

Workshop 2

Developing Students as Artists

Arts teachers help students develop knowledge and fundamental skills while weaving in opportunities for creativity and independence. The challenge is to achieve a balance between teacher-led instruction and active, self-directed learning. To achieve mastery, students cannot be passive consumers of knowledge; they must actively construct and apply what they learn.

How do teachers help students develop as artists?

- Assignments reflect increasing knowledge, skills, and experience
- Instruction is thoughtfully sequenced to support student development
- Artistic roles are age- and level-appropriate
- Students experience increasing mastery and autonomy in the arts

Learning Goals

The goals of this workshop session are for you to:

- Construct a working definition of instructional “scaffolding,” and determine how it can help students develop as artists
- Identify teaching sequences that effectively scaffold student learning
- Redesign an instructional sequence to better foster students’ development

Workshop Session (On Site)

Getting Ready (15 minutes)

Readiness can be thought of as a student's pre-existing knowledge, experiences, and attitudes. Discuss how student readiness affects the sequence of instruction.

- What are the prerequisites for the various courses in your program?
- What happens if a student doesn't have the requisite knowledge, experiences, and/or attitudes for a particular course?
- Assuming that individuals progress at different rates through a course, how do you deal with students who have not developed the necessary knowledge and skills to succeed with the next phase of the curriculum?

Watching the Program (60 minutes)

The information sheets found at the end of this chapter provide helpful background on the schools, arts programs, and individual classes featured in each segment.

Consider the following questions as you watch the program. You may stop the video after each segment to discuss the questions with your colleagues.

Dance: Michael O'Banion [Senior Choreography Project]

- How does Michael support his students as they develop new artistic skills?
- How does your curriculum support the artistic development of your students?

Theatre: Peter Lynch [Stagecraft and Design]

- When did students make independent decisions, and when did Peter step in to offer guidance?
- How do you help your students become more self-reliant?

Visual Art: Dale Zheutlin and Jon Murray [City Silhouettes/Still Life Paintings]

- How does the visual art curriculum used by Dale and Jon support the artistic development of their students?
- How do you strike a balance between building skills and providing opportunities for creativity?

Music: William Taylor [Beginner Men's Ensemble/Angelaires]

- We see Will teaching two classes with very different skill levels. What differences in instructional techniques do you see Will use in these two classes?
- How do you motivate beginning students to continue studying the arts?

Activities and Discussion (45 minutes)

Instructional Sequence and "Scaffolding"

The teachers who appear in this program all say that their ultimate goal is to "step aside" and help students take responsibility for their own learning and artistic development.

The concept of *scaffolding* is useful in designing the kind of instruction demonstrated by these teachers, instruction aimed at fostering students' creative autonomy.

Workshop Session (On Site), cont'd.

Scaffolding refers to a particular kind of instructional support: support that encourages students to be active, self-directed learners.

Part I: Scaffolding (10 minutes)

Read and discuss the following two descriptions of scaffolding.

Scaffolding is an instructional strategy where a more knowledgeable person provides scaffolds or supports to facilitate students' development as they build on prior knowledge and internalize new information. Scaffolds are temporary structures that physically support workers while they complete jobs that would otherwise be impossible. Scaffolds provide workers with both a place to work and the means to reach work areas that they could not access on their own. Instructional scaffolding is a teaching strategy that was cleverly named for the practical resemblance it bears to the physical scaffolds used on construction sites. The strategy consists of teaching new skills by engaging students collaboratively in tasks that would be too difficult for them to complete on their own. The instructor initially provides extensive instructional support, or scaffolding, to continually assist the students in building their understanding of new content and process. Once the students internalize the content and/or process, they assume full responsibility for controlling the progress of a given task. The temporary scaffolding provided by the instructor is removed to reveal the impressive permanent structure of student understanding.

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Some teachers favor an apprenticeship model of scaffolding, where an expert models an activity, provides advice and examples, guides the student in practice, and then tapers off support until the student can do the task alone. Others prefer methods that encourage ongoing consultation with other people, since in life few people ever work exclusively on their own.

From "Scaffolding as a Teaching Strategy" by Linda J. Lawson. Used with permission.

After you have read the descriptions, discuss the following questions:

- How do these two descriptions of scaffolding compare to your own understanding and use of the term?
- As a group, try to agree on a working definition of scaffolding.

Part II: Examples of Scaffolding (15 minutes)

Identify examples of scaffolding used by teachers in Program 2. For each of the teaching segments in the program, brainstorm examples of scaffolding that you saw:

Dance	Senior Choreography Project
Theatre	Stagecraft and Design
Visual Art	City Silhouettes/Still Life Paintings
Music	Beginner Men's Ensemble/Angelaires

Part III: Identify Scaffolding You Do, or Might Consider (20 minutes)

How do you sequence instruction? What sort of scaffolding techniques do you use? Do you provide students with the same level of support at all stages? Or do you strive to withdraw supports over time, allowing students more opportunities for creative autonomy?

Use the *Instructional Sequence Worksheet* on the following page to sketch a teaching sequence you do, and analyze the scaffolding and student autonomy it involves.

Afterwards, share with the group your instructional sequences and the ratings you gave the different steps.

Instructional Sequence Worksheet

Workshop2: Developing Students as Artists

1. Identify an area of artistic knowledge / skill you teach (circle one) in one of the four art forms.

Dance	Music	Theatre	Visual Art
Dancing	Solo singing/playing	Acting	Painting/drawing
Choreography	Ensemble singing/playing	Playwriting	Sculpture
	Composing/arranging	Directing	Printmaking
		Designing	Videography
			Commercial design

2. In the boxes, briefly outline an instructional sequence you teach in this area.

1.	2.	3.	4.
<div> <div>5</div> <div>1</div> </div>	<div> <div>5</div> <div>1</div> </div>	<div> <div>5</div> <div>1</div> </div>	<div> <div>5</div> <div>1</div> </div>
Amount of scaffolding you provide	Scaffolding	Scaffolding	Scaffolding
Level of creative autonomy students have at this stage	Autonomy	Autonomy	Autonomy

3. Now use the scales above to rate each step in the sequence, according to the amount of scaffolding and autonomy you think it involves.

As you think about your ratings, consider some of these questions:

- Are students working alone or as part of a group?
- What leadership roles do students take on?
- What experiences do they need to prepare them for their responsibilities?
- How much independence do they have?
- At what point do they become completely self-directed?
- Do advanced students mentor other students?

Workshop Session (On Site), cont'd.

As a group, discuss these questions:

- If the overall goal is student autonomy, what is the relationship between the scaffolding a teacher provides and the creative autonomy students have?
- What strategies can we use to increase the likelihood that students are making creative choices as artists?

Between Sessions (On Your Own)

Homework

In your journal, describe two recent students—one who displayed great progress in his or her development as an artist, and one who struggled. For each student, reflect in writing on these questions:

- What qualities as a learner did he or she have? What sorts of classroom behaviors were characteristic?
- What are two or three ways I intervened in her/his development? What did I do? What kinds of support or scaffolding did I provide?
- Which strategies were most successful? Which least successful?
- How can I incorporate these insights into my instruction?

Dance

SEGMENT 1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Michael O'Banion

20 years teaching

About the School

Denver School of the Arts

Denver, CO

Type:

Urban/Arts-focused

Grades:

6-12

Students:

900

Very mixed socio-economic status

Majors:

Creative Writing, Dance, Theatre, Instrumental Music, Stagecraft & Design, Video & Cinema Arts, Visual Art, and Vocal Music

About the Dance Program

Faculty:

2 full-time + resident and guest artists

Students:

115

Facilities:

Above Average in the Area

- 3 large dance studios
- 2 theatres (178 seats, 550 seats)
- Full light grid
- Dressing rooms

Required Courses:

Modern, Ballet, Jazz, African & Spanish, Improvisation, Composition, Repertory, Performance Technique, Partnering, and Senior Seminar

Elective Courses:

Tap, Hip Hop, and Pointe

Audition:

Technique Master Class, individual choreography showings, and interview

About the Featured Class

Senior Project:

Students choreograph other advanced students as well as their own solos, and then the graduating class works as a team to create a full evening of dance in concert form as a culminating choreographic project.

Preparations/Prerequisites:

Eligible students are seniors with a B or better grade

Student Motivation:

High

Preparations/Prerequisites:

- Sixth-graders begin collaborating on choreographic projects
- Intermediate students learn partnering skills and group choreographic techniques and devices
- Juniors collaborate on an informal evening of choreography – Junior Project
- Advanced sophomores and juniors participate as performers in Senior Projects

In the Teacher's Words

What motivates your students?

The Senior Project is an honor and a responsibility. It is part of the tradition of the program, and students look forward to the opportunity to complete a Senior Project. It is not mandatory that a student participates, but no student has ever elected not to.



Program 2: Developing Students as Artists

Theatre

SEGMENT 2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Peter Lynch
11 years teaching

About the School

Denver School of the Arts
Denver, CO

Type:
Urban/Arts-focused

Grades:
6-12

Students:
900
Very mixed socio-economic status

Majors:
Creative Writing, Dance, Theatre,
Instrumental Music, Stagecraft & Design,
Video & Cinema Arts, Visual Art, and
Vocal Music

About the Stagecraft & Design Program

Faculty:
2 design and costume + 1
paraprofessional technical director

Students:
110 majors + 100 taking electives

Facilities:
Above Average in the area

- 6 performance venues
- Full light grid
- Sound system with 48-channel board
- 1 classroom
- Costume shop
- Metal shop (shared with Visual Arts)
- Construction and paint areas
- Dressing rooms
- Storage for props, costume, and scenery

Required Courses:
Skill-level courses on Materials and
Construction, Design-Styles Course, 15
hours of production, and community work

- Ninth-graders design and produce all music department productions
- Tenth-graders design and produce all dance department productions
- Eleventh-graders design and produce all theatre department productions
- Twelfth-graders produce an independent senior project and/or stage manage at least one main stage production

Elective Courses:
Lighting, Make-up, Costume, Stage
Construction, Sound Production, Design,
Invention Design, and Historical Periods

Audition:
Portfolio showing and paper-based
design assignment. Returning students
must audition annually, at the end of the
fall semester. The audition accounts for
one third of their semester grade.

About the Featured Class

Sophomore Stagecraft & Design:
Tenth-graders spend a semester
working in a specific production
area, mostly lighting and costuming,
as those areas pertain to dance.

Student Motivation:
High

Preparations/Prerequisites:

- Two years spent in the production department
- Intermediate students have worked on at least 24 productions

In the Teacher's Words

What safety precautions do stagecraft and dance students take for the aerial work?

Because the individual handling the aerial line shares a connection to the person hanging on the other end, they work together to make sure each person feels safe with what he or she is doing. To reinforce this relationship, students often verbalize their responsibilities, for example, saying: "I will be ready at this cue."

Program 2: Developing Students as Artists

Visual Art

SEGMENT 3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Dale Zheutlin
 32 years teaching

Jon Murray
 26 years teaching

About the School

Mamaroneck High School
 Mamaroneck, NY

Type:
 Suburban/Comprehensive

Grades:
 9-12

Students:
 1,400
 Middle/High socio-economic status

Arts Requirement:
 New York has a 1-credit art or music graduation requirement (180 minutes of instruction per week for one year)

About the Visual Art Program

Faculty:
 5 full-time

Students:
 425

Facilities:
 About Average in the Area

- 5 specialized art studios
- 1 art gallery/exhibition space
- 1 office
- 1 photo room

Required Courses:
 Art Foundation

Elective Courses:
 Drawing & Painting, Advanced Drawing & Painting, Sculpture, Introduction to Clay, Advanced Clay, Advanced Placement (AP) Art Studio, Introduction to Illustration, Advanced Illustration, and Senior Art Experience

About the Featured Classes

Art Foundation:

Students learn to recognize and use the elements of art – line, form, space, texture, color, and light – while experimenting with a variety of materials and techniques.

The class covers drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, and computer graphics.

Preparations/Prerequisites:

Open to all students, but taken by ninth-graders who plan to continue in art

Typical Subsequent Courses:

Drawing & Painting, Sculpture, or Introduction to Illustration

Student Motivation:

Mixed. Motivation varies from students fulfilling state graduation requirements to students following the AP sequence.

In the Teacher's Words

How do you find a balance between teaching skills to students, and giving them the freedom to be creative?

Dale Zheutlin: The Art Foundation course is structured so that each project has two parts. The first part is carefully constructed to help the student focus on learning a specific skill. The second part encourages them to use their new understanding of that skill in an intensely personal and creative way.

Drawing & Painting:

In this intermediate level studio class, students develop drawing skills, a stronger sense of design, and insights into the behavior of color.

Preparations/Prerequisites:

Art Foundation

Typical Subsequent Course:

Advanced Drawing & Painting, Illustration, and Ceramics

Student Motivation:

Moderate. Students have already completed one art class, and they've decided to continue. Students who take Drawing & Painting in the sophomore year often have their sights set on Advanced Placement Art Studio in their senior year.

Student Level:

Intermediate, mostly tenth-graders

About the School

East High School

Denver, CO

Type:

Urban/Comprehensive

Grades:

9-12

Students:

1,900

Very mixed socio-economic status

Arts Requirement:

None

About the Music Program

Faculty:

2 full-time (1 vocal and 1 instrumental)

Students:

142

Facilities:

Above Average in the Area

- 2 classrooms (instrumental and vocal)
- School auditorium

Required Courses:

None

Elective Vocal Music Courses:

Beginning Choir, Men's Ensemble, Seraphim, Honor Choir, Angelaires, Beginning Music Theory, AP Music Theory, and Voice

About the Featured Classes

Men's Ensemble:

This beginning level ensemble for boys focuses on voice training and rudimentary music reading skills.

Audition:

None

Preparations/Prerequisites:

Any student may choose to take this course. Students only need to demonstrate the ability to match pitch (hear a note and sing it back accurately).

Typical Subsequent Course:

Honor Choir

Student Motivation:

Mixed. Some students will become motivated to stay in the choir program.

In the Teacher's Words

What does solfege mean?

Solfege is a series of syllables that are used by singers to identify and to sing the pitches of a scale (do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti, do). The word can also refer to general singing and ear-training instruction.

Why do the Angelaires use microphones in class?

Most vocal jazz groups use microphones because they perform with amplified instruments (bass, piano, and drums). Microphones are used in class to acclimate the students to the sound of amplified voices.

Angelaires:

Students receive accelerated and demanding instruction in vocal technique and performance, music theory, music appreciation, ear-training, vocal improvisation, and music history, as well as opportunities to use these advanced musical skills in a vocal ensemble setting.

This is a high-level "X" class, which means that students receive a higher grade point: A=5.2 instead of 4.0.

Audition Requirements:

Students must demonstrate music reading ability, vocal ability, aural skill, and part-singing ability. Rehearsal discipline, school attendance, and dedication to vocal music (particularly in other ensembles) are also examined.

Student Motivation:

High. Most students are motivated by their love of music or by the quality of the music that the Angelaires make.

Additional Resources

On the Web

General Sites

The Collaborative Classroom

<http://www.ncrel.org>

Search for: *collaborative classroom*

Essay describing characteristics of collaborative classrooms, including teacher and student roles, interactions, challenges and conflicts, and relevant research

Constructing Knowledge in the Classroom

<http://www.sedl.org/>

Search for: *scimast constructing*

An article that introduces teachers to constructivism and how it can be employed in the classroom, including a list of six characteristics of the constructivist classroom

Instructional Grouping in the Classroom

<http://www.nwrel.org/>

Search for: *ward grouping*

An article on reasons and strategies for creating learning groups in the classroom

Working Toward Student Self-Direction & Personal Efficacy as Educational Goals

<http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/>

Search for: *personal efficacy*

Information and strategies enabling students to take charge of their own learning

School and Teacher Sites

Denver School of the Arts—Dance Major

<http://dsa.dpsk12.org/>

Select: *Majors*, then *Performing Arts Department*

Web page for the dance program that Michael O'Banion chairs

Denver School of the Arts—Stagecraft and Design Major

<http://dsa.dpsk12.org/>

Select: *Majors*, then *Fine and Practical Arts Department*

Web page for the Stagecraft and Design program that Peter Lynch chairs

Mamaroneck High School—Art Department

<http://www.mamkschools.org/mhs/>

Select: *Departments and Class Web Pages*, then *Art*

Web page for the Visual Art Department where Dale Zheutlin and Jon Murray teach

Boody Fine Arts, Inc.

<http://www.boodyfinearts.com/>

Select: *Artists*, then *Artist Listing A-Z*, then *Zheutlin*

Photo gallery of Dale Zheutlin's ceramic artwork

East High School

<http://east.dpsk12.org/>

Web site for music teacher William Taylor's school

Additional Resources, cont'd.

In Print

Brooks, Jacqueline Grennon, & Brooks, Martin. *In Search of Understanding: The Case for Constructivist Classrooms*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Revised edition, 1999. ISBN: 0871203588

Presents a case for the development of classrooms in which students are encouraged to construct deep understandings of important concepts

Eisner, Elliot. *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*. Yale University Press, 2002. ISBN: 0300095236

Examines different approaches to the teaching of the arts

Hogan, Kathleen, & Pressley, Michael. *Scaffolding Student Learning: Instructional Approaches and Issues*. Brookline Books, 1997. ISBN: 1571290362

Addresses the how-tos of scaffolding for students who need support to keep up, as well as those working to master difficult materials

Manning, Brenda H., & Payne, Beverly. *Self-Talk for Teachers and Students: Metacognitive Strategies for Personal and Classroom Use*. Allyn & Bacon, 1996. ISBN: 0205159486

Guides teachers to use metacognition to change the ways they think and learn so they will become more reflective, autonomous, proactive, and positive

Meichenbaum, Donald, & Biemiller, Andrew. *Nurturing Independent Learners*. Brookline Books, 1998. ISBN 1571290478

A framework for helping students acquire skills and strategies, and transfer them to increasingly complex, authentic tasks

Notes
