**Come and Join the Circus!**

Advocating for the Creative Arts & Design in K-16 Classrooms & Beyond

Debrah C. Sickler-Voigt, Ph.D., MTSU
Monica Leister, M.S., TSB
TinyCircus.org

---

**NAEA: The Art of Design Objectives**

- **Form:** Stop Motion Films Created/Inspired by the Tiny Circus
- **Function:** Teaching Big Ideas, Creative Expression, & Entertainment
- **Future of Visual Arts Education:** Art Educators Using Creative Artworks to Advocate for Quality Arts Programming

---

**Art Education: Thriving in Teaching & Learning Lessons to Thrive: Tiny Circus—Creativity**

Textbook Lesson Includes This Kaleidoscopic Design

---

**The Tiny Circus’ Creativity**

---

**The Tiny Circus: “Come and Join the Circus”**

- Founded in 2008
- Artist collective (over 1,000 everyday people of all ages)
- Stop animation films
- Based in Grinnell, Iowa & New Orleans

---

**The Tiny Circus: Deep Collaboration**

- Artists’ anonymity—all members have a voice.
- The artists bring their experience not authority.
- “Hosting the Circus”
- Workshops last from a few hours to several weeks

---
Stop Motion/Claymation Process

- Select a theme/big idea
- Brainstorm ideas
- Develop a storyboard
- Arranging objects into creative forms
- Photograph frame shots of objects arranged into slightly different positions to illustrate a sequence of movements
- Add technological effects, including sound.

National Visual Arts Standards Framework

- Creating
- Presenting
- Responding
- Connecting

Designing Creativity into Everyday Life

- Creativity is present in simple and common forms.
- People need not have special tools or equipment to radiate their own unique creativity.

Arts Advocacy

- Arts advocacy informs others about the value of art & its role children’s education.
- It brings positive attention to teachers, students, & schools.

Teachers & Arts Advocacy Skills

- Teacher professionalism
- Knowledge of the discipline
- Enthusiasm for subject matter
- Genuine care for students
- Ability to inspire & motivate others
- Effective collaborations

Advocating Your Message

- Newsletter
- Website
- Ceremonies
- Identify Life Skills
- Student Works
- Artist Statements
- Multimedia Presentations
- Displays
- PTO
**Advocacy-in-Action**

- Become aware of how others’ have developed advocacy campaigns.
- Use advocacy to inform policy makers & administrators why children need the arts.

**Community Partnerships**

- Partnerships place children in touch with the community.
- Build on existing & create new partnerships.

**The Tiny Circus—Elephant Trap**

527 Students from Mount Vernon Washington Elementary Tiny Circus & Sarah Fitzgerald

**Arts Advocacy Campaign**

- Promote your arts advocacy campaign like a quality infomercial:
  - Identify Best Features
  - Enthusiastic Voice
  - Present Quality Visuals
  - Explain why children need the visual arts

**The Tiny Circus’ Dragon Trap**

Cecilia Elementary School, 210 participants, 40 minute class sessions

**Arts Advocacy Serves All Students**

- Build students’ self-confidence
- Active participation in school
- Positive attention from peers
**Collaboration: MTSU & TSB (K-16)**

- K-16 collaboration to provide a unique and meaningful project that combined the talents and creativity of elementary, middle, and high school students, all of whom have visual impairments.
- Each group's contributions built upon the next to design a stop motion animation/ Claymation project about “Adventure.”

**MTSU & TSB Teamwork**

Together we achieve more!

**MTSU & TSB Video**

**Adventure Film: Our Materials**

- Stop Motion Studio HD
- Claytoon Clay
- Good microphone: Samson Meteor
- (PowerPoint on Loop or Stop Motion Studio are Free Alternatives)

**Designing Creativity into Everyday Life**

- Use The 'Tiny Circus' films as a guide, consider how you might utilize common objects and creative ideas to produce meaningful artworks.
- Identify how the different parts come together to promote the value of the arts in your school and the greater community.

**References**

Contact

• Debrah C. Sickler-Voigt, Ph.D. “Debbie”
  – Textbook: ART EDUCATION: THRIVING IN TEACHING & LEARNING (publication forthcoming)
  – dsickler@mtsu.edu
• Monica Leister, M.S.
  – Tennessee School for the Blind
  – Monica.Leister@tsbgers.org
• Tiny Circus (Carlos & Katie)
  – www.TinyCircus.org