

Who's at the Drawing Table?
Innovative Models of Collaborative School Program Development and Delivery

School Programs at the Art Gallery of Ontario

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Our Challenge: How do you get part-time teaching staff (Education Officers) and volunteers (Gallery Guides) to work together to deliver an exceptional student experience in a unionized work environment?

Our Model: A unique team-teaching structure based on distinct yet cooperative roles for unionized part-time teaching staff and volunteers.

Change Management – Lessons Learned:

1. **Assess the limitations and possibilities** of your situation and find creative solutions that work for your institution – there is no one-size-fits-all model of school program delivery
2. **Position the change** as part of your institution's larger mandate and that as staff, you are charged with implementing that change – de-personalize the change
3. **Support from director and management** – support and advocacy at this level will prove invaluable when the change is challenged, as it will be
4. **Straight from the horse's mouth** – Share feedback gathered from visitor research to demonstrate your institution's responsiveness to its audience in support of the change
5. **Take control of your staff hiring and volunteer recruitment processes**, from posting methods to interview questions, to ensure you are attracting candidates who buy into the change – the enthusiasm from new faces is infectious!
6. **Establish a common goal** that is the main focus of both staff and volunteer roles to reinforce teamwork towards a shared objective – an exceptional student experience
7. **Language is power** – words like “team” and phrases like “shared goals” used repeatedly in communications help to drive home the idea of we're-in-this-together
8. **Clearly outline responsibilities and expectations** of both roles and how they work together through job descriptions and volunteer placement descriptions. Require descriptions to be signed as a real and symbolic demonstration of accountability.
9. **Support roles both separately and together** – Provide a combination of separate and shared meetings and training sessions to acknowledge the distinct contributions and specific issues of each role, and to provide opportunities to work together on school program delivery skills
10. **Create team traditions and celebrate together** to build camaraderie such as winter holiday and end-of-year potluck parties
11. **Be transparent and keep lines of communication open** – everyone appreciates honesty and potential fears can be alleviated
12. **Be kind to yourself – being a change agent is not easy!** Find support amongst colleagues, family, and friends, and try to find that elusive balance between work and the rest of your life.

Who's at the Drawing Table?

Alyson Luck, Associate Manager, Learning Through Art, aluck@guggenheim.org

Jennifer Bevill, Teaching Artist, Learning Through Art, jennybev@gmail.com

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

Challenges:

- Art of Problem Solving findings discovered 3 out of 6 indicators of creativity (Flexibility, Resource Recognition, and Connections of Ends and Aims).
 - How do we disseminate this information to classroom teachers?
 - How do you teach for creativity when it's not an explicit activity or behavior, more like something you set conditions for and then try not to step on?
 - What does it mean to think and teach like an artist?

Art of Problem Solving Findings:

Problem Solving Skills as found in art education, identified by APS.

- Imagining
- Experimentation
- **Flexibility**
- **Resource Recognition**
- **Connections of ends and aims**
- Self reflection

Teaching Artist Skills and Habits

Teaching artist recognizes, encourages, models, and shows examples of the following:

- Multiple approaches and individual solutions
- Questioning and curiosity
- Deliberate intentions and choice-making
- Seeing mistakes or challenges as opportunities

Project Team - Collaboration:

- The Project Team was created to plan for the Summer Institute and also learn how to disseminate Art of Problem Solving information.
- 42 applicants, 13 teachers (Art Teachers, Classrooms Teachers – from public and private schools in New York.)
- Participants were paid \$400 to attend 7 sessions
- This was a chance to model “Teaching Behaviors” and to get feedback

Project Team findings (by the Guggenheim)

- Being a teacher (even an art teacher) at a school is very different than being a practicing teaching artist.
- Teaching for creativity means you literally have to twist your brain to think in a way that goes against many of the teaching practices that you are encouraged to do in other subject areas.
- Creativity is about experimenting, failing, multiple approaches, etc. This is different than other subject areas. Two conflicts we discovered are around time efficiency and goals. Creativity by

definition is not efficient, therefore appropriate goals must be set for creative art making. Goals usually won't be product based.

- Language that makes sense to teaching artists does not necessarily make sense to classroom teachers. Touchstone questions (below) were created to translate the findings into a visual language and also highlighted the study findings/indicators of problem-solving.
- Our professional development workshops needed to model these teaching skills as well as give tangible takeaways and ideas. Theory was NOT enough – teachers needed tools they could use, visual, hands on experiences, and experiential learning.

Touchstone Questions:

- Am I allowing my students to discover things for themselves? (Experimentation and resource recognition)
- Am I asking juicy questions? (Open ended questions allow us to question assumptions)
- Are my lessons full of surprise and mystery? (Engages imagination)
- Am I choosing my constraints carefully? (Multiple right answers)
- Am I allowing my students to respond in multiple ways? (Connection of ends and aims)
- Have I got their backs? (Flexibility and risk taking)
- Am I encouraging them to reflect? (Self reflection)

Activities:

Autobiography in Pictures for Students

The activity consists of a list of questions, answered in pictures, that serves as a diagnostic/warm up. (Also as good practice for visualization and visual thinking):

1. What is your favorite season of the year?
2. What is your favorite time of day or night? (no clocks)
3. If you could be any animal, which would you be?
4. If you could live in an animal home, where would you live? (doesn't have to be the same one)
5. What is something you are really good at?
6. What comforts you when you are afraid?
7. Think of a living being (adult, friend, pet) you like spending time with and draw them.
8. Where is your favorite place to be?
9. On the playground, where do you play first?
10. What are you most proud of?
11. What is your wish for the world? (not just you but everyone)
12. What is important to know about you that I forgot to ask? (write the question and then answer it with a drawing)

Drawing Challenges:

1) Neverending Line

Draw a long continuous line to fill up the page without ever lifting up your pencil (a demonstration usually helps so the students get that their drawings can look like a maze/ labyrinth/ crazy squiggles)

2) 8-year-old Self

Think about three words that described your personality when you were eight. With your non-dominant hand draw a portrait of yourself as an 8-year-old while thinking about these characteristics.

Who's at the Drawing Table?

Niki Ciccotelli Stewart – niki.stewart@crystalbridges.org

Director of Education and Exhibitions, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art

The Challenge: Start from scratch

What would you do, if you could do anything?

Enduring questions for building our school program:

- What do the local students need?
- How is it relevant to the classroom curriculum and common core?
- What can you do in an informal setting that you can't do in a classroom?
- How do you get them here?
- How do you make it fun and interactive?

Round One: Secure Interest. Developing content with stakeholders was key to our success.

- Superintendents
- Principals
- Teachers
- Teacher advisory committee formation

Round Two: Partnerships. Working with existing community partners strengthened our content.

- Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art
- Walton Arts Center
- Trike Theatre for Youth
- The Kennedy Center

Round Three: Content Development. Working with teams to create content that they needed and wanted

- Local School District: Curriculum and Instruction teams in each district
- National Education Groups: Common Core
- Museum Departments: Curatorial, Library and Education

Resulting initiative: Tableau

Unpacking the Process: Does the order matter?

- Single – simple translation
- Pair – working with a partner
- Abstract – interpreting non-human elements

Unpacking the Process: Why does this work?

- Tableau immediately displays a student's understanding.
- Teachers can quickly assess knowledge and understanding through tableau.
- It's collaborative learning.
 - Learn to work as a group.
 - Learn to rely on collective knowledge.
 - Knowing that 150 other teachers in 30 other schools are doing this with hundreds of students every day is powerful!

It begins & ends with collaboration.

- By collaborating with our partners, tableau was born as a cross-curricular learning tool.
- The artwork becomes a platform for learning about more than just art.
- The students learn through an experience.
- They are activated, engaged, and immersed.
- They learn to work in a collaborative group.