. Not like boundaries as in what materials to do but how to respect them, how to clean them up, and when to clean them up. That was my biggest thing I had to enforce with them. (Interview, 2021)

Since this particular teacher teaches at the elementary level, it took a lot of time for the students to fully grasp how to properly care for materials, along with how to properly clean these materials up. Implying that implementing this approach in the younger grades may take a bit more of class time to have your students fully grasp the concept of CBAE.

Blue and Yellow adds to the negatives of CBAE as well. Blue shared; "I think for me personally, timing and transitions are hard because everybody is essentially doing a different project. People finish at different times" (Interview, 2021). To add, Yellow shared in their journal,

> I have found through my teaching of CBAE so far that when they say CBAE is time consuming, I have to agree. It has been difficult ranging where students are on projects. Some students get work done literally the next day. Some students hand things in a couple days later after spending class time working. It has been difficult with the hybrid model of teaching to kind of keep track of everyone and timing. (Journal, 2021)

A commonality between Blue and Yellow's perspective is timing. With CBAE comes a lot of responsibility on gauging where students are on a project. If students are done well before the deadline, the teacher needs to have an understanding of how to occupy these students. With such a wide range of possibilities to accomplish one project, it is almost impossible to have each student finish at the exact time.

However, Yellow and Blue also share strong positives when it comes to implementing CBAE into their classrooms. They continued to share:

> Blue: I definitely do think that it is successful. I think it means engagement. I think that like everybody is doing something to the best of their abilities. Like being present in this space, I think that is successful. Just like everyone, like nobody feeling like they are not welcome there. Like in that space, like I just cannot stand when people say they are not artistic. (Interview, 2021)

> Yellow: The students could all have the same ideas for a project and yet they could all turn out completely differently. I will give the students a general prompt for example, and they will just run with it. (Journal, 2021)

Being present in their environment is so important for an art classroom. This is where students are generating new ideas and having creative freedom. In order for students to perform at their best, they need to be present. As a result, students work will look different from their peers, which gives students confidence as they were the ones who created a unique piece of art.

From a student's perspective, Yellow and Orange were both able to comment on the positives of CBAE. They both shared,

> Orange: Yeah. I liked it a lot because it did take a lot of pressure off of being perfect because there wasn't like a specific thing you had to live up to. So I liked that. And then I also liked just the freedom to kind of do whatever I wanted with whatever medium I had to use, because in a lot of other classes, it is so like regimented on, like, you have to do this and you have to meet this criteria and this, this and that, where like having more of a choice in art kind of made it more enjoyable and allowed you to be more creative because if it didn't turn out the way you wanted to, well, that's okay because that's kind of just how art is not like you're not held to, okay, well you picked this at the beginning, so it has to look exactly like this at the end. So, I definitely liked having more of a choice when it came to like, um, the different like aspects of the project and things like that. It definitely made it more fun and not inspiring, what's the word like create creative, like a lot more creativity with it. Yeah. (Interview, 2021)

> Yellow: I believe that CBAE works. It teaches students in a way that they are not used to learning. It takes students out of their comfort zone which is something I enjoy. It teaches students how to work collaboratively and it also helps them get an understanding of who they are as a learner. It makes them think outside the box and be unconventional. (Journal, 2021)

CBAE has strongly impacted these former student participants. Overall, these students were able to feel comfortable in the art room and have a positive outlook on art after being exposed to this approach.

To follow, there were negatives that they felt in the art classroom as well. Meeting deadlines was a common factor between the two participants. Their perspectives on the negatives of CBAE are as follows,

> Orange: And then like, probably the one thing that was like stressful, if you could even call it stressful was like, meeting a deadline. Like only a week or two weeks or something. If you did not like, get the project to where you wanted to be, but you had to hand it in anyway. So, like mainly just like timeframes. (Interview, 2021).

> Yellow: I felt there were very little negatives after being exposed to a CBAE approach. The one thing I remember was it was always so nerve racking finding out when the due date for the next project would be. Since we all wanted our projects to look good, we always hoped we would have a lot of time. But sometimes that was not the case. (Journal, 2021)

With every approach comes negatives and positives. Negatives being timing, scaffolding, and students feeling overwhelmed with the amount of freedom. Positives being that students feel safe in the art classroom and enjoy making art that is unique to them. Every teacher who implements this approach will have a different outcome. As a student who was exposed to this approach, there was no greater feeling than walking into a stress-free classroom. Now, as a teacher teaching a CBAE classroom, there are different obstacles to face every day, but at the end of each day, I am confident they are worth facing. Through an autoethnographic study, I aimed to answer these questions fully through self-reflection in my researcher-reflection journal, interviews, and answering interview questions myself, allowing for the research questions to be answered in full.

Context of literature sources from Chapter II. The questions posed to my participants were created primarily with the literature sources from Chapter II in mind. Data collected from my researcher-reflection journal also supports the literature from Chapter II. Through these findings, I found similarities with the literature presented. Overall, the students' comfort level in the art room was strong, as most students enjoy the environment.

Andrews, who wrote, *Art and Ideas: Reaching Nontraditional Art Students* (2001), *Art, Reflection, and Creativity in the Classroom* (2005), and *Student Ownership: Learning in a Student-Centered Art Room* (2010), stressed how students can take what they have learned in a CBAE classroom and apply these skills beyond the classroom. In terms of how this approach has impacted students on an emotional level, Andrews' (2005) shared a student's writing stating,

> I had a lot of problems at home and in my head. These problems led me to bulimia and depression. No matter what other people took from me mentally or physically, I always had my art to hold onto. I never trusted people so I need something; that something was art. (p. 38)

My data collection is in support of students finding mental comfort in the art room as well. Yellow stated the following about their CBAE teaching experience; "Students have been enjoying the environment, being that they come to my class on their off periods." Yellow went on to express their input from a student perspective stating, "If anything art was and is the reason, I have minimal stress or anxiety in my life. I have not once felt overwhelmed by the art room" (Journal, 2021). Art was a way for myself to cope and feel safe, I continue to aspire to have my students feel safe in the art classroom as well.

Andrews went beyond the classroom walls in order for their students to be involved in the community. Andrews (2005) did paintings in the school that the administration approved for

students to create murals in hallway wings related to that hallway's subject area (p. 36). Green, Blue, and Yellow did not have much experience with taking CBAE into the community or beyond their classroom.

Gates (2016) stated that their peer, Nate, had students' interest in the arts increase after changing their approach. Yellow was able to support this claim by stating,

> Students have created some very unique artwork. I feel it depends on the project. Some students just want to quickly do their work and be done with it. Most students really enjoy taking their time to complete their artwork to the best of their ability. Some students even like to keep their artwork in my classroom so others can see it and admire it. (Interview, 2021)

Yellow's experience supports Gates' (2016) claim that students are finding an interest in the arts after being exposed to a CBAE approach.

McElhany (2017) discusses the challenges she had with implementing a DBAE approach in her classroom when students could not understand why they simply could not do just what they wanted. However, Green seemed to have difficulties when having students do as they please at their centers. They stated,

> They do not know when to stop. And, so, that is the biggest issue that they will keep going, and going, and going. And wasting the materials and then they will say, "Oh, I hate it" and throw it away. (Interview, 2021)

This statement highlights how DBAE may be helpful for those teachers who do not want students wasting materials. Some students are so used to the structure of the school environment that when they come into a class with choice, it can be overwhelming for some students. As a result, they may spend time on one project, use a large number of materials, and still not like the

end result. A way to ease your students into a CBAE approach is by incorporating middle-range choice into your classroom. This still allows some structure for students, but also allows them to think of ideas on their own.

In terms of reevaluating teaching habits to suit present-day needs, Blue changes lesson plans as frequently as every year. Due to the pandemic, it has been difficult for them to gear lessons towards social issues. They stated, “Um, but I think that usually my projects have more societal meat to them. I think this year I had to claw that back a little bit” (Interview, 2021). Green seemed to gear their lessons daily on what they felt would best suit their students for that day. Yellow stated, “I always try to gear my lessons in a direction that my students will be interested in” (Interview, 2021). Overall, these participants main priority is their students and what they believe is the most important for them to learn from the lesson.

In terms of Choice-Based Art Education as a whole, my data collection supports Douglas’ (2018) statement that choice can be small, like allowing the students to choose the colors for their given project, or it can be a full-choice approach, where students are the ones with the most say in how their projects will look (Douglas, et al., 2018). This literature is strongly supported through my data collection as each participant seemed to implement choice somewhat differently. Green was adamant in using centers in their classroom. They stated:

> So, like, last year I was having like three months of centers. But I would have a different center open. Like some days, I would have painting open, some days I would have clay open, some days I would have printmaking, it would depend on my day, I guess. (Interview, 2021)

Blue and Yellow had slightly different inputs on CBAE implementation. Blue used more of a middle-range approach in their classroom. Blue stated the following about how they incorporate CBAE in their classroom,

> But usually, I found that it was best I guess what I was doing was partial choice or like middle choice. It was not a full choice. Um, so it would be like, you know, within this material do this, within this idea, you can, you know, experiment within there. Having something that was constant or consistent, whether that was material or, um, yeah, an idea. (Interview, 2021)

In contrast, Yellow allows mostly for free-range when it comes to student's art projects. They incorporate CBAE by sharing,

> Usually, I will teach a lesson about different artists. The artists I show vary depending on the lesson, but I usually always try to show at least one contemporary artist. I will show the students videos, lecture, have them take notes, and things like that. Then for the project it can be completely open, or I will tell them they have to follow a certain medium or a certain prompt. But they can do and create whatever they want based on that information. It has made all students create something completely different. (Interview, 2021)

Choice-Based Art Education can be implemented in many different ways. That being said, there will be different outcomes for each student. Reflecting on my former student participant Orange and myself, Yellow, we are a prime example of how two students can be exposed to a similar environment yet still have different outcomes.

Context of research environment. Being that a majority of the research collected was through the comfort of my own environment, I felt I was able to gather research comfortably.

The environment in which this research was administered was crucial as I wanted to make my participants feel comfortable. I felt more information would be gathered if they felt safe. On my end, conducting a researcher-reflection journal, it was comforting to reflect on these thoughts in a safe space. It allowed me to be more candid in my journal. There were also times when I would write down candid thoughts on paper when I was in the school environment, which is also a safe space for me.

In terms of what my findings reveal about my participants' classrooms, it is evident that each participant has a different type of classroom environment. For example, Green shared that they actively use centers in their classroom. Green did not share much on how their classroom is set up. However, since they have shared that they use centers in their class, it can be assumed that the tables are set up into pairs.

Yellow and Blue were very similar in their classroom arrangements. Both participants aspired to have a community feeling in their classroom where students are facing one another. Allowing students to engage in conversations naturally and also allow students to see their peer's artwork. Yellow and Blue state,

> Yellow: This year has been difficult to set my room up the way I would prefer due to COVID restrictions. Students are required to be six feet apart from one another. However, my ideal way to set up the classroom would be a U-shape. This would allow students to candidly interact with one another as they would be facing each other. (Interview, 2021)
>
> Blue: Um, so yeah, normally my classroom is set up where it is like groupings of tables. Or I did a U-format, which was pretty nice too. So, everybody has their own workspace

> and then materials are in centers around the classroom for that student to access. (Interview, 2021)

Yellow and Blue both shared the similarity of having students being together in some form. Whether that be in a U-format or groupings, which is different from the typical row set up that we commonly see in schools.

Context of researcher as practitioner. After reflecting in my researcher-reflection journal and answering questions that were asked in my interviews, I was able to compare and contrast my results with my participants. What I was able to find is the commonality of time being a negative, this commonality was primarily shared with Blue who stated "Timing, transitions, scaffolding, like how much is too much? Especially with younger students, like where they just want to try something and move on" (Interview, 2021). I share my experience by stating,

> I have found through my teaching of CBAE so far that when they say CBAE is time consuming, I have to agree. It has been difficult ranging where students are on projects. Some students get work done literally the next day. Some students hand things in a couple days later after spending class time working. It has been difficult with the hybrid model of teaching to kind of keep track of everyone and timing. (Interview, 2021)

Sharing this similarity with a teacher who has been in the field for two years longer has made me aware that this can be a prominent negative in CBAE.

In contrast to the negative views shared on CBAE, there were also positive views that I shared similar to my participants. Green and I shared freedom as a positive. Students have seemed to react well to being open with their projects and having free-range in the art classroom. Most students seemed to enjoy the process of creating the art and making their projects unique to

them. Students' artworks are able to be individualized, leaving each students work to look different from their peers. As a result, this makes discussing others artwork more engaging since each piece is unique.

In terms of reflecting on my experience as a student through this approach and my peers, we were able to share mostly similarities, but also a good amount of differences. A primary difference was the anxiety or stress level the art room brought. Orange shared a statement:

> I kind of felt like, I mean, I probably put more pressure on myself because I knew what level I could, you know, do it to. But the teacher never made me feel like my artwork was bad, kind of. But as long as you put in effort and it showed, and you showed him that you were putting in effort and you were obviously doing the project during class time and like trying your best, um, then like I never really felt pressured to like, be perfect or do the perfect piece of art or anything like that. No. (Interview, 2021)

Even though Orange did not feel the pressure from their teacher, there was this pressure they put on themself. Some may see that as a beneficial aspect of CBAE, that students care and want to do well. However, it is still an aspect of CBAE to take into consideration.

As a first-year art educator, being able to compare and contrast these factors with others in the field allows me to thoroughly understand what comes along with implementing a CBAE approach. There may be some teachers who are able to control time effectively in their CBAE classroom, however, in this case, this was a similarity. The difference between Orange and me allows for me, as the researcher, to see CBAE from a different perspective.

Context of researcher as self. I knew from an early age I wanted to be an art educator. The earliest I could remember knowing that this career was for me was four years old. The art room has always been a safe space for me, as I aspire as an educator now to provide that for my

students as well. Similar to my former student participant, who shared that they always felt art class was just supposed to be taught in an open environment, this thought came to an end once I started my undergraduate career. This is where we learned about various approaches teachers can take in the art room, CBAE being one. However, these other approaches that were introduced were out of the ordinary for me.

After studying these various approaches, I came to realize that not every art teacher may feel the art room should be an open, community-feel, environment, but this is what I strive for as an educator. It was evident to me when starting this research process that I wanted to explore this idea further. Being able to share my story as not only a student but as a first-year teacher is empowering. Hearing my participants' stories during the interview process gave me the courage I needed to see that there are other art teachers out there just like me who want to make a difference in their students' lives.

In this research, there were struggles shared, the downfalls of CBAE, and the overall fact that CBAE may not be the right fit for every teacher's classroom. Being able to conduct this research and facing these realizations, I would still not change my experience with CBAE. As I still am a strong believer that CBAE made me the artist I am, the educator, and overall, a confident person. Regardless of this approach's flaws, I still aspire to look past them in order to provide my students the same art experience I was able to encounter.

Implications for the field.

Larger audience. Primarily, the main focus of this study is to show how Choice-Based Art Education allows students to develop their unique learning process through experimentation while preparing students for experiences outside of the art classroom. This study also focused on how first-year art teachers can incorporate a CBAE approach into their teaching pedagogy and

philosophy. In terms of the larger audience with this research, the focus of this research still holds true. CBAE does have the potential to allow students to find their own learning process, which is something every class teacher can relate to. First-year teachers are allowed to educate themselves on a CBAE approach and incorporate this approach into their teaching philosophy.

This study was also able to provide input on how CBAE compares to other approaches, allowing educators to compare and contrast which method would work best for their classroom. Being able to compare the negatives and positives this approach has allows all educators to be conscious of this when implementing this approach. Targeting all art educators by providing a well-rounded understanding of CBAE before using it in the classroom is crucial. Being able to understand what negatives to look for, how this compares to other approaches, and hearing how other students have reacted to this approach, give educators the opportunity to envision their students using this approach.

Most important outcome. Overall, the most important outcome is that CBAE is not a perfect approach that will work with any classroom it presents itself in. After collecting data from an array of teachers with different levels of experience, each one shared their difficulties with implementing this approach. Time, scaffolding, projects being too broad, are all aspects to take into consideration. As the teacher, it is important to be a master of your craft since not every student will be using the same medium or completing the same prompt. Some may feel CBAE is a scapegoat to avoid teaching, however, it truly takes a lot of precision to teach this method. Of course, there is an abundance of positives when it comes to CBAE as well. However, I feel teachers should be aware of the possible negative outcomes of this approach before implementing it.

Implications for further research.

Arising questions. When conducting this research, some questions seemed to continuously arise. I am unaware if this was due to the circumstances in which this study was conducted, through a pandemic, which made me limited in what I could accomplish. I am curious as to how the results would have differed if I was able to observe an art teacher's classroom. Even though I had reflected on my own students' reactions, it would have been interesting seeing students' reactions in a different environment, with a different teacher.

I am also curious as to how a large number of participants would have impacted the results of the study. Looking back, even with a large number of lingering questions, this research benefits the world of education as it provides a fresh perspective on CBAE.

Further area of research. CBAE is a very broad educational approach. There are many ways researchers can further this area of research, either by simply conducting research similar to this, but by adding participants, or having this study become an action research study, where a researcher is able to see students' reactions to this approach. Another direction that researchers could pursue is observing various teachers who use different aspects of the CBAE spectrum. From there, the researcher could be able to compare and contrast the spectrum.

A few questions that could be posed for further research is, do long-term effects from CBAE change depending on what part of the scale is being taught? What were the differences in students' behaviors when transitioning from a CBAE classroom to a DBAE art classroom? How can other subject teachers be influenced by a CBAE approach and incorporate this into their own classrooms? Lastly, how does the overall environment of a CBAE classroom affect the mental health of the students? All these questions arose throughout my research. Making me want to dive deeper into these topics, however, it was important for me to keep my own research

questions in mind when conducting research. COVID-19 also played a factor in my inability to answer some of these lingering questions.

Conclusion.

Reflection. Creating research questions at the beginning of this process gave me a set goal I feel I strived hard to achieve to answer. There was not one step taken in this research where I did not always keep my questions in mind. The literature, methodology, data collection, data analysis, and the overall findings were all in an effort to answer these questions I set for myself at the beginning of the research process.

The literature collected throughout this process gave me, as the researcher, a thorough understanding of what was being researched. Being able to hear others' interpretations of CBAE through literature gave me a good understanding of CBAE and gave me the confidence needed to collect data. It also provided me with a thorough understanding of what to be mindful of when collecting data in the field.

The overall findings in this research were not expected. Going into this research, my primary perspective of CBAE was through a student lens. Being that I am a new educator implementing this approach, I was naive in thinking there were no negatives this approach can have because I had such an enjoyable time experiencing this approach. After collecting literature and through data collection, the negative themes that were common in these two aspects made me more aware of these in my own teaching. With every approach, there will be negatives and positives. The result for myself as a teacher is that seeing those in my classroom thrive is what keeps me wanting to implement this approach. There is no better feeling than being able to see every student's unique creation.

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Appendix A: Letter of Consent and Permissions

A.1 Recruitment Letter for Participants

Date:

To Whom it May Concern,

I am contacting you to request your permission to participate in a research study conducted through Moore College of Art and Design. My name is Kelly Marrone and I am currently a first-year art teacher implementing Choice-Based Art Education into my classroom. Being a current graduate student at Moore College of Art and Design, I am conducting my thesis research on first-year art teachers implementing Choice-Based Art Education and how this approach can impact their teaching philosophy. I am also examining the long-term effects Choice-Based Art Education can have on students. The purpose of this study is to explore the long-term effects of a choice-based approach and the different strategies teachers have taken throughout their careers to implement this approach into their classroom. Participants have been invited to participate based on careful selection, with the intention of ensuring a range of art teachers who have implemented this approach into their classroom and students who have been exposed to this type of learning. This study is completely voluntary and there will be no penalty for denying participation in this study.

This research will be conducted during your convenience, either socially distant in-person or through video chat. These interviews will not exceed one hour in length. Your identity will be kept confidential, as pseudonyms will be used on all data collected. Participants will be encouraged to share artifacts that they feel will benefit the study such as journals, photographs, worksheets, rubrics, etc. To effectively collect data during interviews, you will be audio-recorded. The artifact you provide will be photographed for the study. Any photos of participants will be blurred to maintain their anonymity. All audio, visual, and digital data will be destroyed upon conclusion of the thesis.

Attached you will find a PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS and INFORMED ASSENT form which further detail the research study. Should you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact me at (609) 422-1358 or at kmarrone@moore.edu at any time. If you have no further questions, you may sign and return these forms before February 20, 2021.

Sincerely,
Kelly Marrone
Graduate Student, Moore College of Art and Design

A.2 Informed Assent for Participants

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH: You are invited to participate in a research study that examines how a Choice-Based Art Education approach has impacted the art room and the effect it has had on students. This study also focuses on how first-year art teachers have implemented this approach into their art classroom and how they have used this approach for their teaching pedagogy. It is hoped to gather valuable information on how the classroom environment is impacted when implementing a Choice-Based Art Education approach and will be discovered throughout the course of this research. For this study, I will ask you to participate in one interview that will take approximately 45 minutes to one hour. If a follow-up interview is needed, arrangements will be made. In the interview, you will be asked open-ended standardized interview questions: basic demographic information such as your years of experience teaching, years at the school site, types of approaches implemented in your classroom, and primarily the impact Choice-Based Art Education has had on you. You will also be asked to reflect on your own experience throughout your career as a Choice-Based teacher and ways you have changed your approach throughout your career to meet the needs of your students. I will not be asking to view any personal information on students such as IEPs, student records, or behavior programs. During all interview sessions, you will be audio recorded. These audio recordings will provide information that I will use in writing my thesis, and the audio recordings and transcripts will be destroyed upon the completion of my study.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: Participation in the study is completely voluntary. There will be no effects or risks to you should you decide not to participate in this study. The interview questions will be the same for both teachers and peers involved in the study. Therefore, you will not be singled out if you choose not to participate in the study. If you become uncomfortable at any time during the interview, you may address your concerns verbally or in writing. If this occurs at any point in this study, special arrangements can be made, and/or you can remove yourself from the study without penalty or repercussions. The benefits from the study include how a Choice-Based Art Education approach has impacted your teaching career, along with, how you have implemented this approach into your teaching pedagogy. I also hope to contribute to a larger conversation on inclusion in the art classroom, collaboration, and the impact this approach has had on students.

PAYMENTS: There will be no payments for you to participate in this study.

DATA STORAGE TO PROTECT CONFIDENTIALITY: Subject's confidentiality will be preserved. I am the sole researcher of this study. For the collation, analysis and reporting of all data, all of the participants will be assigned a pseudonym to prevent individuals from being identified. The school name will also be changed. Any charts used in my dissertation or presentations will be coded. All the data that I collect for this research project will be kept on a flash drive which will be kept in a locked drawer in my home. The audio recordings and transcripts will be destroyed upon the completion of my thesis.

TIME INVOLVEMENT: Your participation in the study will take approximately 45 minutes to one hour for interviews. If extra time is needed, arrangements will be made.

HOW WILL RESULTS BE USED: The results of the study will be used to examine the possible ways a Choice-Based Art Education approach has impacted a diverse range of art educators and students who have experienced this type of approach. The study will be reported in the form of a thesis, which serves to fulfill my requirements for a Master's degree in Art Education with an Emphasis in Special Populations.

A.3 Informed Assent Form

PARTICIPANT
DATE

Dear Participant:

I am a Graduate Student at Moore College of Art & Design where I am majoring in Art Education with an Emphasis in Special Populations. I will be conducting research for my MA thesis from February - April 2021.

The purpose of this study is to develop a better understanding of the affects a Choice-Based Art Education approach has on students. This study also focuses on first-year art teachers and how they can foster this technique into their teaching pedagogy.

Participating in this study is voluntary, and you can refuse to participate. If you agree to participate, participation will take place between February and April of 2021. You will meet with me via video chat, or, based on comfort level, in-person practicing social distancing when times are convenient with you. You will not receive payment for participating in this study.

This study poses very little risk to you. Though I will disguise your identity in the final thesis, there is a possibility that details of your story will make you identifiable. This possibility could result in the public disclosure of various aspects of your life. To minimize this risk, I will change your name and any other obvious identifying information, such as organizations with which you are employed or contracted, in the final thesis. Throughout the study, I will also discuss with you what details you feel comfortable having included in any final products. Additionally, you are permitted to withdraw from the study at any time. If you withdraw, all existing interview recordings and transcripts will be destroyed immediately.

If you have any questions or concerns about the study, or if you are dissatisfied at any time, you can contact me at (609) 422-1358, kmarrone@moore.edu, or the Graduate Program Director in

Art Education Lauren Stichter, at (215) 667-6811 or lstichter@moore.edu. You are encouraged to ask questions at any time about the study and its procedures, or your rights as a participant.

Sincerely,

Kelly Marrone

****

Statement of Assent: I have read the above information and have received answers to my questions. I give my consent to participate in this study.

Printed name of Participant_____

Signature of Participant _____

Date_____

A.4 Participant's Rights

Principal Investigator: Kelly Marrone

Research Title: THE OVERALL EFFECTS OF CHOICE-BASED ART EDUCATION ON FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

- I have read and discussed the Research Description with the researcher. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the purposes and procedures regarding this study.
- My participation in research is voluntary. I may refuse to participate or withdraw from participation at any time without jeopardy to future employment or other entitlements.
- The researcher may withdraw me from the research at their professional discretion.
- If, during the study, significant new information that has been developed becomes available which may relate to my willingness to continue to participate, the investigator will provide this information to me.
- Any information derived from the research project that personally identifies me will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.
- If at any time I have any questions regarding the research, I can contact the investigator, who will answer my questions. The investigator's phone number is (609) 422-1358.
- If at any time I have comments, or concerns regarding the conduct of the research or questions about my participation, I should contact the Moore College of Art & Design Institutional Review Board (IRB).
- I should receive a copy of the Research Description and this Participant's Rights document.
- If audio recording is part of this research,

    I ( ) consent to be audio recorded.

    I ( ) do NOT consent to being audio recorded.

- If video recording is part of this research

    I ( ) consent to be video recorded.

    I ( ) do NOT consent to being video recorded.

- If artifact collection is part of this research

    I ( ) consent to share artifacts.

    I ( ) do NOT consent to share artifacts.

The written and audio taped materials will be viewed only by the principal investigator and members of the program faculty.

- Written and audio taped materials,

( ) may be viewed in an educational setting outside the research.

( ) may NOT be viewed in an educational setting outside the research.

****

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information and have received answers to my questions. I give my consent to participate in this study.

Printed name of Participant_____

Signature of Participant _____

Date_____

If necessary:

Investigator's Verification of Explanation: I certify that I have carefully explained the purpose and nature of this research to _____ (participant's name) in the appropriate language or form.

They have had the opportunity to discuss it with me in detail. I have answered all their questions and they provided the affirmative agreement (i.e. assent) to participate in this research.

Investigator's Signature: _____

Date: _____

A.5 MA Thesis Consent Form

Teacher Consent

Miss. Kelly Marrone
High School Art Teacher
Delran High School
50 Hartford Rd, Delran, NJ, 08075

Dear Participant:

I am a Graduate Student in Art Education with an Emphsis in Special Population at Moore College of Art & Design. I will be conducting research for my MA thesis from February - April 2021.

The purpose of this study is to develop a better understanding of the affects a Choice-Based Art Education approach has on students. This study also focuses on first-year art teachers and how they can foster this technique into their teaching pedagogy.

Participating in this study is voluntary, and you can refuse to participate. If you agree to participate, participation will take place between February and April of 2021. You will meet with me via video chat, or, based on comfort level, in-person practicing social distancing when times are convenient with you. You will not receive payment for participating in this study.

This study poses very little risk to you. Though I will disguise your identity in the final thesis, there is a possibility that details of your story will make you identifiable. This possibility could result in the public disclosure of various aspects of your life. To minimize this risk, I will change your name and any other obvious identifying information, such as organizations with which you are employed or contracted, in the final thesis. Throughout the study, I will also discuss with you what details you feel comfortable having included in any final products. Additionally, you are permitted to withdraw from the study at any time. If you withdraw, all existing interview recordings and transcripts will be destroyed immediately.

If you have any questions or concerns about the study, or if you are dissatisfied at any time, you can contact me at (609) 422-1358, kmarrone@moore.edu, or the Graduate Program Director in Art Education Lauren Stichter, at (215) 667-6811 or lstichter@moore.edu. You are encouraged to ask questions at any time about the study and its procedures, or your rights as a participant.

Sincerely,

Kelly Marrone

****

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information and have received answers to my questions. I give my consent to participate in this study.

Printed name of Participant_____

Signature of Participant_____

Date_____

A.6 Interview Protocol-CBAE Participants

Kelly Marrone

Interview #1 Protocol and Questions-CBAE Teacher Participant

PROTOCOL:

The questions will be conducted in an identical fashion to demonstrate experimental control. The interview questions may prompt follow-up questions that are different from participant to participant. Those teachers who have used, or are using, a Choice-Based Art Education approach will be asked questions regarding their teaching experience with this approach. The semi-structured approach will allow for an in-depth search of valuable data. In addition, it will demonstrate to which degree, depth, or direction the participant in developing in terms of teacher identity. The structure of these questions is designed to engage the participants in active conversation and to encourage deep, meaningful, and personal connection. Positive reinforcement will be provided after each response, in which I will respond enthusiastically if the information given was sufficient or ask the participant to expand if necessary. Teachers will also be allowed to ask the researcher questions should they choose to do so.

The steps for questions/dialogue will be as follows:

1.Conditions will be as follows:

i. Each teacher will meet with the researcher at a time convenient for them in a one-on-one ratio

ii. All sessions will take approximately one hour

iii. The setting will be whatever is most comfortable for the interviewee

iv. The interviewee is encouraged to make themselves comfortable, snacks and drinks are allowed

v. There will be no other professional or participant present

vi. Experimental control will be demonstrated using a digital voice recorder

vii. Transcripts of each session will be created in a word processing program

viii. Each transcript will be identified with the teacher's pseudonym, date, and time

ix. If verbal communication becomes difficult, you will be able to use the chat feature through video chat or will be offered a computer or piece of paper to write if in person

2. The researcher will greet the teacher, offer accommodations, and begin with the questions in the order below
3. Teachers will answer questions in the order given. If there is no answer in 20 seconds or an answer is unobtainable due to processing delays, I will offer that question to be asked at the end of the interview to be reflected upon.
4. Written notes will be taken during the time of the interview.
5. Teachers are welcome to leave at any time they feel uncomfortable.

INITIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

TEACHER INFORMATION

1. What is your name?
2. What school do you teach at?
3. How long have you been a teacher?
4. What made you want to be an art teacher?
5. What age level do you prefer and why?
6. Describe the school you have implemented a CBAE approach in.

IDENTITY AND DIMENSIONS OF TEACHING

7. What does a Choice-Based Art Education approach mean to you?
8. Did you implement a CBAE approach your first year of teaching?
9. Have you implemented a CBAE approach your entire career? If not, what other approaches have you implemented? How does it differ from CBAE?
10. Did your college education educate you on what a CBAE approach is? If not, how did you learn about a CBAE approach?
11. Were you exposed to a CBAE approach in your K-12 career?
12. What was it that made you want to implement a CBAE approach? Were your students an influence on this descion?
13. What are some of the outcomes you have seen in your classroom while implementing choice?

14. Have you noticed that students who did not have an interest in art, grow a love for art? If so, do you believe this is because of CBAE or because they simply grew to love art?
15. How do you provide choice for your students?
16. How is your classroom set up? Do students have their own areas in the classroom or are there certain stations?
17. Have you noticed an increase in student engagement in the classroom? Are students more willing to help one another and work together?
18. Have you ever collaborated with either other subject areas or companies in the community that your students can create art for?
19. Overall, do you believe a CBAE approach is successful? If so, what does success mean to you?

A.7 Interview Protocol- Participants

Kelly Marrone

Interview #1 Protocol and Questions-Non-Teacher Participants

PROTOCOL:

The questions will be conducted in an identical fashion to demonstrate experimental control. The interview questions may prompt follow-up questions that are different from participant to participant. Those participants who have been exposed to a Choice-Based Art Education approach will be asked questions regarding their experience with this approach. The semi-structured approach will allow for an in-depth search of valuable data. In addition, it will demonstrate to which degree, depth, or direction the participant in developing in terms of choice-based identity. The structure of these questions is designed to engage the participants in active conversation and to encourage deep, meaningful, and personal connection. Positive reinforcement will be provided after each response, in which I will respond enthusiastically if the information given was sufficient or ask the participant to expand if necessary. Participants will also be allowed to ask the researcher questions should they choose to do so.

The steps for questions/dialogue will be as follows:

1.Conditions will be as follows:

i. Each participant will meet with the researcher at a time convenient for them in a one-on-one ratio

ii. All sessions will take approximately one hour

iii. The setting will be whatever is most comfortable for the interviewee

iv. The interviewee is encouraged to make themselves comfortable, snacks and drinks are allowed

v. There will be no other professional or participant present

vi. Experimental control will be demonstrated using a digital voice recorder

vii. Transcripts of each session will be created in a word processing program

viii. Each transcript will be identified with the participants's pseudonym, date, and time

ix. If verbal communication becomes difficult, you will be able to use the chat feature through video chat or will be offered a computer or piece of paper to write if in person

2. The researcher will greet the teacher, offer accommodations, and begin with the questions in the order below
3. Participants will answer questions in the order given. If there is no answer in 20 seconds or an answer is unobtainable due to processing delays, I will offer that question to be asked at the end of the interview to be reflected upon.
4. Written notes will be taken during the time of the interview.
5. Participants are welcome to leave at any time they feel uncomfortable.

INITIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

1. What is your name?
2. What school exposed you to a Choice-Based Art Education approach?
3. How long have you been aware of this approach?
4. What is your favorite subject?
5. Are you interested in the arts?
6. Would you say you excelled in the arts in school?

IDENTITY AND DIMENSIONS OF CHOICE-BASED ART EDUCATION

7. What do you remember from your art classes that you would define as “choice”?
8. What does a Choice-Based Art Education approach mean to you?
9. Have all your art teachers implemented this approach in the art room?
10. Did you enjoy this approach? If not, why?
11. Do you prefer learning in a structured environment? Why?
12. Do you feel, due to a CBAE approach, you were able to implement what you learned in the art room into your everyday life?
13. Do you feel that due to a CBAE approach, you have learned to think more creatively and free in situations?
14. Do you recall any of your projects?
15. Was learning in the art room stressful for you due to less structure compared to other classes?
16. What are some characteristics you remember from the art classroom?

17. In the art room, did you work collaboratively with others? If yes, has this helped you in the work world with working collaboratively with others?
18. What is your ideal classroom setting?
19. In your opinion, do you believe a CBAE approach is successful? If yes, what do you define successful as?

A.8 Participant Artifact Protocol

Date:	Time:	Length of Interview:

Artifact Photograph	**Description**	**Notes**

A.9 Journaling Protocol-Participants

PARTICIPANT JOURNAL

Kelly Marrone
Participant Journal
Date:
Time:

PROTOCOL:

Participants will be presented the following journal entry two weeks before the set interview date. Participants are welcome to use an alternative form of journal entries such as a video recording or a scheduled one-on-one meetings session. This is not a requirement for participating in this study, however, it is encouraged.

DIRECTIONS:

Please answer the following questions with as much details as possible. Everything you have to say is IMPORTANT. You are welcome to type, hand write, or voice record your answers.

Please return the finished journal entry by:

JOURNAL ENTRY QUESTIONS

1. What is your name and age?
2. What are your interests?
3. Describe your background in the arts.
4. Define what a Choice-Based Art Education approach means to you.
5. What is your most memorable project in art?
6. How did art compare to your other subjects?
7. What emotions did you feel in the art room?
8. How did your teachers support you in the arts?
9. Did art ever make you feel overwhelmed?
10. What types of choices did you have in the arts?
11. Has a choice-based art education approach impacted your thought process?

A.10 Journaling Protocol- Teacher Participants

TEACHER PARTICIPANT JOURNAL

Kelly Marrone
Teacher Participant Journal
Date:
Time:

PROTOCOL:

Participants will be presented the following journal entry two weeks before the set interview date. Participants are welcome to use an alternative form of journal entries such as a video recording or a scheduled one-on-one meetings session. This is not a requirement for participating in this study, however, it is encouraged.

DIRECTIONS:

Please answer the following questions with as much details as possible. Everything you have to say is IMPORTANT. You are welcome to type, hand write, or voice record your answers.

Please return the finished journal entry by:

JOURNAL ENTRY QUESTIONS

1. What is your name and how long have you been an educator?
2. Describe yourself as an educator.
3. How do you define a Choice-Based Art Education approach?
4. How is this approach implemented into your classroom?
5. When were you exposed to this method of teaching?
6. Is this approach effective to your students?
7. What other methods of teaching have you tried in your classroom?
8. How has your student's behavior changed due to this approach?
9. Does your administration support a student-centered approach?
10. Do other teachers in your school use this method of teaching?
11. What encouraged you to try this approach with your students?