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6 Introduction



From ancient times to the present, storytelling has captured the imaginations of young and old alike. *Stories of Art* is a collection of eight short stories written especially for use in middle school art classrooms. In each short story, young people use art to solve a real life problem in their lives. The fictional stories are based on broad interdisciplinary themes that parallel developments in cultures across the globe. Two additional units provide students the opportunity to write their own stories featuring modern or contemporary artists.

The Themes Include:

Our Place in the World
Farm Folk, City Folk
Great Teachers Long Ago
Spiritual Worlds
When Cultures Meet
Powerful Families
Protest and Persuasion
Technology
The Individual
The Global Village

In addition to the story, each unit presents ideas for inquiry projects and art-making activities that use the story as a springboard for learning about art in different cultures. Also included are interdisciplinary activity ideas that help students transfer their knowledge across the curriculum. Each unit contains activities through which students can address the four art processes around which the National Core Visual Arts Standards are organized: creating, presenting, responding, and connecting.

What Will I Find in Each *Stories of Art* Unit?

Theme Divider

Historical Time Frame
Unit Objectives
Objective/s for Preservice Art Teachers
Inquiry Foci
ArtsConnectEd Presentation website address
Reading Approaches

Back of Theme Divider

Related Tempe Center for the Arts Units
Objectives
Sample Student Artwork

Introduction

Theme in Life (broad human concern)

Theme in Art (how art addresses the broad human concern)

Introduction to the Theme (explanation of the theme with broad connections across culture and to everyday life.)

Key Questions (two or three broad inquiry questions that can be applied to any artwork or artifact)

Key Cultures (suggested cultures around the world)

Story

A short piece of historical fiction centered on how young people confront problems and resolve them through art. Units 9 and 10 do not include stories.

Activities

Discussion of Theme and Key Questions (comprehension questions about the story and questions asking students to access their prior knowledge)

Transfer to Diverse Cultures (challenges for students to apply the unit's Theme and/or Key Inquiry Questions to the Key Cultures of the unit).

Transfer to Studio (studio ideas inspired by the unit's Theme and/or Key Inquiry Questions)

Interdisciplinary Transfer (suggestions for cross-curricular integration or collaboration)

Theme Inserts

Following each theme are supplementary inserts, such as sample lesson plans, planning worksheets, and other instructional materials.

How Can I Use *Stories of Art*?

GRADE LEVEL

Designed primarily for middle school, units can be adapted for upper elementary grades. High school students may see themselves as too mature for the stories. However the Themes, Key Questions, cultural and interdisciplinary connections, and suggested studio activities are appropriate for high school, especially for introduction to art classes.

TIMING

The scheduling of art classes in middle-school (as well as upper elementary and high school) can vary tremendously. One *Stories of Art* unit might be the focus of an entire quarter, or even a semester. Because art teachers are usually responsible for teaching multiple grades, they may wish to develop a multi-year program using all or selected units implemented across several grades. Of the many activities proposed in each unit, teachers may choose just those that are appropriate for their students and teaching situations.

How Can Stories Increase Learning Transfer?

For any learning to be useful or meaningful it must be transferable. **Transfer is what happens when people find themselves in a new situation, recall knowledge they already have acquired, and use that knowledge appropriately.** If we learn something but are unable to recall it in unfamiliar circumstances or are unable to appropriately apply what we've learned, then can we really say we've learned anything at all?

In recent years, many teachers have increased their efforts to develop instruction that crosses boundaries between subject areas. To support their programs, some art teachers have argued that what students learn in art transfers across the academic curriculum. Winner and Cooper (2000) analyzed 44 research studies that were potentially relevant to the question of whether arts experiences affect academic achievement. In their discussion of results, they argued that "for transfer to occur, teachers must teach explicitly for transfer. Teachers need to help students develop strategies in one domain that can be applied to another domain, without at the same time simply teaching students a superficial rule or technique" (pp. 63-4). Pugh and Bergin (2006) found that learning improved when achieving transfer was as explicit goal.

How can teachers ensure that the connections they are making within the art program and across the curriculum are also made by their students? Haskell claims that "for education to be effective, ... curricula must be designed with our eyes focused on transfer of learning" (2001, p. xiv). He further claims that "our future depends on our ability to transfer what we learn, for it's the transfer of learning that creates our understanding of peoples, that creates technological innovation, that creates scientific discovery, that creates our competitive and cooperative edge in a global market, and that creates understanding in an ethnically diverse culture" (Haskell, 2001, p. 8).

Haskell explains that "the essential problem in transfer is when and how something is perceived as being the same as or equivalent to something else" (2001, p. 26). *Stories of Art* is a curriculum resource designed to explicitly teach for transfer. It is built on the notion that a story can form the foundation of an instructional plan that increases students' ability to transfer, that is, that increases students' ability to see sameness or equivalence throughout their art learning, across the curriculum, and in their everyday lives.

Prawat (1989) identified three conditions that affect transfer: 1) students' prior knowledge, 2) students' information seeking strategies, and 3) students' disposition or motivation.

Stories of Art Builds on Students' Prior Knowledge

- When a story encourages students to imagine situations that are in some way similar to their own lives, it "[reduces] our world to manageable proportions; and [makes] the world more familiar" (Haskell, p. 25).
- When a story introduces a big idea or theme, it provides students with the basis for discovering similarities in artworks and everyday artifacts with which they are already familiar.

How *Stories of Art* Builds Information-Seeking (Inquiry) Strategies

- When students have the opportunity to apply the theme of a story in multiple contexts (within the story itself, in their own personal experience, to diverse cultures, and through their own art making), the story helps them see similarities, and create categories and concepts (Haskell, 2001, p. 25).
- Key inquiry questions introduced through a story help students create generic or general scaffolds of thinking.

How *Stories of Art* Increases Motivation

- Stories can increase motivation when students identify with the young people in a story.
- Stories can increase motivation by showing how art can be an active force for people in society.
- Students' perceptions of broad themes as important to themselves and/or others can affect their persistence and, ultimately, their success, thus enhancing their own abilities to complete tasks and reach goals.

How Can Learning in Art Transfer Across the Curriculum?

Hetland, Winner, Veenema, and Sheridan (2013) identified eight thinking habits developed in middle school and high school studio art classes that each relate to English Language Arts Common Core Standards and to Math Common Core Standards. They found students developed eight “studio habits of mind”, the dispositions to:

- develop craft
- engage and persist
- envision
- express
- observe
- reflect
- stretch and explore
- understand art worlds (p. 143)

The “Transfer to Studio” section in each unit of *Stories of Art* proposes art-making activities inspired by the theme and key inquiry questions of the unit, thus teaching for transfer between viewing art and making art.

The activities suggested in each *Stories of Art* theme are designed to include interdisciplinary learning experiences in reading, writing, listening and speaking, technology, social science, and workplace/career skills. Students are asked to seek and read information online or in print. They are asked to write reports focused on the theme or key inquiry questions and to present their conclusions to their classmates. Each theme asks students to work in teams to discover, organize, and present information about diverse cultures. Each unit concludes with suggestions for interdisciplinary transfer to other school subjects such as, history, geography, science, mathematics, literature, world religions, government, other arts, life sciences, physics, world history, world cultures, language arts, engineering, economics, and social studies.

How Can Transfer Promote Cross-Cultural Understanding?

Among the extraordinary challenges that the United States faces in the twenty-first century are:

- living up to its democratic ideals as its multicultural population grows and evolves, and
- learning how to function effectively and ethically within a global community of nations, through, and sometimes in spite of, its economic and military dominance.

Haskell (2001) proposes that “the transferring of experience is the basis of our human sense of caring, empathy, and compassion for others” (p. 64). The ten themes of *Stories of Art* challenge students to examine a broad theme as it applies to different cultures. In addition, themes five (When Cultures Meet) and ten (Global Village) focus specifically on the challenges of dealing with conflicting, dominating, cooperating, evolving, and overlapping cultures.

How Can an Inquiry Approach Lead to Higher-Order Thinking?

Higher-Order Thinking about Artworks and Through Art Making

Each of the ten units in *Stories of Art* is constructed not only around broad, cross-cultural themes, but also around two or three broad inquiry questions. The short story introduces Key Inquiry Questions in a fictional context. The supplementary ArtsConnectEd PowerPoint provides excellent reproductions of artworks that afford students the opportunity to practice transferring their skills of inquiry to unfamiliar artworks from the Key Cultures of the unit. The “Transfer to Diverse Cultures” section of each unit challenge students to more extensive collaborative inquiry.

Four sets of Key Inquiry Questions for thinking about art are introduced in *Stories of Art*. They range from lower-level questions focused on determining facts (Questions about an Artwork and Questions about an Artist’s Background) to higher-order thinking focused on drawing conclusions and constructing persuasive arguments based on those facts (Questions that Compare Artworks and Questions about Meanings and Goals).

Tempe Center for the Arts Inquiry Strategy

The Gallery at the Tempe Center for the Arts in collaboration with Mary Erickson (Erickson, 1977; Erickson, 1983; Erickson, 2005; Addiss & Erickson, 1993; Erickson, Dock, & Eldridge, 2010; Erickson, Eldridge, & Vidrio, in press) developed an inquiry strategy to train docents and as the basis of its free online curriculum. Two animal mascots represent complementary aspects of art inquiry. Questor is a bird who is curious about artworks. Jack is a rabbit who jumps at the chance for art-making ideas.

TCA Scaffold for Art Inquiry

Questions about an Artwork

Subject Matter, Art Elements & Principles, Technical Features, Function, Care, and Reproduction



LOOK

What Can I See in
in the Artwork?

CHOOSE

What Choices Will I
Make in My Artwork?



Questions about an Artist's Background

Artist's Life, Physical Environment, Culture, and Artworld,



LEARN

What Can I Learn
about the Life and
Times of an Artist?

SEEK

What Art Ideas Can
I Get from My Own
Life and Times?



Questions that Compare Artworks

Style, Art Influence, and Theme



COMPARE

How Does This Artwork
Compare with Other
Artworks?

EXPLORE

What Ideas Can I Get
by Looking at Other Art?



Questions about Meanings and Goals

Artist's Intention, Art Specialist's Understanding, Cultural Understanding, and Personal Viewpoint



INTERPRET

What Does This Artwork
Mean?

PLAN

What do I Want to
Achieve with My
Artwork?



Inquiry about Artworks



What can I see in the artwork?

- **SUBJECT MATTER:** What people, places, or things, if any, are shown in this work?
- **ELEMENTS:** What elements (line, shape, color, value, texture, 3D form, and space, etc.) did the artist use?
- **PRINCIPLES:** How did the artist organize the elements using design principles (balance, emphasis/focal point, rhythm, contrast, pattern, etc.)?
- **TECHNICAL FEATURES:** What tools, materials, and processes did the artist use?
- **FUNCTION:** What function or purpose, if any, does/does this artwork serve? For whom?
- **CARE:** Does the artwork look different now from when it was new? How?
- **REPRODUCTION:** How can I tell whether I am looking at an original artwork or a reproduction?



What can I learn about the life and times of the artist?

- **ARTIST'S LIFE:** What are the background and life experiences of the artist?
- **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS:** What natural and built environments has the artist experienced?
- **CULTURE:** What people, places, activities, and ideas are part of the artist's culture? (nationality, religion, politics, popular culture, inventions, economic conditions, etc.)
- **ARTWORLD:** What art training, traditions, movements, and expectations may have influenced the artist?



How does this artwork compare with other artworks?

- **STYLE:** How does this artwork look like other artworks? (by the same artist or within its art movement, or in its cultural style)?
- **ART INFLUENCE:** What artists or artworks do I think might have influenced this artist?
- **THEME:** What other artworks are associated with the big idea underlying this artwork?



What does this artwork mean?

- **ARTIST'S INTENTION:** What can I find out about why the artist wanted this work to look as it does?
- **ART SPECIALISTS' UNDERSTANDING:** How do art specialists (critics, other artists, art historians, art teachers, patrons, etc.) understand this work?
- **CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING:** How do I think this work might be understood by members of my culture who are not art specialists? or by members of another culture or subculture?
- **PERSONAL VIEWPOINT:** What do I think this work is about? How might my own personal experiences affect how I understand it?

Inquiry through Art Making



How do I want my artwork to look?

- **SUBJECT MATTER:** Will my work have subject matter?
- **ELEMENTS:** What one or two elements (line, shape, value, color, texture, 3D form, space, etc.) is most important for the success of my artwork?
- **PRINCIPLES:** What design principles (balance, emphasis/focal point, rhythm, contrast, pattern, etc.) can I use to organize the elements into an interesting and unified composition?
- **TECHNICAL FEATURES:** What tools, materials, and processes will work best for my artwork?
- **FUNCTION:** Will my work have a clear or not-so-obvious function?
- **CARE:** What can I do as I create my artwork (or store it or exhibit it) to ensure that it stays in good condition?
- **REPRODUCTION:** What aspects of my artwork might be difficult to capture in a reproduction? (for example in a photograph or a scan)



What art ideas can I get from my own life and times?

- **ARTIST'S LIFE:** What ideas can I get from my life?
- **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS:** What ideas can I get from my physical environment?
- **CULTURE:** What ideas can I get from my culture?
- **ARTWORLD:** What ideas can I get from my own, or some other artworld?



What ideas can I get by looking at other art?

- **STYLE:** What visual characteristics do I tend to use in my art? Do I want this work to be similar in style to other works that I, or other artists, have made?
- **ART INFLUENCE:** What inspiration can I draw from other artists or from their work?
- **THEME:** What can I learn from artists who have expressed a big idea similar to the theme I'm interested in?



What do I want to achieve with my artwork?

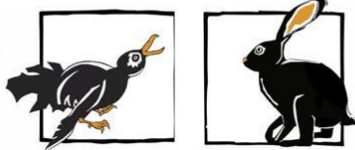
- **ARTIST'S INTENTION:** What is my goal as an artist?
- **ART SPECIALISTS' UNDERSTANDING:** How would I like my work to be understood in the artworld? Which artworld?
- **CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING:** Do I want my work to reflect or impact my culture? How?
- **PERSONAL VIEWPOINT:** How might other people's experiences affect how they respond to my artwork?

Cycle for Creative Art Inquiry

1. Begin your inquiry by using Questor's questions to investigate an artwork that interests or inspires you in some way.



4. Coming full circle, use Questor's questions as springboards to formulate your own independent questions to guide you in developing new art ideas that extend or refine your work or perhaps lead you in a new direction as an artist.



3. Use Questor's Questions to critically reflect on your work in process or to seek feedback from a classmate.
Jack's questions can also help you judge whether your work is successfully completed.



2. Use Jack's questions to help you find ideas for your own art and draw inspiration for preliminary plans or sketches.

How does *Stories of Art* align with the National Core Visual Arts Standards?

The standards address four primary art processes, which are subdivided into the 11 anchor standards listed below. Anchor standards are further broken into distinct performance objectives for each grade level. Ideally, the curriculum for each grade will include activities through which students will practice all performance objectives for that grade. Most units, and even individual lessons, will likely address a combination of several performance objectives related to more than one of the four primary art processes.



CREATING

Cr1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Cr2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Cr3: Refine and complete artistic work.

The "Transfer to Studio" section of each *Stories of Art* unit suggests studio projects you can use to engage students in creating their own art. You can choose whether to focus on the beginning, (Cr1), middle (Cr2), on concluding (Cr3) phase of the creating process, or on all three phases.

PRESENTING

Pr4: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.

Pr5: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

Pr6: Select, analyze and interpret artistic work for presentation.

All "Transfer to Studio" activities in *Stories of Art* conclude with exhibition ideas. Students can develop their presenting skills by preparing their own completed artwork for display (Pr4), for example by matting or mounting a two-dimensional work or by selecting/making a base or finding an appropriate space to display a three-dimensional work. Independently or in teams, students can further develop their presenting skills by selecting, and analyzing, and interpreting their own or classmates' artworks (Pr6) and installing an exhibition of those artworks to convey meaning (Pr5), such as a broad theme. Students' exhibitions might rotate in designated spaces within the art classroom, in hallways, in lobby display cases, or in the school's media center. More ambitious presenting efforts might culminate in an exhibition in the district boardroom, the public library, or other appropriate public or commercial space.

"Transfer to Diverse Cultures" activities in *Stories of Art* challenge teams of students to collaboratively use the unit's Theme and/or Key Inquiry Questions to focus their own inquiry on unfamiliar artworks and to share their findings with the entire class. Students can develop their presenting abilities by selecting, analyzing, and interpreting unfamiliar artworks (Pr6) and installing an exhibition of reproductions (printouts or photocopies) of artworks to convey meaning (Pr5). Exhibitions might take the form of a mock gallery, a bulletin board display, a PowerPoint presentation, etc. accompanied by text (labels, text panels, captions, etc.)

RESPONDING

Re7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Re8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

Re9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

The short stories in *Stories of Art* use narrative fiction to introduce artists' intents and meanings (Re8) for making artworks in diverse cultural/historical contexts and further to illustrate how those diverse cultural/historical contexts affect the criteria (Re9) both artists and viewers use to evaluate artistic work. The artworks reproduced in each unit's supplementary ArtsConnetEd online PowerPoint were made in the unit's "Key Cultures" and relate well to the unit's "Theme" and/or "Key Inquiry Questions". Students can respond to the artworks through careful perception and analysis (Pr7), by interpretation (Pr8), and by applying appropriate evaluation criteria (Re9).

CONNECTING

Cn10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

Cn11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

When students use broad cross-cultural themes and the contextual inquiry questions of *Stories of Art* to discuss the artworks in ArtsConnected PowerPoints, or when they use the themes on contextual inquiry questions in "Transfer to Diverse Cultures" activities, they deepen their understanding of artworks (Cn11). Discussion of "Students' Experience with the Theme" and "Inquiry into Students' Experience" help students reflect on their own personal experiences as bases for their own art making in activities such as those proposed in "Transfer to Studio".

How Does the TCA Scaffold for Art Inquiry Align with the National Standards

National Visual Arts Anchor Standards	TCA Scaffold for Art Inquiry
CREATING 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.	SEEK: What ideas can I get from my own life and times? EXPLORE: What ideas can I get by looking at other art? PLAN: What do I want to achieve with my artwork?
CREATING 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.	CHOOSE: How do I want my artwork to look?
CREATING 3: Refine and complete artistic work.	PLAN: What do I want to achieve with my artwork?
PRESENTING 4: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.	CHOOSE: (Care) What can I do as I create art (or store it or exhibit it to ensure that it stays in good condition?
PRESENTING 5: Convey meaning through presentation of artistic work.	COMPARE: How does this artwork compare with other artworks?
PRESENTING 6: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.	INTERPRET: What does this artwork mean? PLAN: What do I want to achieve with my artwork?
RESPONDING 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.	LOOK: What can I see in the artwork?
RESPONDING 8: Interpreting intent and meaning in artistic work.	INTERPRET: (Artist Intention) What is my goal as an artist?
RESPONDING 9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.	INTERPRET: (Art Specialist's Understanding) How would I like my work to be understood in the artworld? INTERPRET: (Cultural Understanding) Do I want my work to reflect or impact my culture?
CONNECTING 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.	SEEK: What ideas can I get from my own life and times?
CONNECTING 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical contexts to deepen understanding.	LEARN: What can I learn about the life and times of the artist?

How Can Reading about and Responding to Artworks Develop Higher-Order Thinking?

Reading “Text”

Arizona has adopted reading, mathematics, and science standards based on the Common Core Initiative called "College and Career Readiness Standards". Art is not explicitly listed among those standards, but can be understood as a “Technical Subject” within Arizona’s “Reading Standards for Literacy, Social Studies, Science and Technology Subjects.” These standards focus on “text”. Text can be understood broadly to include visual and well as verbal text. When one understands that artworks are considered to be “text” in Arizona’s 6th-12th grade Reading Standards (below) then these standards provide strong support for art activities that engage students in learning to “read artworks.” Words in brackets are added.

Key Ideas and Details

1. Read closely to determine what the text [artwork] says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual [or visual] evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text [artwork].
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text [artwork] and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text [within the artwork].

Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases [or visual features] as they are used in a text [artwork], including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word [or visual] choices shape meaning or tone.
5. Analyze the structure of texts [artworks], including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text [artwork] (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text [artwork].

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text [artwork] including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
9. Analyze how two or more texts [artworks] address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors [artists] take.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts [or artworks] independently and proficiently.

Reading Verbal Art Fiction and NonFiction

Arizona Standards require building knowledge through “content-rich nonfiction” with substantial attention to literature throughout K-12, as half of the required work in K-5 and the core of the work of 6-12 ELA teachers. The reading standards also require practice reading “complex text” with focus on academic vocabulary, that

is, words that appear in a variety of content art (including art vocabulary). (Arizona Department of Education, 2010)

The short stories in *Stories of Art* are fictional verbal text appropriate for middle school students. The “Transfer to Diverse Cultures” activities in *Stories of Art* ask students to read content-rich nonfiction, which includes specific art vocabulary.

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