Concentration Reframed as Essential Question
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Does “What’s your CONCENTRATION?” freeze your students in their tracks? That’s not good for young artists’ thinking process or portfolio development! Reframe Concentration as EQ. Theory & Practical Instructional Methods. Best Practice Lecture

Convention Center/Meeting Room R08/Second Level
• What is the Instructional Objective for students creating a “Concentration”?

• How do your students identify and pursue their “Concentration”?

• What improvements would you like to see in how your students identify and pursue their “Concentration”? 
IN MAY WHERE WILL YOUR STUDENTS BE?
WHY SHOULD AP® STUDIO ART CONCENTRATION BE RE-CONCEIVED AS AN ESSENTIAL QUESTION?

HOW MIGHT CONCENTRATION AS AN ESSENTIAL QUESTION BE PRACTICALLY INTRODUCED TO MY STUDENTS?
REVIEW OF THEORY

Backwards Design

Big Ideas

Essential Questions

Enduring Understandings
Backwards Design

Grant Wiggins

Jay McTighe
What is Backwards Design?

“...many teachers begin with textbooks, favored lessons, and time-honored activities rather than deriving those tools from targeted goals or standards.

We advocate the reverse: One starts with the end-the desired results (goals or standards)-and then derives the curriculum from the evidence of learning (performances) called for by the standard and the teaching needed to equip students to perform.”

Enduring Understandings

- Frame big ideas to give meaning and lasting importance to discrete elements such as facts and skills.

- Transfer to other fields as well as life.

- “Unpack” Big Ideas to reveal misunderstandings and misconceptions.

- Provide a conceptual foundation for content.

- Are deliberately framed as declarative sentences that present major generalizations of recurrent ideas.
How can art teachers set up instructional conditions to support student discovery of enduring understandings?
WHAT IS A BIG IDEA?

A BIG IDEA (DESCRIPTION)


A BIG IDEA:
• Provides a “Conceptual lens” for prioritizing content.
• Serves as an organizer for connecting important facts, skills, and actions.
• Transfers to other context.
• Manifests itself in various ways within disciplines
• Requires uncoverage because it is an abstraction.
How can students identify the Big Ideas that exist in their topics of interest?
PRACTICE FINDING BIG IDEAS THAT EXIST IN TOPICS OF INTEREST

Examples

The American Civil War

Emotions

Hunger Games
Real Example
My concentration is about combing two animals into one.
What’s the BIG IDEA???

MORPHING
What is a Declarative Statement?

A declarative statement provides a fact or an argument and ends with a full stop.

The period indicates a finality or conclusion of an idea.
REFRAME MORPHING AS ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
What is a Question?

In an Interrogative Sentence (Question) the **verb** or **verb phrase** usually appears **before** the subject and **EXPECTS** the **ACTION** of **RESPONSE**.
How Do Questions Differ from Declarative Statements?

• How do people respond to questions vs. declarative sentences?

• In what ways does a definitive statement effect possible future actions?

• What type of sentence best stimulates investigation? Why?
MORPHING

• Morphing WHY????????
• To what purpose?
• What do you want to communicate through morphing?
It is not enough to make cute morph pictures. Your concentration should represent a meaningful underlying idea. First ask
*What meaningful ideas interest you?

Then ask
*In what ways might using the technique of morphing help to communicate those ideas?
*What meaningful ideas interest you?

• I am concerned about global warming. What will my future on Earth be like?

• It seems that people in this country view everything at the extremes. There is meeting in the middle. There is no uncertainty. It’s my way or the highway. I see things with a lot of uncertainty.
Example 1

From: My concentration ideas is humans adapting to environmental changes.

To: How might humans adapt to predicted climate changes?

What Topical EQ do you have about your Concentration EQ?
How might humans adapt to predicted climate changes?

1. What climate changes are expected?
2. How will these changes effect the environment?
3. In what ways has human interaction with the environment changed natural environments?
4. In what ways have animals adapted to environmental changes/What characteristics enabled them to survive successfully?
5. What characteristics might provide people better adaptability/survival in a “Human Morphed” environment?
6. How have others morphed images?
7. Why have others morphed images?
Your investigation plan

Question 1  What climate changes are expected?
List 6 sources to investigate this question.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
Your investigation plan

Question 2 How will these changes effect the environment?

List 6 sources to investigate this question.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.
Your investigation plan

Question 3 In what ways has human interaction with the environment changed natural environments? List 6 sources to investigate this question.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
ETC
Question 6 **How have others morphed animals?**

Source 1. Google search “Morphed Animals:

Question 1  How have others morphed animals? 6 sketches
ETC.
Example 2 Morphing

From: It seems that people in this country view everything at the extremes. There is NO meeting in the middle. There is no uncertainty. It’s my way or the highway. I see things with a lot of uncertainty. My concentration idea is about using creatures to show different people’s opinions about the same things.

To: What and why are the polarizing opinions in the US?
Example 2 Morphing

• What issues are most polarizing?
• What are the reasons & characteristics for each side’s position?
• What Animal would best represent each side’s position?
• How have others used animals to represent ideas?
• How could the animals be combined to represent a compromise?
• What would the morphed animal’s environment be like?
Progression from a declarative sentence.
How does the concluding statement differ from the beginning idea?

(The Concentration Statement)
What should the Concentration Statement Reveal?
Think of the Concentration Statement as unpacking the suitcase at the END OF THE CONCENTRATION JOURNEY.
What is an Enduring Understanding?

“Enduring understandings are statements SUMMARIZING important ideas and core processes that are central to a Big Idea or discipline and have lasting value.”

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If a “Concentration Statement” is a statement summarizing the student’s Enduring Understandings resulting from Their Journey with the BIG IDEA then it needs to be expressed as an ending conclusion to their investigation.
Global climate is changing. The dinosaurs died off because of climate change. People could too. My concentration explored and envisioned how humans might evolve new characteristics to adapt to environmental changes.
Example 2 Morphing

I explored opposing opinions on contemporary issues. I then selected animals to best represent each side’s position. These were morphed into one creature & given an environment to represent our national perspective. I studied Native American Totems & was influenced by George Orwell’s Animal Farm.
My INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVE for creating a “CONCENTRATION”?

STUDENTS WILL DEVELOP AN ENDURING UNDERSTANDING OF A SELF-SELECTED BIG IDEA THROUGH THE ARTISTIC PROCESS OF ONGOING INVESTIGATION OF ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS & UNIQUELY PERSONAL IDEATION.
WHAT DO I WANT TO INVESTIGATE?

WHAT DO I WANT TO COMMUNICATE ABOUT MY INVESTIGATION?
\[(C + M/T = V) = EU\]

**CONCEPT**  
Student’s individual investigation of **ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S)**

**+ MEDIA**  
Student’s individual application of the media lesson taught in this lesson

__________________________________________________

= **VOICE IN IDEATION**  
Original statement made about the concept (BIG IDEA) with the lesson media/techniques.

__________________________________________________

= **ENDURING UNDERSTANDING**
WHEN SHOULD THE CONCEPTS OF BIG IDEAS AND ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS BE INTRODUCED TO STUDENTS?

IN AN IDEAL WORLD

Freshman Art Classes

Prior to “Concentration” development
A Scaffold Lesson

• For your next assignment you will be asked to identify a BIG IDEA, develop related ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS about that BIG IDEA, investigate your questions, develop an artwork in response to your investigation and tell about what you came to understand from your investigation.
IN A BREADTH LESSON WHEN SHOULD BIG IDEAS AND ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS BE INTRODUCED TO STUDENTS?

• Somewhere before, with, or after your introductory media/technique instructional activities

&

• Before the students begin researching, experimenting and planning for the final artwork.
IN MAY WHERE WILL YOUR STUDENTS BE?
REFERENCES


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