Welcome back to Connecting with the Arts.

I'm Reynelda Muse. In our last program, we looked at the roles that students take on as they move through the artistic process. We saw students writing and performing original scripts with puppets they had made. We saw a teacher help students refine their work. And we saw how constructive feedback from peers can contribute to the artistic process.

In this program, we're going to see how teachers organize instruction around themes and concepts.

A theme is a broad issue or topic that can be studied in different disciplines.

Our first visit will be to Mary Lou Schweickert's band room. In her school, the seventh grade teachers have organized their instruction around the theme of World War II. Mary Lou has chosen military marches as her way of exploring that theme. As you watch, consider how the musical instruction addresses the broad theme of World War II.

All right, let's get going. Today we're gonna be reviewing some of the marches of the armed forces for the USO show. We have a special guest coming in to talk some about her branch of the military.

We're gonna review our cut-time counting skills.
We're gonna review our 6/8 counting skills.

In class, we were working on the marches of the armed forces.

The seventh grade has been studying World War II, and we want to tie in with that.

Anchors Aweigh-- Who's got the melody at the beginning?

The low guys. Let me hear you.

I'm trying to get the kids to understand the importance of bands in military music and how people can be honored by this theme and how it can inspire enthusiasm.

As they go off to war and things like that.

All right, all right.

So aircraft carrier for the Navy is about to take off.

The band was actually on the aircraft carrier, okay?

Really important job.

And you know that this tune is going to get them more than any others.

Now, low guys.

One, two.

Students had a choice of researching the origins of the themes for the Army, the Navy, Marines, and the Air Force.

So they had some fun learning some things about the themes.

Layla, you did the Navy, right?

Did you find anything cool you want to share?

Yes, ma'am.

I found out that "weigh" means, like, to hoist up
the anchors,
69 05:03:48:04 05:03:52:10 and "aweigh" means that the job is done.
70 05:03:52:12 05:03:53:18 Very nice.
71 05:03:53:20 05:03:55:15 Whenever we get to the Air Force song,
72 05:03:55:17 05:03:57:08 there's one person I always think of,
73 05:03:57:10 05:03:59:02 and that's our very own Miss Whitmire.
74 05:03:59:04 05:04:00:09 Good afternoon.
75 05:04:00:11 05:04:01:18 As most of you already know, I'm a member of the South Carolina Air National Guard.
76 05:04:01:20 05:04:05:27 (Schweickert) I knew that that would really make the kids put a face with the military personnel if they didn't already know somebody else in their family,
77 05:04:05:29 05:04:08:08 for example, that was in the military.
78 05:04:08:10 05:04:10:07 We hear the national anthem; Americans stand, usually.
79 05:04:10:09 05:04:13:04 Is there any sort of requirements or regulations about the marches of the armed forces in standing?
80 05:04:13:06 05:04:15:21 We stand at attention; that's with our feet parallel.
81 05:04:15:23 05:04:17:25 I'm in this position with our heels together,
82 05:04:17:27 05:04:21:03 and our hands are down by our sides,
83 05:04:21:05 05:04:24:04 and the hands is locked in this position, okay?
84 05:04:24:06 05:04:26:28 That's the position of attention.
85 05:04:27:00 05:04:29:28 You know, your chest is up high,
86 05:04:30:00 05:04:32:09 and you're looking straight ahead to honor the flag when we're indoors.
87 05:04:32:11 05:04:34:16 When we're outdoors, of course, we are saluting.
88 05:04:34:18 05:04:37:00 Like this.
89 05:04:37:02 05:04:38:21 Okay?
90 05:04:38:23 05:04:40:23 Well, thank you, Miss Whitmire.
91 05:04:40:25 05:04:42:15 All right, any time.
92 05:04:42:17 05:04:44:21 [applause]
93 05:04:44:23 05:04:47:11 (Schweickert) Okay.
Somebody tell me what that top number means.

Raise your hand.

Six beats per measure?

(Schweickert) Six beats per measure.

And what does that bottom number mean?

The eighth note gets a full beat.

The eighth note gets one beat.

This particular arrangement is written in cut time and 6/8, which is tough for second-year band students.

So we had to, first of all, learn about the counting.

Cut time, they'd had a little bit before but 6/8 was totally new to them.

So it was neat that they could use that in a piece that they're familiar with, but they still had to learn the counting skills because they weren't too familiar.

One, two, three.

[steady tapping]

Good. Stop there.

All right.

Miss Whitmire talked about being inspired by the themes.

Do you think it'd very inspire to hear

[slowly] Off we gooooooooo... § §

No, that's not inspiring.

What do we need to change?

The speed, okay?

So let's say we're gonna go at the real speed.

§ Off we go into the wild-- § §

Pat your foot six beats to a measure to that.

Just pat.

Ready, pat.

[very fast]
Pat, pat, pat, pat, pat, pat, pat, pat, pat, pat, pat, pat, pat, pat, pat, pat, pat, pat, pat, pat.

136 05:06:13:27 05:06:15:11 That's kind of too fast, isn't it?
137 05:06:15:13 05:06:17:24 So the neat thing about 6/8 time is,
138 05:06:17:26 05:06:20:21 you can divide every measure up right between the three and the four.
139 05:06:20:23 05:06:22:10 This is now beat one. This is two.
140 05:06:22:12 05:06:24:13 One, two, one, two, one, two.
141 05:06:24:15 05:06:30:04 One, two, one, two, one, two.
142 05:06:30:06 05:06:32:09 I got almost all of them.
143 05:06:32:11 05:06:33:15 What am I going to call this?
144 05:06:33:17 05:06:34:17 Two what?
145 05:06:34:19 05:06:36:18 Two la li, good.
146 05:06:36:20 05:06:38:06 Just like triplets in common time.
147 05:06:38:08 05:06:40:13 Early in the year, when they were doing some poetry
148 05:06:40:15 05:06:44:19 in another class, we did poetry in band class,
149 05:06:44:21 05:06:48:03 and they had to come up with the rhythm that fit the syllables of their poem,
150 05:06:48:05 05:06:49:27 and they had to write a melody over a chord progression that fit with that.
151 05:06:49:29 05:06:52:28 It's pretty sophisticated for seventh grade,
152 05:06:53:00 05:06:54:17 but they can do it.
153 05:06:54:19 05:06:56:26 All right, let's get back to the top and play through all five branches.
154 05:06:57:25 05:07:00:09 I hope that every kid that comes through here will end up being a consumer of music,
155 05:07:00:11 05:07:02:11 even if they're not a performer.
156 05:07:02:13 05:07:04:08 One, two...
157 05:07:04:10 05:07:07:17 [playing The Marines' Hymn]
158 05:07:07:19 05:07:15:16 § §
159 05:07:34:14 05:07:36:20 I hope they get a greater understanding of what goes into the process of making music.
161 05:07:40:09 05:07:56:10 § §
162 05:07:59:10 05:08:00:10 Excellent.
163 05:08:00:12 05:08:01:20 When I was in school,
164 05:08:01:22 05:08:03:24 nobody ever made
the connections for me.

Nobody told me that George Washington probably listened to Mozart; they were contemporaries.

Nobody told me that Debussy was writing music the same time Henry Ford was creating automobiles.

So I try to make a lot of connections for my kids.

Let's discuss how the theme of World War II was supported by this instruction.

Well, I am amazed with the kids.

They were so aware of the importance of what they were playing in terms of how you had explained that this was a motivational force.

and that it took groups of people out into dangerous situations or situations of honor, ceremony.

It's really impressive.

I originally started this to tie in with what the rest of the seventh grade was doing, and I found out quickly that by involving the students emotionally, making them imagine themselves as armed service bands, really supported my instruction.

Made learning 6/8 a lot more exciting.

when you're tying it in with a theme like that.

And I would love to see that in the other arts at the same time.

I would love to see some of the propaganda posters.

some of the recruiting posters.

and how are the arts used to motivate and inspire people
In stressful times or to unify a community?

That's interesting because that's exactly what our visual art teacher did, was the propaganda posters, and the students learned about Rosie the Riveter and people like that.

In dance, we studied swing dancing because, you know, it was a time in American history where people needed the release of getting up and dancing. I was interested in you bringing the assistant principal in. It wasn't like she came in and gave a big, long lecture, but just that one thing kind of personalized what you were talking about. She had gone to Kuwait the year before, and every time we do the Air Force theme, that's who I'm thinking of is Miss Whitmire. I wanted the kids to make that connection. (Grady-Smith) The other thing that really impresses me is, there is instruction that carries outside the classroom, and for them to be researching and bringing in a report and thinking about the relationship of what they're playing to World War II, I envision your students being much more rounded out in their understanding of the importance that music plays in people's lives, which is a huge concept, compared to how my notes sound.
on a given day.
Right.
And it's exciting.
I would think
the other teachers
would have so many ways
to hook in,
so it's almost as though
you've flung the doors open
and said, "Okay, this is
the whole ball of wax."
(Percival)
And, Mary Lou,
I was wondering
how the language arts teacher
was connecting
with what you were doing.
(Schweickert)
Their main focus
was reading
The Diary of Ann Frank
and acting out
scenes from that.
I see.
Once again, tapping in
to the emotions.
The children think
how they would've felt
as a young girl or young boy
during that time period.
And did they
perform
for the rest
of their team of students?
We put on a huge
USO show
and invited some
World War II veterans.
The students had a chance
to talk to them.
The veterans
thoroughly enjoyed
seeing some of
the old radio skits read
and hearing the music.
The jazz band played
In the Mood,
and several got up
and danced.
(Baxley)
The students understand
the reason for the music,
but they also understand
the reason to be a musician.
They begin to understand that
there's a power behind this,
When I play this music, I am causing that emotion to happen in someone else, "I am serving a purpose." You'd hear a difference in their playing once I put them in that position. Put them in that role. What a beautiful illustration of the fact that, you know, just by virtue of being in the past, history is not a dead topic. We continue to interact with it in many ways. You brought it to life. You humanized it for the students by having the veterans in, by having the assistant principal in. You know, that's often very difficult to do. We talk about knowledge being constructed: Let the students construct their own connection, their own meaning. When you give them that freedom, they often surprise you and find things that are deeper and more meaningful because they connect with them in some way. Well, in our modern world, students have to assimilate so much information, and who knows what challenges they have in the future? And if we're able to get them to think from a lot of different angles, it's gonna be so much more valuable in their lives than just learning skills in several different content areas. In our next segment, we'll see instruction that is
integrated around a concept.

A concept is an abstract idea that teachers can use to connect knowledge across disciplines.

At Rachel's school, the eighth graders are exploring the concept of conflict in language arts and social studies.

The arts teachers draw on this concept by asking the students to raise their artistic voices as a form of protest. They call this unit Finding Your Voice.

Consider how the concept of conflict is used differently from the way the theme of World War II was used.

The eighth grade interdisciplinary arts unit that we're working on started with someone offering us 100 tickets to see Sweet Honey in the Rock.

They're a contemporary a capella gospel-influenced group.

And we thought, "Well, gee. What's interesting about Sweet Honey in the Rock?"

What could we do with that?"

And I immediately thought of protest music.

§ We shall overcome some day. § §

Then we thought, "Well, hmm. Aren't the eighth graders working on genocide in World Cultures?"

"And doesn't that tie in with Kaethe Kollwitz and her artwork that protested social conditions in Prussia and then Germany?"

When we had talked about the unit amongst ourselves--
the arts teachers--then we went to the eighth grade teachers and said, "Here's what we're interested in doing. Would you like to join us? How are we gonna work it out?"

We've looked at music of the Holocaust. We've looked at music of the Civil Rights Movement, the folk music movement of the '60s and '70s and such. We've really tried to encourage the students about conflict-- conflict and coexistence on either side of the coin-- as, like, a release outlet for your art.

My half-year students are working on charcoal drawings. They're almost complete. Their charcoal drawings have to do with the same topic that their World Cultures research paper is about. (Peterson) We're just in the process of wrapping up a unit where we've spent about ten weeks studying conflict and ethnic cleansing and genocide.

What we do is, we study it from the base and the Holocaust to give the students a foundation, and then from there, really talk about bigger issues of genocide and ethnic cleansing.

To start, I'm gonna just ask you a series of questions. Keep it in mind, guys, that what I'm looking for are your opinions, your ideas. There's not a right or a wrong in this case. Okay? First thing that I want to know
from you guys is, in your opinion, can art--
and I'm talking about Art with a big "A"
as opposed to art with a little "a,"
so we're talking about theatre,
visual arts, media arts, literary arts, dance,
all of those things that fall under that category--
can art portray traumatic events like the Holocaust?
This class is called world cultures.
And what we do is, we focus on the idea of culture throughout the entire year,
starting with the eighth graders in terms of just defining components of culture.
And we try and focus on teaching kids about that in terms of history, in terms of art, in terms of literature,
their own personal experiences with the world as well.
I'm going to show you three images.
And what I'm going to ask you to look for is, what do these images have to do with conflict?
Think about the scenario. Maybe what conflict is this actually representing?
Whoose point of view is being shown in these images?
I want you to think about the use of line, the use of color,
the use of space.
And I just want you to jot down your ideas.
If you don't get all of them because you get off on a tangent about the point of view or the event
or the emotion, that's fine.

This is just to get you guys thinking about things.

Anybody who's willing to just go out on a limb, share what was your first gut response?

That one right there looked like somebody

letting off some steam because of smoke.

Okay, so you responded immediately to something to do with anger and steam, both literally and also maybe as a person--

to represent something of a person?

Mm-hmm.

Okay.

I thought it was at, like, concentration camps--

like, more of, like, the emotional point of view of the concentration camp;

not, like, what it really looked like.

Okay, so again, something to express some sort of emotion.

Maybe those two things that were going down--

like, I thought maybe the World Trade Centers and all the smoke and stuff, and then at the top, maybe this city when it's all, like, bad--

You know what I mean?

That's an interesting thing that you said that, because this artist actually received phone calls from people who said, "Oh, my gosh.

Those are the images that represent 9/11."

And these images were done years before that for a totally
These three images were done by an artist whose name is Samuel Bak. Samuel Bak is a survivor of the Holocaust. He did these to represent, obviously, the smokestacks going into the air. And if you look closely, the color tones even change as you get to the top. It took him a long time, as a survivor, to do this. This wasn't an immediate response, but it was his way of carrying on and in teaching things also.

Their culminating project is to write a research paper on a topic of their choice. So we have students who are choosing to write about art and the war, protest music, and things like slavery and the Holocaust.

The important concept tying the eighth-grade unit in with the arts right now is protest. That one word was the genesis of the whole thing. We haven't called our unit that, and we haven't used that word with the students, because we were worried that they would get ideas about protesting, and next thing you know, we'd have a sit-in in the cafeteria or something. So we've been shying away from the term protest and using the euphemism "finding your voice." That euphemism actually has proved fairly helpful.
to still make art that's communicating something about themselves. It's really hard for eighth graders to be global thinkers. They're in, developmentally, this stage where it's all about themselves and their lives. And some of them just haven't had experiences that they feel strongly about. All right, eighth graders, good morning.

We are continuing our work on our pastel drawings, our charcoal drawings, related to Kaethe Kollwitz. As you're working today, I want you to really think about communicating the expressive meaning of your artwork. What is the human impact of the issue you've been writing about in world cultures? And how can you convey that through your lines, value choices, textures, all of the expressive content of your artwork? Does anyone have any questions while we get started? All right; go ahead and get started.

My entire eighth grade curriculum is about finding your voice. It's about starting to develop a personal style, starting to look at: What kind of content is interesting? What are the themes that are going to run through your life as an adult artist? I like the contrast of the white figures coming really far forward. Mmm. And I like the suggestiveness of the background. How about if you set this aside and did a second one and colored in
the background figures?

And then you could choose which one was more effective.

All right.

I saw a lot of those pictures of them being really thin and everything.

I kind of exaggerated it a little bit just to make it seem more like a feeling than it really was.

I'm not very good with words, so it's a lot easier to express things like that.

Like, I could never describe that, but I could draw it.

It's easier for me to express something through drawings than it is to write it down or say it.

For the eighth grade, I have several goals. One is just the artistic goal of thinking about composition: How do I make a center of interest? Where is the best place to put that center of interest? How do I use contrast to make it more dramatic? I like how you're shading it from light to dark.

It really guides the eye right to your figures.

And also, I want the images to be expressive, so I'm really encouraging them to use more expressive lines, distort things, change the composition in ways that are more expressive rather than representational.

The other goal is knowing when they're done that they have a voice, that art is something that can be used to change society, and that artists sometimes, when they're creating their art, think about that first,
that they deliberately use their art to change society.

You want to tell me a little bit about what your paper's about?

Yes, the U.S. slave trade.

The U.S. slave trade?

Yeah.

And how are you showing that in this image?

How they got punished.

What are you going to do in the background of your picture?

Make people looking at them getting whipped.

All right; it's looking good.

I think with kids who don't have much dance experience and are kind of beginning dance makers, to have some sort of narrative behind their movement helps them.

So can somebody talk to me about what is this image that we're showing in the beginning, with Amanda falling and you looking away?

Your bodies know what it is. I just need you to verbalize it for me.

Like, they don't--the people don't want to deal with it.

They don't want to help somebody else.

They don't care.

They're just getting themselves where they need to go and looking away, ignoring them.

The eighth grade Finding your Voice work is based on finding something that--"gets your goat"--
something that you find
your heart racing a little bit
when you see things on TV,
you hear
your parents discussing--
some social concern that
you feel personally attached to.
And the first thing
I ask them to do
is just bring those ideas
for discussion into class.
My topic in dance right now
is child abuse,
and I'm dancing with a belt.
The belt noise is resembling the
sound of someone being beaten.
And the people on the floor
are flinching
while Joseph, who is doing
a solo around them, is drunk.
The dance resembles
the fear of children
that can happen to them.
I want you to pick up the--
when you start
pounding on the floor,
you're picking up the exact same
tempo as she had with the belt.
Uh...uh.
The information
that's taking place downstairs
follows them upstairs
naturally.
Some of the discussions
down there,
I know, get really heated,
and I know that they really like
to have a place to put that.
I know, and that's
a relief for kids
to know that there's
going to be an outlet.
And not only
are they stirring up
all of this emotion downstairs
and all this information,
something to do with it.

When you think it's your turn to go...

[clicks tongue]

just go.

Don't be unsure about it.

There's no counts.

The audience doesn't know anything.

When you think it's time for you to go...

go with a little bit more confidence.

Our culminating event at the very end of the unit

is going to be a performance, and the performance

is happening on the same night as the visual arts opening.

And we're going to have all of the visual artworks

that the students are making in my class

up in the hallways.

And the students will be performing

just a variety of different types of acts.

Dandelions call to me

and the white chestnut candles in the court.

Certain students will be doing monologues.

Only I never saw another butterfly.

There'll be movement pieces.

The media arts teacher is helping me put together a video

that will be projected behind some of the dances.

It's going to be really interdisciplinary

throughout the arts.

Let's discuss the differences we observed

in this segment and the first segment we watched

from Mary Lou's school.

(Percival)
I noticed that the planning initially came from the arts teachers. And I guess the other major difference I saw was that after it got started, the content came from the students and drove the instruction and the skill building and so on.

(Baxley) These particular pieces are interesting because they're sort of touching on each other: the topic of World War II and the concept of genocide or the concept of protest.

You're providing this very broad exposure to a topic of World War II, trying to let them see everything they can about this historical period to prepare them for that USO show, whereas with the Finding Your Voice unit, rather than looking at everything about this topic, you found a through rod that went through several areas of discussion of protest.

When that pivot point was the concept, it allowed us to look at exemplars that were excellent from anywhere, from any time. Let's go to this era, because this era has the example that is compelling to us or that is interesting to us, and then we can also go to some completely different era.

So we ranged really far, and I don't think the kids got
that same sense of context,
that same sense of, oh, yes, this war, this music, this dance, é
how they were related.
And I think if that was your goal, then you would want to do a thematic curriculum.
But yet, by going with a concept, it was a different axis, I guess.
It was a different point of entry.
And, Rachel, how was this concept related to the requirements that your state puts on your curriculum?
At the time when we were planning it, we had a skill- and sort of thought-process-based set of standards rather than a content-based set of standards.
And so the research paper, the idea of inquiry-- those were the state requirements, and they were met very well by this unit.
Just as I was able to teach 6/8 time, one of my standards, through this, you can pull in all of the skills necessary.
One significant similarity between the two units, though, was the way the instruction in the arts classes enhanced the instruction in the other core classes.
The dance teacher said having the narrative behind the dance helped her students with the choreography.
I'm sure that the visual art that your students produced made their papers so much richer.
Well, and it raised questions for them. They had questions as they were trying to figure out their visual expression that led them to more research, and that research deepened their paper. And did you meet with your team? We saw the first meeting that you had. Did you continue to meet with that same team as the project went on? We did, almost daily. The arts team eats lunch together every day as part of our planning, in addition to having weekly planning meetings, and then we met with the eighth grade constantly. Can you talk a little bit about how that concept of conflict was identified? Was there a process, or was it just something that somebody had the idea of? The eighth grade world cultures class is concept based, and so we knew that they were studying conflict, that this was their idea, and then these tickets came. These tickets to the concert came, and that connection was visible, and it just sort of cascaded from there. There was nothing to force. No one had to search because anyone can address conflict. It exists.
in all of our fields.

They can talk about it in science class.

They can talk about it in math class.

And so it really takes away a lot of the burden of interdisciplinary planning when it's focused around something that's so universal.

One of the things that the language arts teacher did in preparation for discussing the visual images:

She said, "Remember, there are no right or wrong answers."

Let's talk about why that's important if you're trying to guide students to find their own voice.

Their teacher was asking them to, in effect, engage in an exploration.

You know, there is no right or wrong answer.

There is no definite destination.

And so all kinds of ideas are thrown out, and the students are forced to consider them, weigh them, with their sensibilities and, you know, in the end, formulate some notion of what's right for themselves.

I really think we open the ability to think in such significant ways when we have these opportunities to deal with a large concept or to deal with ways that children can go on their own and research and then bring a voice to the experience.

We're asking them
to deeply process, integrate, and then have an opinion, you know, so I really think that this is an essential. And the whole point of us teaching the skills we teach them and having the conversations we have with them is to get them to a point where they can formulate their ideas better where they can formulate their ideas better, and they can help other people to understand them. And it worked. That was the most amazing thing. The art was better after this unit. They became more effective at communicating, and they became more reflective in their process. And at the end, they found that they had something to say. Our final segment features a unit designed around the concept of culture. We've already seen Rick's class analyzing artifacts from an unknown civilization. We're going to return to his classroom now and learn how those civilizations were created. As you watch, consider how the concept of culture is explored in different subject areas. The sixth grade this year is working on a unit that we called the Island Cultures. We're trying to explore with the kids the concept of culture: What are the different component parts...
that go into establishing our culture?

And, you know, by extension, what are the forces acting on each of us as individuals?

How are your islands coming, so far?

Let me ask the team leaders. Sarah.

We have all of our culture universals pretty much down. And we have lots of artifacts for each one, but--

The first stage was to allow the kids to divorce themselves from the adult society, setting the situation that they've left adult society due to just terminal boredom.

You know, adults are so boring. And, of course, the kids all cheer.

You know, so they're thrilled to set off on this exploration.

Queen Mandy, given the fact that you got your position of leadership from the fact that your parents were, before you, the king or queen,

what influences are there on the decisions that you make?

Well, I mean, I can kind of rule for what I want because I don't have to worry really like me.

Like, 'cause I'm there no matter what, and if they argue with me,

I can, you know, like, yeah, chop their heads off.

Oh, okay.

When they get to their island, they've got a huge task ahead of them.
They've got to dig in, and they've got to look at all aspects of adult culture. And they've got to devise their own. We had the kids creating the world as they would like to see it within the limitations of a tropical island, creating artifacts that would represent different aspects of their culture. You know, I think, when we look at a culture, we look towards the products, you know, human products. So they're working on literature. They're working on sculpture. They're working on paintings. They're working on ritual arts: performance, drama, music. That's how we interpret our cultures. It is Katasi or Erutan? (all) Erutan. Okay, we will start with the delegation from Erutan. Okay, I guess it would only be natural that the queen has the first opportunity to speak. Um, well, our culture came to be on this island because we were quite bored with the way our parents were running the world. They did nothing interesting, so we needed some excitement in our lives. So we got on our little ship and sailed halfway across the world to this island we found which broke off the Galapagos. (Wright) What kind of environment did you find when you landed on this island?
Well, we found different types of environments.

There was several very large mountains, one with a point where three streams flowed from it into a large lake and another stream that went by the lake and lots of forest area.

It was a very large island. Well, actually, LaJeanna knows how many square miles it was. 728 square miles.

I think one of the things that happens as a result of breaking cultures down into these ten universals is, as the kids started comparing their own cultures that they've come up with, they realize that there's just an amazing number of similarities. They basically all have a respect for nature, especially on an island, if they don't treat nature kindly, they've really got nowhere to go.

Why did you decide to make this your home and not sail off in search of some better place?

Our leader that was conducting this really liked the birds and the animals that were there so he--she, actually--demanded that we...stay.

Okay.

You've talked a bit about background of culture. You've talked a bit about food. You've talked a little bit about food.

There's a couple of other elements here that I'm sure you would probably want to provide for yourself.

What about clothing and shelter? I'm assuming that you didn't all run around naked.
For shelter, we actually built a shelter in the trees.

Well, that's for the main city.

In the savanna, they made, uh, adobe-style houses, and same with--

No, the mountains made stone.

Oh, yeah, stone houses.

For clothing, I'm making some clothing for the girls.

And it's pretty much just yarn and weaving.

We wear wraps and a top.

And then for the men,

they wore, like, sashes and--which wrap around.

For ceremonial times, the women wear headbands like what Mandy's wearing.

And then the cloth is completely wrapped around the woman's body.

What kind of things do you value?

Let's talk about themes for a second.

Our main value is nature.

We think nature--it's very important to respect it.

And actually, we think we should treat all people and animals, anything living,

with respect.

And they're all equal.

And for our symbol--

Ah, okay.

Here's one version.

This is our symbol right here.

These are the two leaves in the center representing Mother Nature, one of our gods.

And the spirals here representing another one of our gods, Father Wind.

And on this one, I'm embroidering our name, Erutan, and also our motto,
Under the Elements of Nature.

I think, when we were planning this, we planned it very carefully to incorporate as many areas of the arts as we can. My kids are done performing scenes Tuesday. So my kids will be fine. It is conceivably possible for the kids to share what their cultures are like within the classroom. I mean, we talked about it today. Some of the kids are doing a wonderful job with the attitudes towards the unknown and have really developed that and have a great burial ritual. The dictionary says there are a couple of ways to look at a ritual, specifically "the proper form or order of a ceremony" or "a method or procedure faithfully followed." Okay, and that's what a ritual is. What's interesting, though, is the rituals that we have in our particular culture, it says something about our values. Okay, so the things that you guys choose to celebrate, it's going to say something about what you guys are about. You guys are going to use your voices and your bodies to create this ritual within your group. So the first thing I want you to do is just begin to move around the space. In a moment, I'm going to call "Freeze," and what I want you to do is, I want you to make a shape with your body,
whether the shape is high or it's medium or it's low, okay?

And each time, it's got to be something different.

Here we go, and you're walking.

Walk, walk, walk, walk.

Give me a shape.

Good, and you're walking again.

Move, move, move, move, move.

And freeze.

Now, you guys are gonna show me a picture of a word, as if I were in a museum, and I'm walking, as if I were in a museum, and I'm walking,

and I look up, and I see a picture.

And at the bottom of the picture, I see this word.

Show me what that word is.

The first one is conflict.

Five, four, three, two, and...

We started by just getting them moving,

getting them to stop just thinking about these ideas,

but actually moving around the space and trying to show them with their body.

Harmony.

And then we took words, an abstract idea,

and how can they reflect that idea in their bodies?

One, good job, okay.

Here's what we're going to do.

Somebody raise your hand and tell me what is one ritual
that your culture celebrates?

We celebrate this day called Wind Day or, like, Peace Day
or something.

941 05:40:36:18 05:40:38:24 Seed Day? Seed Day?
942 05:40:38:26 05:40:40:15 Seed day.
You plant trees.

944 05:40:42:21 05:40:44:02 Well, let's take that idea.

945 05:40:44:04 05:40:48:03 And what value does your ritual celebrate?
946 05:40:48:05 05:40:50:11 Well, like-- yeah, nature.

947 05:40:50:13 05:40:51:18 Nature?


951 05:40:56:00 05:40:58:03 And then we created a machine,
952 05:40:58:05 05:41:00:13 which is introducing the concept of:

953 05:41:00:15 05:41:07:05 How do I work with other people to create this idea?
954 05:41:07:07 05:41:09:03 Let's create a machine that expresses all those different things.

956 05:41:11:17 05:41:13:00 Who wants to start
957 05:41:13:02 05:41:14:24 with a really strong, clear, sudden movement?

958 05:41:14:26 05:41:16:23 You want to start?
959 05:41:16:25 05:41:19:05 Okay, let's use this whole area here,
960 05:41:19:07 05:41:20:26 and can you face this way?

961 05:41:20:28 05:41:23:06 The most important thing is just to get them engaged
962 05:41:23:08 05:41:26:14 and excited and coming up with different ideas.

963 05:41:26:16 05:41:29:20 Because so often, they want to be right.
964 05:41:29:22 05:41:31:21 They want it to be neat and orderly.

965 05:41:31:23 05:41:33:23 And we don't want that,
966 05:41:33:25 05:41:35:22 because we don't know where we're going yet.

967 05:41:35:24 05:41:38:09 Think about the elements in your ritual.

968 05:41:38:11 05:41:42:01 [all making swishing sounds]
969 05:41:42:03 05:41:47:23 And now we're gonna slow it way down.

970 05:41:47:25 05:41:49:13 The main thing is to understand

971 05:41:49:15 05:41:51:19 that the mess is good.
972 05:41:51:21 05:41:54:14 And out of that mess, shape will emerge,
973 05:41:54:16 05:41:55:25 but you've got to just--
you've got to let them get in there and come up with their own ideas.

Let's have the wind. And what's the other element we need?

Do we need the men? (student)

Earth.

The earth. I have an idea for the men. Well, like, the men could go, like, "Ahh"

and then go, "Sshh," 'cause they're, like, blowing in the wind.

They're trying to help the kids come up with some kind of ritual related to perhaps burial, marriage--you know,
some of the big events in our lives that cultures would typically celebrate.

This morning, some of my students were showing a ritual for a funeral that they were coming up with.

And it was quite interesting. We wait till two people die, and then we lay them across from each other.

And then we have tribe groups march around it one time. We burn the men and then throw them into the wind because we have a Father Wind, and so we think the men should be with the Father.

We bury the women because we have Mother Earth, and so the women will be with Mother Earth.

We bury the women because we have Mother Earth, and so the women will be with Mother Earth.

And the men will be with Father Wind. I also want to go back and look at the instruments they've created and see if they've created some
This whole thing that we're working on has really changed how you're going to look at the sixth grade music. We've talked about some of the foundations like rhythm and tonality and modality and those things are coming from. We're going to explore, start exploring, modality and sets of notes now and why did they choose certain ones? We're going to talk today a little bit about modes. Modes could be defined as a type of scale or melody indicating the whole and half-step relationships between the notes. Otherwise said, in a very simple way, a group of notes or a pattern of notes that you're going to use for your music. The way we've structured these little breakout sessions is that each group will send a couple of representatives, and they're responsible for learning whatever material the teacher presents to them. And they've got to bring it back to their group and impart that knowledge to the rest of the group. We're going to listen to a couple from these cultures here. And you'll see that some of them are very close. Mrs. Wescott's going to play those. [piano plays a non-Western mode] [piano plays § §]
a non-Western mode]

Now, some of these have come up from mathematical equations. Some of them come up from scientific things. Some groups have decided to have five notes as their mode. Some people have decided to have seven. Some people have decided to have three. And today, what we're going to do is, we're going to take some of these ideas of various sounds, and we're gonna let you decide what you think sounds good. You have five to seven jars on your tables. You have water in a pitcher. You have a container to put water in that you take out. You have syringes to take it out with. And you have mallets, which you can try your sound out with. And you can experiment with those jars in whatever way you'd like to to come up with something that's aesthetically what you think sounds good. [clinking] I like that one. Here, take some out. (Brunkan) What I want to show them is that music was created from someone, that they had to have a thought about something to base their culture's music on. So we talk about some of those foundations from Pythagoras or people like that.

In the sixth grade unit,
I started with just the curriculum concept that the teachers were using, these ten elements of culture, ten broad ideas of how a culture is defined.

So, ladies and gentlemen, we're about to get to work on our clay pots and our relief sculptures. How can you make this artwork representative of your culture? How does your culture use color, line, shape, texture—all of the elements of art that we've been talking about all semester? Now you have to come at them from the standpoint of the culture you're trying to recreate.

Rachel, our arts teacher, collaborated with us. She gave a brief mini-session to the kids on how to make slab pottery. One of the things that most of the kids noticed in many of the archaeological finds was that, when we looked at the Pre-Columbian cultures, many of the artifacts took the form of pottery. They would've been utilitarian vessels for cooking food, for keeping food, ritual vessels, et cetera.

So all of the groups decided that they wanted to make some form of pottery. The kids are looking at how cultures influence artifacts. So all semester, we've been looking at the different cultural universals: methods of finding food, political systems, beliefs about the unknown.
And they have to consider how those elements of culture influence the elements of art. But they also have to take it a step further. They want to think about, is this culture more free? And how would that make the art look more free? Is this culture more structured, more formal? How would that make the art look? Those considerations are going to influence the artistic decisions they make as they create artifacts from these cultures. What is it about turtles that are so wonderful that you want to worship them? When we came to the island, we saw a turtle and followed it to a tree. And on the back of the turtle was the shape of the island. They need to consciously know about the culture. Now, how can I visually represent that?" I showed a turtle with his hands on, like, the great powers of the earth. Because the way we worship turtles is that they're above everything else. You know, so they control the Sun, and they control the Moon. And this is actually a raindrop. What's important about those things? They're important symbols in our culture. (Hoffman-Dachelet)
What were the art historical concepts I wanted to look at?
How does culture influence art?
How does geography influence art?
How do the materials that are available change how the art looks?
Those broad concepts tie in perfectly with what the sixth grade teachers were teaching anyway.
So that's how I structured my curriculum throughout the year.
We saw a shooting star when we got stranded on our island.
And so, like, therefore, that's, like,
that showed us a sign that our god told us to stay there.
And so we stayed there.
And then we created our civilization.
We're looking for the synthesis of information.
How do you take information you've learned in one place and transfer that to another area of learning?
But also, how do you take the information that you're learning and create a product with that information?
Because in order to do that, you really have to know the information at a gut level.
and it's a deeper level than just repeating it back.
Anyone can repeat something back on a test, memorize it.
But to understand it and use it, that's more complicated.
Let's talk for a few minutes about how the concepts in this unit were explored, specifically those cultural universals that you'd identified, because that seemed to be carrying through everything
the students were doing. I thought it was awfully nice that they had those enumerated so clearly so the kids had some real good touchstones to go from. Yet even though they had those clear guidelines, there was so much choice involved throughout the process in every class. 

(Baxley) I'm curious. How were those ten things arrived at? Part of our social studies unit is to look at and explore some of the ancient Mesoamerican cultures and Native American cultures in North America, so we'd go through that as an introduction, and I always try to bring the discussion around to, you know, we've got these disparate groups of Native American peoples with very different cultures, and we try to ask the kids, "Okay, what's the common thread?" "What's the common thread between all of us in this classroom?" We all come from very different backgrounds." And the kids arrive at these ten universals in their own way, in their own terms, and then we introduce them to these terms that have been established by the teachers. They have some part in formulating what those things are gonna be or at least in coming to the same conclusions that you did. Right, and each year that we've done this,
I'm always amazed that the kids, before we even introduce these ten universals of culture, the kids identify the exact same universals. (Percival) They really—as a group, each group had to decide what their beliefs and values were. They did, and there was quite a bit of argumentation about this. We had some real falling-outs in the process. Because they were getting to philosophy, and that had to drive their decisions all through all of your curricula. There was no way they could operate as a group unless they had somehow come to terms with those beliefs and values. It's a great entry for talking about art. It's so easy to look at art from other cultures or other time periods and dismiss it as weird or strange. But if you say, "All right, it's not our job "to judge this art on our standards. "It's our job to figure out why it looks this way." From the simple and the obvious, you know? It's from the northwest coast. There's a rain forest there. They use a lot of wood
Rachel, you talk in the video about transfer of information. You've got to get beyond students just knowing information. They have to use it. Can you think about how a concept-based unit makes that more possible? We talk about symbolism at one point and different ways that different cultures use symbols, "We don't use symbols." And I start drawing an octagon, and I only have to get three lines into it before they know what it means. It's the most amazing thing. And then, all of a sudden, the floodgates open: "Oh, yeah. Oh, my gosh." We use symbols all the time." Then I ask them to create symbols and to use symbols in their artwork. And they use symbols in their folktales, and they talk about literary symbolism. And all of a sudden, it's going deeper. It's building up so that, instead of memorizing a definition, they're using it constructively in their own learning. (Wright) After constant repetition, you know that the kids know what they're talking about. I mean, we engage in conversations.
with the students on a daily basis as they're creating these cultures, and, you know, they've used the terms correctly again and again. At that point, there's no need for a formal pen-and-paper test.

What assessment tool do you have that you can document their learning to, let's say, parents or some outside agency? They journal as they go along, and we ask them certain questions. We ask them to describe certain aspects of their culture. And I've found that I don't even really have to demand that they use certain vocabulary, for instance. It arises naturally.

It seems that, in forming the culture, you've developed a very large portfolio to assess, in that you have objects, and you have the ability to question, just as you would in reviewing a portfolio with a child, and you have the whole team's reaction to things.

In essence, you are creating assessment tools as you go along.

There's something I think we're taking for granted: the ability of these students to work cooperatively. And I was wondering if you could just share with us some of the ways that you make it possible.
for that to happen, it seems with ease.

Well, it would be dishonest if I said that it came about with ease.

It didn't.

There were days where I would've liked to have leapt out of my window.

But I guess, you know, in hindsight, I see that I was able to teach on so many different levels.

I was able to go so far beyond, you know, the standard curriculum.

I allowed situations to arise naturally.

We had one group that absolutely could not work together in the beginning, and I think, you know, by the end of the whole process, they had gone through more growth than anybody else because I insisted that, you know, "Hey, you're on this island. You have no choice. You have to deal with each other or, you know, put up with the repercussions."

This conceit that they are a culture and that they are isolated actually provides, I think, oftentimes, the road out of that conflict because then, well, all right, so how does your culture--

We can take it beyond the personal.

What are the laws of your culture?

Do you need to change your laws?

Do you need to add some laws to your culture
to resolve this?

So this really extends into their life when they step into the world, you know, they go beyond the classroom.

Well, and it doesn't happen in a vacuum, either.

There's the fifth grade, that talk extensively about judicious discipline and how you can use the United States Constitution as a model for interacting with people in your daily life, and that leads so obviously into the sixth grade curriculum of cultures, which eventually leads naturally again into the eighth grade.

which we saw earlier.

And it's so easy to just say, "All right, our team is gonna do this" or "Our team plus the specialist is gonna do this."

But there needs to be, on some level, building-wide buy-in so naturally, one grade to the next.

In this program, we examined instruction organized around themes and concepts. We saw the rich experiences that students have when the arts are integrated across all subjects.

In our next program, we'll learn about planning and teaching toward Big Ideas.

For Connecting with the Arts, I'm Reynelda Muse.

[lighthearted music]