

# International Journal of Education & the Arts

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

ISSN 1529-8094

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Volume 11 Number 4

February 6, 2010

## **“Still Building That Idea”: Preservice Art Educators’ Perspectives on Integrating Literacy across the Curriculum**

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Citation: Maniaci, K., & Chandler-Olcott, K. (2010). “Still Building That Idea”: Preservice Art Educators’ Perspectives on Integrating Literacy across the Curriculum. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 11(4). Retrieved [date] from <http://www.ijea.org/v11n4/>.

### **Abstract**

Conducted collaboratively by an art educator and a literacy educator, this qualitative study focused on pre-service art educators’ perspectives on integrating literacy in their teaching of art as they took a required course on literacy across the curriculum. Data included interviews, questionnaires, course assignments, and field notes from class sessions. Our analysis identified three patterns related to participants’ perspectives while taking the course: their conceptions of literacy expanded, they reconceptualized familiar art education practices with a literacy-focused lens, and they considered new practices. Findings suggest that literacy courses are valuable for art educators but that they must be designed to maximize discipline-specific concerns and literacies. Implications for further research and practice are outlined.

## Introduction

*When I saw that I had to take the class, I thought, “Why am I taking a literacy class if I am teaching an art course?” (David)*

*The study of art requires students to be multi-literate. By this I mean that art literacy encompasses visual literacy, media literacy, oral and written literacy, using the language of art. (Karen)*

These quotations suggest the range of perspectives expressed by preservice art educators taking a literacy across the curriculum (LAC) course required for all secondary and K-12 teacher education programs at their university. Mindful of the importance of preservice teachers' perspectives in how they enact future pedagogy (Richards & Gipe, 2000; O'Brien & Stewart, 1990) as well as research linking print, oral, and multimodal literacies with visual literacy in art (Bustle, 2003; Eisner, 1991; Kist, 2005; Kress, 2003), we, an art educator and a literacy educator, collaborated on a study to explore this question: *What happens to preservice art educators' perspectives toward integrating literacy into their teaching of art as they participate in a required course on literacy across the curriculum?* In the following pages, we provide some background about the course; review related literature about content literacy and art education; describe our methods; share findings; and discuss implications for research and teacher preparation.

## Background and History

Nine years ago, the state of New York made significant changes in its certification requirements for all classroom teachers, regardless of discipline or grade level. According to the new regulations, all programs preparing practitioners graduating after 2004 must “provide study that will permit candidates to obtain . . . pedagogical knowledge, understanding, and skills” related to “language acquisition and literacy development by native English speakers and students who are English language learners” as well as “skill in developing the reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills of all students” (n. p.). To meet this requirement, individuals seeking to be PreK-12 visual arts teachers must take at least one three-credit course in literacy methods. According to the State Education website, acceptable options include “courses in teaching reading comprehension, reading instruction in the content areas, and methods of teaching reading to adolescents” (n. p.). Although state officials provided little information to the public about their rationale for the new literacy requirement, one can conjecture that the move was related to numerous ideas circulating in educational debates at the time, including a call for higher achievement standards in the disciplines (Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1998); concerns about achievement gaps between white students and students of color, as well as between students from well-resourced schools and those from

poor schools (Chubb & Loveless, 2002); and an increasing awareness that literacy learning is a process extending beyond the early grades (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999).

In response to this new state mandate, Kelly (second author) and two other faculty colleagues proposed the course on literacy across the curriculum that serves as the context for this study. To address a separate change in the number of practicum hours required prior to student teaching, the course was designed as a four-credit experience, with three credits of on-campus study accompanied by one credit of field work requiring students to tutor a struggling literacy learner in an urban middle school. At this time, Kathie (first author) was teaching art at the school selected to host the first tutors, and, as a member of the school's literacy team, she was tapped by her principal for a steering committee to help Kelly develop the tutoring model.

Kathie was a member of the literacy team in the first place because she had been experimenting with attempts to fulfill the New York State Visual Art Standards while providing support to her students in developing print and oral literacies. For example, she taught students to write art criticism as well as participate in Socratic seminars (Tredway, 1995) with a piece of visual art as the basis for discussion. She felt that her dual focus on art and literacy would accelerate students' general progress and provide them opportunities for deeper learning of art content. Enthusiastic about her initial work, she presented at a meeting of art educators from her district, where she heard comments such as: "I'm the art teacher, I don't teach English," "I have enough to do already," and "I've been teaching art for twenty years, I'm not going to start teaching writing in the art classroom!" The differences in these responses from her own perspective sparked Kathie to ponder questions such as: What were these art teachers thinking about literacy in the art classroom? What did their teaching look like? What were the main sources of their resistance to literacy integration? An interest in answering those questions catalyzed her decision to leave her K-12 classroom and begin full-time doctoral study in 2004.

Also in 2004, Kelly taught the first section of the LAC course enrolling a high concentration of art education majors (12 of 30 students). Although students' average score for quality of teaching on their course evaluations was high (4.9 on a 5.0 scale), comments during discussions and in students' informal writing suggested that some art education majors saw barriers to integrating literacy that were not explicitly addressed by the course. Kelly resolved to elicit more information from them in order to adjust the course to better meet their needs. She and Kathie had been periodically meeting about Kathie's coursework, and she had provided feedback on a questionnaire Kathie designed as part of an independent study with an art education professor (we used a revised version of the questionnaire in this study, discussed below). As a result of these conversations, we decided that Kathie would assist Kelly with selecting some art-specific readings for the LAC syllabus and then serve as teaching assistant

and primary data collector for a study of art students' perspectives on and participation in the class.

### **Review of Related Literature**

As we pursued our collaboration, we learned that we were far from the only ones concerned with intersections between literacy and art education. The past 25 years have seen an increase in attention to various forms of meaning-making and representation by scholars in literacy, semiotics, aesthetics, visual culture, and teacher education, among others. This study is grounded primarily in two subsets of that literature: scholarship on literacy across the curriculum, also known as content literacy, typically generated by literacy specialists; and scholarship on various conceptualizations of literacy in the art classroom, typically generated by art specialists.

#### ***Literacy Across the Curriculum***

Literacy across the curriculum, also known as content literacy, emphasizes the importance of addressing literacy in all subjects. LAC has been advocated in teacher education since the 1970s to increase student engagement, promote retention of content, and address diverse learning needs (Herber, 1970; Vacca & Vacca, 2008). Early work focused almost exclusively on reading, and reading does remain a primary concern, as both a literature review (Hall, 2005) and New York's course recommendations for the literacy requirement suggest. More recently, however, scholars have considered a range of language and literacy processes including reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and using technology to create multimedia representations (Kajder, 2007; Sheridan-Thomas, 2007). In the past few years, federal mandates about standardized testing of reading and concerns about the achievement gap have heightened interest in LAC as a way to improve literacy for under-prepared students (Braunger, Donohue, Evans, & Galguera, 2005). Many states currently require pre-service teachers of numerous disciplines to complete literacy coursework for certification.

Studies of how teachers view and learn from LAC classes and professional development have produced mixed results. Some suggest that well-taught LAC classes can increase students' awareness of the need to attend to literacy within various disciplines (Hall, 2005) as well as help them learn to use particular instructional strategies to support literacy development (Bean, 1997). Other studies, however, found that both pre-service and practicing teachers resisted assuming a role as a teacher of reading, sharing concerns about their ability to support students who struggle as well as those about balancing attention to both content and literacy (Bintz, 1997; O'Brien & Stewart, 1990; O'Brien, Stewart, & Moje, 1995). Sheridan-Thomas (2007) and Kadjer (2007) reported that students were deeply engaged in LAC classes that

featured attention to multiliteracies, multimodality, and digital technologies, but neither study provided data to suggest whether those experiences helped students to envision discipline-specific ways of supporting literacy in their future teaching.

Art specialists are often enlisted to support literacy, especially in high-needs schools, but these teachers' perspectives have not been well documented. Studies of LAC-related efforts have involved teachers of social studies, mathematics, and science (Donahue, 2000; Hand, Wallace, & Yang, 2004; Hinchman & Zalewski, 1996; Muth, 1993; Vigil & Dick, 1987; Yore, 1991), but they have not, to our knowledge, focused solely on art teachers. Multi-disciplinary studies by Bean (1997) and Bintz (1997) included a few art specialists as participants, but limited data were provided about their experiences—one example or two per paper. Moreover, their perspectives were conflated with secondary teachers', despite many art teachers receiving K-12 preparation. Nor do the resources used in LAC courses usually tend to art teachers' needs and perspectives. Vacca and Vacca's (2008) bestselling textbook, for example, includes 20 references to science and 18 to mathematics, but only six to the visual arts. A popular edited volume on LAC (Lapp, Flood, & Farnan, 2007) has one chapter on how the arts can enhance literacy learning across the curriculum but it offers little to art teachers related to their discipline-specific agendas. Art specialists are thus left to extrapolate from generic recommendations or examples from other disciplines to foster literacy in their classrooms.

Recent scholarship arguing for a broadened conception of literacy has emphasized visual and spatial representations and identified multimodality as key to meaning-making in contemporary society (Jewitt & Kress, 2003). This shift may prove more inclusive of art educators' perspectives and expertise than a print-driven view of literacy, but studies using this lens have focused more on individuals' transactions with popular culture or technology than on their creation or interpretation of other kinds of visual texts. Furthermore, little of this research has taken place in classes taught by art specialists (see Kist, 2005, for an exception).

Another recent and promising trend has seen literacy educators using discipline-specific lenses grounded in sociocultural theory. In this view, disciplines, like other communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), privilege certain literacy practices that are socially constructed; researchers must describe what these practices are in order to help classroom teachers apprentice students into them (Gee, 2008; Moje, 2000). Most of the work done by literacy specialists on what "counts" as literacy in disciplinary discourse communities has focused, again, on mathematics (Borasi & Siegel, 2000), science (Lemke, 1990; Moje et al., 2004), and history (Hinchman & Zalewski, 1996), not on art, although art educators themselves (e.g., Zander, 2003) have begun to illuminate the dimensions of their discourse community, a topic we take up in more detail in the next section.

### ***Various Conceptualizations of Literacy in Art Education***

Around the same time that literacy scholars began to advocate for literacy across the curriculum, art educators themselves began to attend to language and literacy more explicitly. They called for a shift from an almost-exclusive focus in K-12 contexts on the development of studio art skills to a broader focus on professional practices requiring a wider range of classroom discourse (Cotner, 2001). Elliot Eisner was among the first scholars to speak to these issues, arguing as early as 1974 against what he called the “myth” in art education that “Verbal analysis kills art.” According to Eisner,

The argument for this belief is that art is after all a nonverbal activity that yields a nondiscursive form. The best way to appreciate such forms is through direct visual experience, not through verbal analysis. Such analysis, because it requires the application of verbal categories, is inappropriate and alien to art. (p. 98)

In contrast, Eisner argued that “Learning to talk about art insightfully, poetically, and sensitively is one of the great educational needs in the preparation of art teachers. It is, alas, one of the areas most neglected in teacher education” (p. 98).

As art educators embraced a discipline-based paradigm integrating studio art, art history, aesthetics, and art criticism (Kleinbauer, 1987; Spratt, 1987), K-12 students were indeed offered more opportunities to “talk about art” in the classroom, as well as to use other language-based processes for thinking and communicating. The two decades since the National Art Education Association revised its standards to address this shift have seen articles about the potential of talk to help students plan and problem-solve their work during art-making (Thompson & Bales, 1991), engage in community-based inquiries about art (Walker, 2001), and refine their ideas about aesthetics (Venable, 2001), among others. Writing has also received attention from art educators who claim that it helps art students generate ideas, translate complex concepts into visual imagery, and reflect on their creative attempts (Andrzejczak, Trainin, & Poldberg, 2005; Ernst, 1994; Ewald & Lightfoot, 2001; Galvin, 1997; Olson, 1992), especially when writing and image-making are linked.

Scholars’ increased attention to diversity in art education from the 1990s on has also created possibilities for new uses of literacy in the K-12 classroom. Kindler (1999), for example, argued that

[A]rt education needs to be concerned with broadly understood visual literacy and to be conducive to the development and mastering of multiple pictorial repertoires. In the same way in which education in language arts is not limited to

teaching and learning how to write poetry, education in visual arts should not remain limited to exploration of a narrowly selected range of pictorial systems that we happen to particularly value. (p. 344)

Scholars working in this vein called for the canon of artwork to be studied in schools to be expanded to include non-Western artists and new genres (Freedman, 2000; Gude, 2004; Neperud, 1995; Sullivan, 1993). They also challenged the idea of art communicating universally and timelessly, arguing instead that the meaning viewers make of a piece of art is dependent upon the context in which it was made as well as the context in which it is viewed (Freedman, 2003). Such a perspective creates space for art students to use print and multimedia texts to access information about various cultures and contexts to enhance their meaning-making around others' artwork as well as their own art-making (although to date there has been limited empirical study of such research in art classrooms).

Scholars of visual culture (Bustle, 2003; Duncum, 2002, 2004; Freedman, 2003) argued further that images and objects encountered in everyday life, not just fine art, merit intellectual consideration and analysis. According to Duncum, a leading proponent of this view, while earlier conceptions of "visual literacy focused primarily on the image as text, visual culture is concerned with the contexts of texts, the real material conditions of image production, distribution and use" (2002, p. 17). Smith-Shank (2004) framed the "informed consumption" of visual data in context as "essential in a post-modern democracy" (p. vii) and argued that art educators were uniquely positioned to engage learners in semiotic study. While agreeing about the central place of art educators in such cultural work, Duncum (2004) argued that this view of art education created even more common ground with literacy researchers whose similarly sociocultural orientations had led them to an expanded conception of text: "To be relevant to contemporary social practice, art educators must embrace interaction between communicative modes (music, voice, sound effects, language, pictures). The recent concepts of multiliteracy and multimodalities are suggested for this purpose" (p. 1).

These arguments suggest that art and literacy educators have a good deal in common, as well as much to learn from each other. What is less clear, however, is the sense that preservice art educators are making of these various intellectual developments. Some promising work has been done on preservice elementary educators' perspectives on integrating art and literacy (Cuero, 2008; Richards & Gipe, 2000), but these studies did not include students seeking art specialist certificates. Studies specifically focused on preservice art educators' perspectives (Grauer, 1998; Unrath & Kerridge, 2009) have tended not to discuss literacy—print, visual, or otherwise—very explicitly at all. Consequently, we know very little about how preservice art teachers define and understand the various literacies relevant to their K-12 teaching. Nor do

we know much about the literacy-focused instructional approaches they intend to employ in their future classrooms given their understandings of those literacies.

Situated at the intersection of these trends, this study was meant to address some of the gaps in the literature. It drew on multimodal and sociocultural theories of literacy, although the course itself used some texts reflecting generic LAC practices. Our insistence upon taking preservice educators' perspectives seriously, in light of discipline-specific concerns, as well as our commitment to working across disciplinary lines ourselves, reflects our desire to contribute to Zander's (2003) comprehensive view of how literacy, broadly defined, can promote meaningful learning in art classrooms.

### **Methods**

Grounded in phenomenology (Stokrocki, 1997), this semester-long qualitative study explored the perspectives of preservice art educators in RED 326-625, *Literacy Across the Curriculum*, a four-credit course required by the students' degree programs. In this section, we describe the students, the course, ourselves as researchers, and the methods we used to conduct the study.

#### ***The Students***

Participants were five undergraduates and four graduate students enrolled in one section of the LAC course at our university. They included one male and eight females, all European-Americans. All but one were native speakers of English. Most were in their early twenties, though two were older, having returned to graduate school after pursuing careers in other fields and raising children. All nine have been assigned pseudonyms. In addition to the literacy course, students in the 42-credit preservice graduate program were required to take 6 credits of general education courses enrolling students from multiple majors; 20 credits of coursework in methods, curriculum, and research in art education; and 12 credits of student teaching. Their studio work in a visual arts area was completed as part of their bachelor's degree. The undergraduates were pursuing dual degrees in the College of Visual and Performing Arts and the School of Education. In VPA, they were required to take at least 30 credits of foundations in visual arts, 36 credits of studio coursework, and 6 credits of art history. In Education, 8 credits of general education beyond RED 326, 12 credits of art education-specific coursework, and 12 credits of student teaching were mandated. At the time both groups took the literacy course, only one student had completed a student teaching placement, although most had logged significant hours observing in K-12 art classrooms.



### ***The Course***

The nine art education students described above (and one more who chose not to participate in the study) were joined in the LAC course by 15 other students representing mathematics, science, English, and social studies education majors. The syllabus included the following goals for student learning in the course:

- Understand key principles related to language acquisition and literacy development for native English speakers and students who are English language learners
- Identify aspects of classroom and school environments that promote literacy in culturally responsive ways
- Design and implement discipline-specific instructional plans that support students' literacy development and attend to their diverse needs as learners
- Identify and use a range of strategies for assessing students' literacy learning and reflecting on your own instructional effectiveness
- Identify strategies to use in promoting home-school collaboration and active involvement of families in literacy instruction and support
- Locate and evaluate school, community, and professional resources for supporting adolescents' literacy development across the curriculum

As the schedule of topics from the syllabus (see Figure 1) demonstrates, oral and print literacies received the majority of attention, but classes on multiple literacies, literacy and technology, and visual literacy were also included to address new trends in literacy research and encourage students in fields such as mathematics, science, and social studies to tap the power of visual and multimedia representations in ways perhaps not typical of their disciplines. Art education students were typically positioned as experts vis a vis their peers during these sessions.

Each three-hour, weekly class meeting featured whole-class instruction, same- and mixed-discipline group discussions, and activities designed to help students experience and reflect on research-based instructional approaches they could adopt and adapt for their own K-12 teaching. Students were assigned readings for a general audience (e.g., Daniels & Zemelman, 2004) and discipline-specific texts from professional journals (e.g., Cotner, 2001). The mid-semester assignment was the discipline-specific inquiry project, which asked students to analyze the place of literacy in their discipline's state and national standards, review professional journal articles and other content-focused materials, and write reflective memos on their inquiry (see Appendix A for the assignment description and Appendix B for the project cover sheet given to students). The final project, a unit plan, required students to develop a content-specific series of lessons while simultaneously building in deliberate

support for their target learners' literacy development (see Appendix C for a description).

Class #	Date	Topic
1	1/16	Multiple Literacies in Students' Lives
2	1/23	Building Literate Cultures in Schools and Classrooms
3	1/30	Prior Knowledge and Literacy
4	2/6	Comprehension and Fluency
5	2/13	Text Selection and Multiple Text Approaches
6	2/20	Vocabulary Development Across the Curriculum
7	2/27	Talk Across the Curriculum
8	3/6	Writing Across the Curriculum
9	3/20	Literacy Assessment
10	3/27	Differentiating Literacy Instruction
11	4/3	Literacy and Technology across the Curriculum
12	4/10	Visual Literacy across the Curriculum
13	4/17	Working with Families and Communities to Support Students' Literacy
14	5/1	Critical Literacy

*Figure 1. Class Topics from the Syllabus*

In addition to the campus-based component of the course, students pursued a one-credit tutoring placement one morning a week at a local middle school. This experience had several purposes: to offer students insight into the perspectives of struggling literacy learners and to provide them with hands-on practice using the instructional approaches advocated in the course. Tutors designed their lessons with a literacy focus (e.g., prewriting strategies, making inferences while reading) that would be useful in academic contexts, but Kelly and the tutoring field supervisor urged them to use materials of interest to their tutees (e.g., readings

or writing prompts about sports teams, popular entertainers, and hobbies), rather than strictly adhering to curriculum topics. Art education students were encouraged to tie their lessons to art topics if tutees demonstrated interest in that area, which many did, but the aim in these lessons was not to teach art content but rather to develop strategic literacy behavior by the tutee that would translate to multiple disciplines.

### ***The Researchers***

Kathie is a doctoral student with an art education major and a minor in literacy. She taught art in an urban middle school for seven years. Kelly is an associate professor of literacy education and a former high school English teacher. We are both white females and native speakers of English. Kathie served as the primary data-collector for the study, though she also participated in the class by suggesting art-specific readings, sitting in on group discussions, co-teaching one session, and solo teaching another. Kelly served as instructor for the course, responding to all student work and assigning grades. To reduce risk for participants, she did not examine data (e.g., the interview transcripts) beyond course assignments until after grades were submitted. Data analysis (described below) and writing were evenly shared between us. Our collaborations, and the LAC class itself, were grounded in a shared commitment to the following beliefs:

- Numerous kinds of literacies should be valued beyond those privileged in academic settings
- Literacy involves viewing and representing, not just reading, writing, speaking, and listening
- The arts should be integral to the K-12 curriculum, not a frill or an elective
- All teachers need to share responsibility for developing students' literacy across the curriculum, not just English and reading teachers
- Teacher educators must model with their own pedagogy the sorts of collaborative, student-centered, and inquiry-driven instructional practices they want their preservice students to adopt in their K-12 teaching

### ***Data Collection and Analysis***

Data came from various sources. At the beginning and end of the course, Kathie administered a questionnaire of her design (see Appendix D) to all participants. This included eight questions with five possible answers on a Likert scale. Participants were also asked to rate 15 possible teaching approaches on a 1-5 scale for frequency of use in future classrooms. The purpose of the questionnaire was to guide the development of interview questions and serve as a broad, informal indicator of change over time in participant perspectives (we did not see it as a fine-tuned, field-tested instrument for collecting data). Kathie also conducted individual interviews using a semi-structured protocol (see Appendix E) with each participant at the beginning and end of the semester. The purpose of these interviews was “to gather descriptive

data in the subjects' own words" in order to understand how they "interpret some piece of the world" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 103). Interview data for participants totaled over 100 transcript pages. Finally, Kathie conducted participant observation during each class meeting (42 hours total) and collected student work and handouts from those sessions (800+ pages). Because the data were varied, our analytical procedures varied as well. Questionnaire results were expressed in visual graphs by question (see Appendix F for an example). Content analysis was performed on discipline-specific inquiry projects, unit plans, and other artifacts using various coding matrices (see Appendix G for an example). Interview data were analyzed using a similar inductive process of categorical coding (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Sample codes included participant's own art education, definitions of literacy, perspectives on existing art curriculum, and so forth. Kathie wrote three- to five-page analytical memos for each participant, discussing patterns across all sources of data related to that person and noting quotations from the data to reflect their perspectives (see Appendix H for an excerpt from one of these memos). She also wrote analytical memos for each data category (e.g., the unit plans), making reference to the coding matrices she had already created. Kelly wrote responses to these memos, and we met regularly to discuss ongoing insights and adjust our analytical procedures. Near the end of the process, we coded hard copies of data with colored tape flags to reflect macro-level patterns as we understood them, eventually refining and combining these into the three themes we report next.

### **Findings**

Kathie's experiences with her K-12 colleagues, Kelly's teaching of several previous sections of the LAC course, and limited previous research on literacy across the curriculum with art education participants (cf., Bean, 1997) caused us to anticipate some student resistance to integrating literacy in the teaching of art when the course—and the study—began. While some students did enter with what Karen, one participant, called "a little attitude—what's the matter with art for art's sake?", their questionnaire responses suggested that they were open to exploring literacy in art and that their commitment to this integration increased over the semester. For example, by course's end, all nine circled "A great deal," the strongest degree of support, for *How much do you think supporting literacy in your art classroom will benefit your art students?*, despite five having selected "Very much" or "Somewhat" for this item before the class. In addition, we identified these three patterns related to our research question: participants' conceptions of literacy expanded, they reconceptualized familiar art education practices with a literacy-focused lens, and they considered new practices. Each is discussed below.

#### ***Expanding Conceptions of Literacy***

Participants' conceptualizations of literacy expanded over the course. When it began, most reported seeing literacy as print-based, usually as reading. For example, Petra said in an

interview at the beginning of the class: “I kind of had a set idea of, of course, incorporating books, and I think I kind of always drew from books to . . . do lesson plans and different things, but I guess there are so many new options that I hadn’t thought of before.” Others with a similarly print-driven conception questioned the relevance of literacy to art classes because they did not see the discipline as focused on reading print texts. David, for instance, was negative in his outlook about incorporating any reading in his teaching of art:

My perspective on integrating literacy in the art classroom at the beginning of the semester was pretty much limited to why should I be teaching kids how to read in an art classroom? There’s plenty of other classrooms like English and social studies classes where they do plenty of reading and writing. . . In my classroom, kids need a bit of a break. . . Art is a completely different issue, it is completely separate.

By the end of the class, however, David, like several other participants, reported considerable change in his thinking:

It’s a lot easier to learn something if you are getting that information reinforced throughout all of the classes you go to. Integrating literacy type activities in the art classroom is necessary because it helps to solidify basic skills for education and learning in the future. . . [I]ncluding literacy in the art classroom is also a way of increasing the student’s understanding of the material that we are teaching by being able to look at it from not just a visual perspective but from a literacy perspective.

Other students began the course with viewpoints that contrasted with Petra’s and David’s. Emma’s initial conception of literacy was not print-driven, but it was similarly narrow. She saw literacy in art as primarily oral, as “mainly about listening, speaking, and visualizing” within such speech genres as the critique where “at the end of each class . . . everyone puts up their work and speaks about it.” Her early conceptions of literacy in art had little place for written forms. By the end of the course, Emma reported that her emphasis on visual thinking and oral language as literacies had been validated but that she had been introduced to approaches that addressed print literacies as well. She remained skeptical of some of these, maintaining her stance that reading in art was largely inappropriate (“You can read a textbook for anything, but I don’t necessarily think it’s the best way to go about teaching art”), but she expressed interest in graphic organizers, vocabulary, and written critiques, none of which had been addressed in her early talk about what her practice might include.

A small number of students began the course with a conception of literacy in art that was multifaceted, attending to visual, print, oral, and multimodal literacies. As the quotation with which we began this article reveals, Karen believed the “study of art requires students to be multiliterate,” a term that for her encompassed “visual literacy, media literacy, oral and written literacy.” Margaret’s conception of literacy was similarly multidimensional. It began, understandably, with a conception of visual literacy that appeared to be influenced by work in visual culture (Duncum, 2002, 2004; Freedman, 2003), as the following excerpt from her discipline-specific inquiry project indicates:

Visual literacy can be seen everywhere, street signs, bathrooms, toxic containers, billboards, you name it. If you were to go to the bathroom in a public place, and there was a picture on each of the doors. They were of a silhouette of two people, one was plain, and the other has a dress on it. If you look around the restaurant, you may see one or two women actually wearing a dress. Why do we associate this symbol with a woman? We see that image constantly growing up, and we all know what it means. That is visual literacy.

At the same time, Margaret, like Karen, recognized from the beginning of the course that literacy in art had print and oral dimensions, not just visual ones: “[H]elping a student to read or write a wall text or helping students to walk through a painting using VTS [Visual Thinking Strategies] are all parts of supporting literacy in the art classroom.” Her unit plan, which focused on concertina bookmaking of short stories authored by 11th graders, required students to read about the history of bookmaking, use a storyboard to plan their overall compositions, draft written text in their journals, create thumbnail sketches for their illustrations, and confer with peers over their work in progress. Her definition of literacy was a broad one.

As these examples show, students differed in terms of how much their definition of literacy expanded over the semester. Some, like David, entered the course with a narrow conception that expanded considerably. Others, like Emma, came in with a narrow conception that expanded but not as significantly. Still others, like Margaret and Karen, came in with a broad definition already and refined or solidified it during the course. Some participants’ envisionments involved the consideration of new practices, while others involved reconceptualizing familiar practices, discussed in the next section.

### ***Reconceptualizing Familiar Practices***

In addition to expanding their conceptions of literacy, participants in the LAC course also reconceptualized some familiar art education practices with a literacy-focused lens. Over the

semester, all nine reported new appreciation for how literacy was threaded through familiar art practices. Arriana addressed this idea in her inquiry project:

Though I had not thought about art education in terms of literacy before, I have come to realize that a substantial amount of what I have been preparing and training to teach has its roots in literacy. It turns out that much of what I do—and art educators in general do—already works to develop, and promotes growth in, literacy. Viewing, speaking, and listening are just as central to literacy as are reading and writing—a major idea that I had not really considered prior to taking this course.

In her final interview, Arriana said that realizing that a practice such as art criticism also promoted literacy gave it more weight for her future teaching: “[I]t kinda backed it up . . . so everything that I’ve seen that we’ve been doing already is that much more important.”

Like Arriana, Margaret identified several art-specific ways of being literate, but she also argued that these were easy to take for granted because they were familiar:

In order to know what art is around you, you would need to read the paper, search online for artists, go to museums, go to artist speeches, and many other things. In museums, for example, you may pick up a brochure about the artist’s work, or you may read a comment by the artist that would better explain the art. These may seem like benign things to have to use literacy for, but it is so intertwined in our culture that it is hard to get by without being completely literate.

Margaret’s idea that literacy was embedded in art paralleled a theme from students’ inquiry projects. All participants identified literacy implications in both the state and national art education standards, though more than half noted that these connections were inexplicit. Some saw this inexplicitness as positive, allowing room for teacher choice: “The New York Standards are open-ended and allow for the teacher to easily integrate literacy into the classroom,” wrote Emma. “However, it is up to the teacher to decide how to include literacy based on his or her own teaching methods versus specifically following the teaching Standards.” Others believed that the open-ended nature of the documents with reference to literacy created opportunities for school- and district-level collaboration among art educators and even across disciplines. Petra was a proponent of such collaboration: “The national art standards [lay] out a general structure to create an art environment that promotes literacy. It is the responsibility of our art educators and district to enforce this practice in each classroom and define how literacy fits into our expectations.” A few participants, most notably Karen, expressed concern that the inexplicitness of the documents around literacy might make it

easier for art educators to sidestep what she saw as their responsibility to address literacy. Overall, students were positive about the room for attention to literacy that they felt the standards created for their future teaching.

In addition to reconsidering how literacy fit into the general practice of their discipline, students reconsidered some specific practices they already knew. One was the use of picture books. Early on, participants talked about using picture books as a teacher-led launch for a lesson, often with a focus on the illustrator's style and less attention to the text or its integration with the images. Some had used picture books in this way while teaching the Saturday art workshops for youth that served as a practicum for two required arts methods courses. As Karen put it, though, the books in this context were typically used as "something to motivate them, or something to inspire them" more than they were "an integrated thing."

As time went on, students continued to talk about the use of picture books as a launch for a hands-on lesson, which the LAC course supported, but they also began to talk about other uses, and, interestingly, ways they could configure their teaching space to foster more interaction with picture books. Emma wanted to have a comfortable reading corner in her classroom where picture books were sorted by "different reading levels" to address grade-level differences. Doreen shared that she was "thinking of a library display, instead of a whole bunch of books—just put out a couple books and that changes constantly. [When] books are just stacked up on a shelf, I'm not sure—do kids even look at them?" David sought "[p]lenty of room for art projects or easels. . . as well as an area for really solidifying your ideas, like desk space that's not necessarily art space, so kids can actually get their stuff out, their books out, and have a place to work without getting paint on it." These ideas built on familiar ways of using picture books in art, but they sought to increase individual access to multiple texts, not just whole-class exploration of one, and they positioned picture books as references for art-making.

Another familiar art practice which participants appeared to reconceptualize after taking the course was the teaching of art-specific vocabulary. When Anna administered her questionnaire at the beginning of the semester, eight of the nine study participants gave "art terms/vocabulary" a 1 rating ("intend to use this strategy for every lesson") and one gave it a 2 ("intend to use this strategy on a regular basis") on the five-point scale representing frequency of use. This represented the highest degree of initial support among students for any of the 15 teaching strategies listed in the questionnaire. At the same time, the vocabulary-focused instructional ideas that students shared in their initial interviews tended to be general, focused either on engaging K-12 learners in what Petra called "talking about art" or on teachers' oral



introduction of terms before a lesson. As the course unfolded, students read articles on approaches to teaching vocabulary, analyzed a discipline-specific text in terms of its potential vocabulary challenges, and participated in a vocabulary-focused cooperative activity called a list-group-label (Taba, 1967). This activity involved groups of four or five students in discussing, sorting, grouping, and labeling categories for approximately 30 terms on individual index cards that related to a key topic from a discipline represented in the class (we selected ceramics and painting as the art-related topics for this semester). In a debriefing session after all of these activities took place, study participants contributed the following art-specific ideas to a class-wide list for supporting their students' vocabulary acquisition:

- Send kids out with sketchbook or camera to find real-life examples of word meanings
- Create your own quiz with visuals/definitions
- Post terms throughout the room, with images that relate, so they can use them as references as they work (Class fieldnotes, 2/20/07)

In our view, these instructional suggestions have the potential to engage learners more actively in learning vocabulary central to discourse in art than the largely teacher-centered approaches participants discussed in their initial interviews, although the teacher-led activities have their uses, too. Their items link study of art terms with not just oral language but also with print and visuals, a multimodal approach consistent with the visual orientation of the art class as well as aligned with research-based recommendations by literacy educators on vocabulary learning (Blachowicz & Fisher, 2000). Analysis of participants' unit plans supports the idea that many had reconceptualized their teaching of vocabulary: all but one included specific approaches to supporting students' vocabulary development that combined more than one modality. Odette, for instance, intended to launch a lesson on Egyptian art with whole-class brainstorming about students' prior knowledge of cartouche, to be recorded on chart paper and revisited after students had created their own works of art. For a unit on Tlingit art and folktales, Arriana identified a small number of art terms, including *geometric shape*, *organic shape*, *symmetry*, and *ovoid*, that she would emphasize and assess during one-to-one conversations with students over three studio periods. Both examples reveal students' increased awareness of the need to specify their foci for vocabulary instruction in advance, as well as the need to interact with students around those terms in multiple ways.

Students' reconceptualization of familiar practices with a literacy-focused lens generally took two forms. In some cases, they constructed new understandings about how attention to literacy was threaded through the K-12 art standards, which made it easier for them to justify particular practices' value, as well as pinpoint their own potential contributions to students' literacy development. In other cases, they revised their thinking about how and why to pursue particular practices in the art classroom in order to address literacy more explicitly. In the next

section, we discuss participants' perspectives on how the course supported them in considering new practices intended to address young people's literacy in art classrooms.

### ***Considering New Practices***

Data suggest that all participants considered new instructional practices intended to support literacy in art. Which new practices they embraced, and to what degree, varied by participant. The tendency across the cohort, however, was toward greater acceptance of their potential role to play with reference to students' literacy development, and toward awareness of a larger set of instructional approaches on which they could draw.

One of the most powerful trends over the course was the degree to which students planned to use print literacy in combination with visual tools to help students plan and reflect on their work. For example, David incorporated into his unit plan what he called a "visual journal," where "kids can continually throughout the course of the year write down or illustrate their thoughts and feelings and where they can put down on paper their ideas in any number of ways that are either visually or verbally." In her final interview, Margaret talked about seeing new potential for storyboards and thumbnail sketches to capture ideas with "a little bit of writing . . . instead of just the drawing" to facilitate students in "going over it [the idea] in your mind again." Both students felt, as did a number of their classmates, that using multiple representational modes at the same time would provoke fresh thinking for students. They went beyond the traditionally print-driven ideas in the writing to learn literature (Duke & Sanchez, 2001) to add a multimodal twist.

Students also embraced the teacher read-aloud. Some reported familiarity with the practice early on, but neither their initial interviews nor their mid-semester projects included much support for it. Kelly read a text aloud in nine of the 14 LAC class sessions, however, and this seemed to resonate for participants. Six included the approach in their unit plans, with their ideas spanning a range of grade levels. Danielle planned to begin a Madagascar-focused unit on mask-making for elementary students by reading an informational text. Karen intended to read aloud two poems in a high-school unit inspired by the work of African-American artist Romare Bearden. Arriana's first lesson in a 7<sup>th</sup> grade unit on the art of the Tlingit included multiple readings of a picture-book folktale called *Raven* (McDermott, 2001). While participants reported wanting to promote students' listening, talking, and sometimes writing with their read-alouds, they often did so with added visual elements. Arriana, for example, wrote that asking students to take notes in varied forms during her second reading of *Raven* would allow them to "work on listening to, and interacting with, oral language. . . This will also give those who are visual learners the opportunity to express ideas through imagery and not just written language."

Another pattern centered on technology and its implications for art and literacy. In the initial interviews, only one student mentioned technology at all. By semester's end, all nine included some use of the Internet in their unit plans. Questionnaire data further corroborated this trend, as the average score for the three technology-mediated approaches went from 2.74 at the beginning of the course to 2.58 at the end, with 2 representing *frequent* and 3 representing *occasional* use of the approach. Comments like these indicate participants' awareness of technology's role in multimodal communication:

- [I want] a computer or two in the classroom so that you . . . can get online and find the information that you are looking for, or images that you are looking for, really, as well. Google Images, I use that a ton when I'm making stuff. (David)
- I will begin class with the YouTube video "Tribute to Vincent Van Gogh." This five-minute video is set to the music of Don McLean's song "Starry Starry Night." Students will be given the lyrics for personal study. . . Music and images speak loudly to adolescents and I feel they will be intrigued to learn more about Vincent Van Gogh after viewing this video. (Doreen)
- [My] perfect classroom would be having access to all the resources, first of all, in terms of WebQuest guides and everything—being able to have access to the Internet, technology. . . [so] when people are on different time, wavelengths . . . there's something that can be done in between, so it's kind of a more seamless transition. (Arriana)

Because, as we reviewed above, digital technologies play a key role in new conceptualizations of literacy, communication, and representation, we were encouraged by students' enthusiasm for Internet-enhanced instructional approaches. At the same time, we found it interesting that participants tended to focus in their final interviews and unit plans on using Internet technologies as a source of information and images, rather than on their affordances for multimedia composition by K-12 students themselves. The absence of the latter in the instructional approaches they embraced is particularly intriguing given that participants spent considerable time during two LAC class sessions composing their own comic strips with a template adapted from Comic Life (<http://plasq.com/comiclifewin>) and designing multimedia "how to" brochures for a procedural task in their disciplines. Although the oral and end-of-class written feedback on these activities was positive, participants did not take them up in their own planning.

It is also important to note that students' enthusiasm for approaches like Internet research or the teacher read-aloud did not mean that they adopted literacy approaches without considering complexities associated with implementation in art. Doreen, for instance, liked the idea of book clubs (small, student-led discussions about a text) described in class and in a required

reading (Zemelman & Daniels, 2004), but she had reservations, some associated with her inexperience and others with being a teacher who would likely not see students daily. She felt resolving those tensions would be worth it, though, because such clubs, whether organized around informational text or even artwork itself, could address what she saw as a limitation of her education: “I don’t think I ever really learned how to talk about art or to think about why I made something. I just did it because that’s what we were doing that day. And I think that’s important to teach kids to think about their art and be able to verbalize it.”

In addition, several students discussed their new belief that literacy needed to be scaffolded in the art classroom—that they couldn’t simply leave its development to chance. Karen talked about realizing during unit planning that she could not ask students to create visual art and poetry together without providing deliberate support for both:

Okay, so I’m going to slap this poem thing to do in front of them, this activity, and expect them to be able to do it to what my standard is, or my expectation, or my thinking this is something they can handle? Because I know now that if I did that, what I would get . . . a couple of words or nothing to the depth that I would hope they would be able to get out of it. I’ve got to draw them up to it to be able to get what I want out of them.

Doreen talked about a similar change in her thinking: “I think it’s really important to be able to break the steps down into really small pieces for kids and then verbalize it and then make sure they understand it. . . I’m realizing that I wasn’t doing [that] in the beginning and I am starting to do [it] now.” Both participants, as well as most of their peers, were familiar with the need to demonstrate components of processes related to art making, but they did not appear to transfer this insight to literacy in art until after they had taken the course and, perhaps most importantly, tutored a struggling literacy learner in the accompanying field placement. As Karen explained it, her experience as a tutor, combined with a stint as a long-term substitute teacher in an art classroom, helped her to “see that those issues arise, that I have to know their literacy skills in order for me to teach them what I want to about art. . . it’s not two separate issues. I can’t do one really without the other one.”

The LAC course introduced participants to literacy-focused instructional practices that many of them had not considered before, either because the practices were unfamiliar or because they seemed out of bounds in an art classroom. Although some individuals embraced more of these recommendations than others, all nine reported finding approaches that resonated with them as having the potential to support meaningful learning in art as well as develop students’ literacy.

### Discussion and Implications

Findings indicated that preservice art educators were open to integrating literacy into their practice, in contrast to our previous experiences and some limited research (Bean, 1997; Bintz, 1997; Hall, 2005; O'Brien & Stewart, 1990). All nine participants expressed interest in exploring the place of literacy in their teaching—interest that intensified over the semester—and they identified numerous ways that literacy is implicated in typical art practices and in their professional standards, even when these connections were not made explicit in the documents themselves. Although they acknowledged that their ideas about literacy would not be fully formed until they began teaching, they expressed a willingness to learn more. As Arriana put it, “There are a lot of different aspects of literacy that I didn’t tie into it [art] until now. I’m starting to grasp where it might come in. . . . I’m still building that idea.”

Students tended to begin the course with a conception of literacy that emphasized one or two elements more than others. Most typically, they conflated literacy with reading—a narrow view that should not have surprised us, given how common it is in the general public (Kazemek & Rigg, 2002). The State Education department’s listing of three *reading* courses as acceptable ways to fulfill the literacy methods requirement for certification suggests its prevalence in educational circles as well, despite calls by scholars for a broader conception of literacy (Eisner, 1991; Gallego & Hollingsworth, 2000; Kress, 2003). Other students conceptualized literacy as focusing primarily on oral language and visual thinking. Only a few framed it as encompassing print literacy, oral language, visual literacy, and multimodal communication.

Although all nine preservice teachers expressed openness to integrating literacy in their teaching, there were differences in their perspectives on the benefits of doing so, as well as the instructional approaches they found appealing. At the end of the course, one participant still appeared to see literacy as largely separate from art, although she was willing to support literacy anyway, as long as it did not siphon off too much time. She was attracted to approaches that involved students in reflecting through talk or limited writing on their art production. Five appeared to see literacy integration as a way to deepen learning in art and differentiate for varying student needs. They embraced such approaches as teacher read-alouds, vocabulary, discussions, informal writing, and the use of varied texts, including the Internet. Three more appeared to see learning literacy as integral to and inseparable from learning art. They embraced multimodal approaches such as reflective sketch books, storyboarding, graphic organizers, and concrete poetry along with the approaches supported by the second group. Those who saw addressing literacy as inextricable from teaching art were, perhaps not surprisingly, also those who embraced multi-dimensional and multimodal conceptions of literacy.

A key finding of the study, in fact, was that participants appeared to see more space for their perspectives and needs as art educators when the LAC course was most explicit about being grounded in an expansive conception of literacy. The course appeared to work best for them when readings, instructor demonstrations, and other in-class activities were not narrowly focused on academic reading and writing with print texts. Visual, and often oral literacies have had an important place in art classrooms historically, and it appeared to be helpful for students to know that these ways of knowing and communicating valued by the discipline were also valued in the class. At the same time, the course appeared to stretch participants most as learners when it advocated periodic integration of judiciously-chosen reading and writing activities because of their potential to promote and enhance planning, reflection, and the acquisition of new art content. Participants often took up print literacy-focused instructional suggestions such as the writing-to-learn approaches in Daniels and Zemelman (2004) and redesigned them with greater emphasis on visual meaning-making. In this way, they adapted the content of the course to suit their disciplinary needs. Our observations of the moves they made here, in turn, helped Kelly to adapt instruction in subsequent sections of the course to promote and validate such innovation.

At the same time, participants tended not to take up—at least not as far as we could tell—recent developments in both art and literacy education that foreground information and communication technologies for communication and representation (Coiro, Knobel, Lankshear, & Leu, 2008; Gallego & Hollingsworth, 2000; Krug, 2004). The uses of the Internet they envisioned tended to center on information-gathering and inspiration, despite broader claims for its potential in some of the course readings. Similarly, the unit plans they constructed at the end of the course to demonstrate how they would embed attention to literacy in their future instruction tended to approach art curriculum-making in fairly conventional ways, despite the heightened focus on literacy. While they did intend for students to explore art-making practices from a variety of cultures, including those associated with non-dominant groups, they did not tend to write plans for engaging students in examining ideas and objects from everyday culture (Duncum, 2004; Freedman, 2003) or community-based artmaking (Thomas, 2007; Walker, 2001), both of which are current areas of focus in art education scholarship. It is hard for us to say whether the “schooled” conception of art education apparent in nearly all of their units was shaped more by their own experiences as learners in K-12 art classrooms, their other teacher preparation courses, or discourses communicated specifically by the LAC course. This is a question we continue to ponder.

Regardless of these complexities and questions to be explored, we believe that our findings support the idea that an LAC course can have value in helping art education students see

literacy as a tool for thinking and learning in art classrooms. This value may be maximized when the course attends to discipline-specific concerns and literacies more than has historically been the case with LAC-focused courses, even those that have been designed deliberately to interrupt traditional discourses about literacy as a transportable set of generic skills. Kajder's (2007) study of a content-literacy classroom enrolling students from multiple disciplines, including art education, provides a good case in point. On one hand, the class foregrounded multimodal composition with ICTs—a move with the potential to position art educators as experts because of their experience with visual literacy. On the other hand, the activities in which students engaged—for example, literature discussions that were captured by podcast—still mapped more directly onto those that would be valued in English or social studies classrooms than those that would be central to art. In light of our findings, we are encouraged by the potential offered by a combination of Kajder's technology-mediated approaches with the discipline-specific lens offered by the LAC course's mid-semester inquiry project.

### ***Limitations***

The study has several limitations that are important to note. First, only a small number of participants was involved, with a cohort that was homogeneous in terms of race and ethnicity and only marginally less so in terms of gender and language status. A larger and/or more diverse sample might have yielded different perspectives on integrating literacy into the teaching of art.

Because the study draws on largely self-reported data from participants before they have their own classrooms, we cannot know how they will conceptualize literacy in their art classrooms, nor what literacy-focused approaches they will employ in their K-12 teaching. The unit plans they wrote and the ideas they shared in their interviews are hypothetical and might not reflect their actual choices or perspectives in the classroom. Participants' openness to literacy integration may also have been influenced by the course's sequence in their programs. When they began the course, only one had completed a student teaching placement. Bean (1997) suggests that mentor teachers socialize new practitioners into existing discourses about LAC. It is possible that these participants might have been less positive about integrating literacy into art if they had taken the course during or after a field experience with a mentor who reinforced traditional ideas about the separation of visual thinking and language. (Interestingly, the one student who had done student teaching was Margaret, whose conception of literacy was among the most multi-dimensional of the group from the beginning of the course.) A final limitation of the study is the difficulty in attributing sources definitively to the LAC course for particular aspects of student learning about literacy. While we know what was covered in the class, we do not have access to information, beyond what students told us in interviews, about the various influences—other courses, field experiences,

employment, and so forth—contributing to participants’ conceptions of literacy and their perspectives on how they might address it in their pedagogy. Since our purpose in conducting the study was to explore participants’ perspectives in a learning context that foregrounded literacy, not to evaluate the effectiveness of the LAC course, we do not see this lack of precision in linking influences and ideas expressed by participants to be a fatal flaw. It is worth noting, however.

Despite these limitations, we feel that the study makes a contribution because it addresses a little-studied topic and does so with a rich variety of data, albeit for a small, select group of participants. Next, we turn to implications for research and practice.

### ***Implications for Research and Practice***

Although the study provides a snapshot of preservice art educators’ perspectives on integrating literacy into their teaching, more research needs to be done with this population to validate these findings and build on them. Our research was descriptive only; insights from the data were not used to improve teaching and learning for the participants while they were enrolled in the course. A more intervention-oriented action research study might yield insights about how to improve teacher preparation for art specialists in ways that a descriptive study could not. Further research also needs to be carried out in core art education classes (e.g., methods, foundations, etc.), not just interdisciplinary LAC courses, to understand more fully how preservice educators construct discipline-specific understandings of their role in fostering literacy in art. It would also be useful to have additional research using questionnaires like the one Kathie designed. Art and literacy education would benefit from a field-tested, reliable, and valid instrument for gauging change in teachers’ perspectives on LAC. In this study, we interpreted questionnaire data cautiously, using it to guide further inquiry or corroborate patterns from other kinds of data, but a fine-tuned questionnaire, administered to a large and diverse population of art specialists, including both preservice and practicing teachers, could make an important contribution in its own right.

In terms of practice, the study suggests that preservice art educators will be better served by LAC classes and textbooks designed from a discourse-specific perspective by educators who are familiar with the literature in art and literacy education or, even better, who collaborate with colleagues across disciplinary lines. We saw the limits of the generic LAC perspective in co-teaching the class and co-writing this article, as more than once Kelly celebrated examples of literacy practice offered by students (and sometimes herself!) that Kathie saw as shallow art teaching, despite our attempts to design the course in ways that respect disciplinary expertise. For LAC-focused efforts to be effective, they have to address the topics, genres, and processes that are privileged in cutting-edge art education; it’s not enough to recommend that learners



read a historical novel about Vermeer or conduct a research project on surrealism. Instead, art students must be immersed in the kinds of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and representing that disciplinary insiders such as practicing artists, teaching artists, gallery owners, graphic designers, museum docents, and community activists, among others, practice and understand. Only then will they be well prepared to address all kinds of literacies—visual, oral, print, and multimodal—in the art classroom to ensure that the young people in their care will be able to create and communicate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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### About the Authors

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## Appendix A

### Description of Discipline-Specific Inquiry Project

Discipline-specific inquiry projects (20%). During the first six weeks of the semester, you will pursue an inquiry project intended to introduce you to the literacy practices and expectations for students associated with your discipline as a discourse community (see Moje, 2000, for more on this). You will complete and document three of six literacy-related inquiry options in a portfolio if you are an undergraduate, four if you are a graduate student. One of these items, the only required one, will involve you in investigating via the Internet where literacy fits into the discipline-specific learning standards published nationally by your professional organization (e.g., the National Art Education Association) and at the state level by the New York State Education Department. If you are an undergraduate, you will choose two other options from the menu provided in Appendix E. *If you are a graduate student, you will choose three activities, one of which must involve you in reading and reflecting on professional journal articles.* To reflect on your learning across these activities, you will write a memo of approximately two pages, single spaced, that addresses the following guiding questions:

- Based on my inquiry, what insights do I have about how people read and write in my discipline?
- What do these findings mean for my future teaching of literacy within my discipline?

For evaluation, you will submit a completed cover sheet, evidence related to each of your three choices, and your memo. The form that will be used to evaluate this project appears in Appendix F.

## Appendix B

### Cover Sheet for Discipline-Specific Inquiry Project

Name \_\_\_\_\_

#### Part I: Check the professional organization for your discipline:

_____ National Art Education Association	_____ MENC: National Association for Music Education
_____ National Council for the Social Studies	_____ National Council of Teachers of English
_____ National Council of Teachers of Mathematics	_____ National Science Teachers Association
_____ National Association for Sport and Physical Education	

1. Find your organization's web site, locate the standards relevant for K-12 or 7-12 education, and print that document. Then, go to the New York State Education Department web site at <http://www.nysed.gov>, locate the standards relevant for K-12 or 7-12 education there, and print that document, too.
2. Read both documents, highlight and take notes on any material relevant to reading, writing, speaking, listening, or viewing, then write a one-page memo, single spaced, about your impressions of where literacy fits into the goals for student learning and achievement in your discipline.
3. File your printouts and memo in your portfolio; be prepared to talk about your findings in class on \_\_\_\_\_.

Part II: Check the activities (2 for undergraduates, 3 for graduate students) that you completed:

\_\_\_\_\_ Read two professional journal articles of your choice on teaching some aspect of literacy in your discipline, then complete a double-entry journal (see Daniels & Zemelman, 2004, pp. 118-119 for details on this) in response to both; file copies of both articles and your two journal entries in your portfolio (NOTE: THIS OPTION REQUIRED FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS)

\_\_\_\_\_ Keep track of your thinking strategies (see Daniels & Zemelman, 2004, p. 24) with marginal notations or Post-its as you read a text in your discipline (e.g., a textbook chapter, a short story, a magazine article, etc.), then write a one-page memo, single spaced, about what you learned about yourself as a reader/future teacher of reading from this activity; file a copy of the text with the evidence of your strategies and your memo in your portfolio.

\_\_\_\_\_ Borrow a middle- or high-school textbook for your discipline and evaluate it in terms of literacy using a form from Dornan, Rosen, & Wilson (1997), available from me; file the table of contents for the text and your completed form in your portfolio.

\_\_\_\_\_ Read a book appropriate for your content area from Daniels and Zemelman's (2004) "Great Books for Middle and High School" list, then write a one-page memo, single spaced, about your personal response to the text and your thoughts on whether/how you might use it in your teaching; file the cover page from the text and your memo in your portfolio. (See me if you are interested in reading a piece of young



adult fiction relevant to your content area but do not see an appropriate one on D & Z's list.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Interview in person, over the telephone, or via e-mail three individuals who draw on content/skills from your discipline in their personal and/or professional lives. Ask them about what and how they read, write, speak, and listen at work and/or at home, then write a two-page memo, single spaced, about a) who you chose and why, and b) what interested you most as a future teacher of their discipline about what they said about their literacies; file your notes/e-mails and your memo in your portfolio.

Part III: Review all of the material you have related to each of the three activities, then write a 2-page memo, single spaced, that addresses the following guiding questions: "Based on my inquiry, what insights do I have about how people read and write in my discipline?" and "What do these findings mean for my future teaching of literacy within my discipline?" File this memo as the final item in your portfolio.

## Appendix C

### Description of Unit Plan Project

#### Unit plan (30%).

As a culminating project (and in lieu of a final examination), you will develop an instructional unit addressing some key content in your discipline while simultaneously building in deliberate support for reading, writing, and oral language. This assignment will provide you with the opportunity to apply new information from the course to your own interests and the needs of your specific discipline. Your completed project will have three parts:

- a rationale/introduction for the unit itself, which explains why the content is important and appropriate for your target students to learn, as well as describes why you have selected the instructional approaches you have chosen to support your students' literacy development,
- a description of no fewer than 4 texts (broadly defined but including one Internet or multimedia text) that will be used in some way in your unit, with information included about the selection/evaluation strategies you used; the texts' genre, level of difficulty, and potential appeal to learners; and your ideas related to their potential supports and challenges for learners (see ch. 6 of Chandler-Olcott & Hinchman [2005] for more on this),
- instructional plans for each lesson that describe your learner objectives, materials, activities/ procedures, consideration of learners' diverse needs, and assessment strategies.

You should plan for two weeks of instruction: either 5 days of 80-minute blocks or 10 days of 40-minute periods. Your plans may take whatever format—outline, bulleted lists, etc.—is comfortable for you. To ensure that your decision-making is explicit, you will provide additional information about your thought processes related to literacy in italics, colored text, parentheses, or a text box. The evaluation form for this project appears in Appendix I. *If you are a graduate student, your unit plan must include references and citations to two independently-selected research articles on some aspect of teaching literacy in your discipline (in addition to assigned readings).*

## Appendix D

### Art Education & Literacy Survey

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*This is a survey of questions that seek to get some information on how pre-service Art Educators feel about Literacy as related to their Art teaching. Please answer the questions according to the instructions and to the best of your ability. I thank you for your time!*

**\*NOTE: For the purpose of this survey, Literacy refers to Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening.**

**I am currently: (check one)**

\_\_\_\_\_ an Art Education Undergraduate student (circle courses completed)    Foundations    Methods

\_\_\_\_\_ an Art Education Graduate Student (circle courses completed)                      Foundations    Methods

\_\_\_\_\_ Student Teaching

**1a. From your perspective as a future art educator, how important do you feel that literacy is to an adult in their everyday life? (circle one)**

Extremely                  Very                  Somewhat                  Not Very                  Not at all

**1b. From your perspective as a future art educator, how important do you feel that literacy is to a student in their academic life? (circle one)**

Extremely                  Very                  Somewhat                  Not Very                  Not at all

**1c. From your perspective as a future art educator, how important do you feel that literacy is to a student's comprehension of art content? (circle one)**

Extremely                  Very                  Somewhat                  Not Very                  Not at all

**2a. How much do you feel that art technique, content & lessons support and reinforce literacy? (circle one)**

A Great Deal                  Very Much                  Somewhat                  Not Very                  Not at all

**2b. How much do you think supporting literacy in your art classroom will benefit your art students? (circle one)**

A Great Deal                  Very Much                  Somewhat                  Not Very                  Not at all

**2c. How much effort are you willing to put forth to incorporate teaching approaches that support literacy into your art classroom? (circle one)**

A Great Deal                  Very Much                  Some                  Not Very Much                  None at all

**3. How important do you feel incorporating teaching approaches that support literacy is to your art teaching? (circle one)**

Extremely                  Very                  Somewhat          Not Very                  Not at all

**4. How much do you think the New York State Visual Art Standards relate to literacy?**

A Great Deal                  Very Much                  Some                  Not Very Much                  None at all

**5. Below you will see a list of teaching strategies related to the New York State English Language Arts Standards that could be used in an art classroom. Please rate each strategy on a 1-5 scale of how you intend to use it in your future art classroom. See scale below:**

- 1 - Always: use / intend to use this strategy for every lesson**
- 2 - Frequently: use / intend to use this strategy on a regular basis**
- 3 - Occasionally: use / intend to use this strategy sometimes**
- 4 - Infrequently: use / intend to use this strategy once or twice per marking period**
- 5 - Never: will not use / do not intend to use this strategy**

Whole Class Oral Critique \_\_\_\_\_                  Content Read from Textbook / Article \_\_\_\_\_

Group Discussions \_\_\_\_\_                  Use of Children's Literature \_\_\_\_\_

Student Presentations \_\_\_\_\_                  Art Terms (Vocabulary) \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Art Criticism \_\_\_\_\_                  Graphic Organizers / Thinking Maps \_\_\_\_\_

Writing in an Art Journal \_\_\_\_\_                  Interdisciplinary Lessons \_\_\_\_\_

Student Written Artist Statements \_\_\_\_\_                  Internet webquests / research \_\_\_\_\_

"Notes to the Artist" \_\_\_\_\_                  Web design / student web pages \_\_\_\_\_

(Students writing a note to student artists, comments on artwork hanging in a student exhibit.)

Computer art created with drawing software \_\_\_\_\_

**Any additional comments are appreciated:**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!!!**

## Appendix E

### Interview Protocol

**Interviewer:** \_\_\_\_\_ Kathie, first author \_\_\_\_\_

**Interviewee:** \_\_\_ Participant pseudonym \_\_\_\_\_  
Interview #1 \_\_\_\_\_ Interview #2 \_\_\_\_\_

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Before Beginning the Interview:

- Study is summarized.
- Interviewee is asked if they have any questions.
- Confidentiality policy is (re)stated: I will not share specific information that might identify individual participants to Dr. Chandler-Olcott (Kelly, second author) or to other faculty members in the Department of Art Education. Dr. Chandler-Olcott (Kelly, second author) will not have access to specific data, even with pseudonyms, from informal and formal interviews outside of the context of regular class conversations until after the semester ends and grades are posted. Pseudonyms will be used for participants in all publications and/or presentations about the research, and any unusual personal details that might serve to identify the participants will be changed or omitted.

#### Interview #1 Questions:

- Could you please talk about your thoughts regarding literacy and art teaching: what were you thinking before you started the RED course?
- Please talk about how you see literacy support approaches fitting in your art curriculum...and how you came to those thoughts and ideas.
- Please tell me about any ways you see literacy impacting your workshop teaching.
- (Saturday Art Workshops...Art Education practicum before student teaching.)
- I notice that Methods students use children's books as inspiration or motivation for their workshop lessons...if you've done that, can you tell me about your experience with that? If you haven't done that...maybe one of your partners has done it and then you could tell me about that.
- Imagine you are a first year art teacher and your principal tells the faculty that all teachers, including art teachers, every content area, must support literacy in their content. What kinds of resources, teacher books, materials...anything...what would reference to support your teaching art content and supporting the school literacy goals?

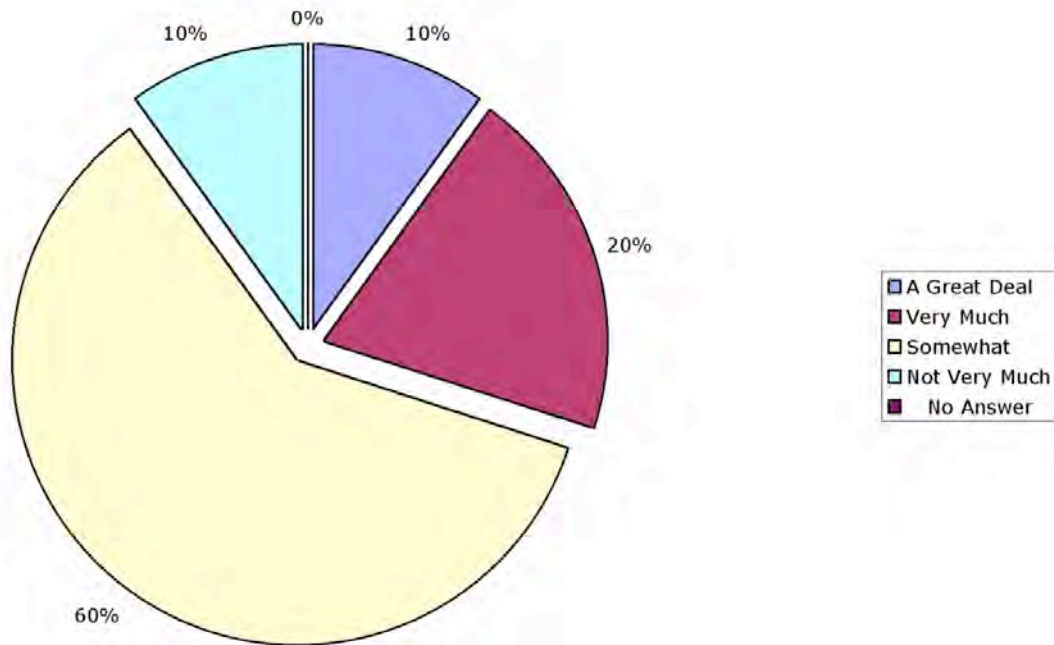
**Interview #2 Questions:**

- Tell me about how your perspective on integrating literacy within the art classroom has changed...or solidified over the semester.
- In our first interview, you talked about reading and writing being the main ways you thought about literacy as it related to art content. Has that changed over the semester? (each participant had a different follow-up question based on their first interview)
- Tell me about your unit plan...
- Tell me how you will approach supporting literacy in your future classroom in terms of your art lessons and curriculum...
- Tell me about your perfect classroom in terms of art content and integrating literacy...
- What will you need to make this vision a reality?
- What do you anticipate “getting in your way” of integrating literacy in your art lessons and curriculum?
- How will you deal with overcoming these roadblocks?
- Is there anything else you’d like to talk about?

## Appendix F

### Sample Graph of Questionnaire Results

#### 4. How much do you think the NYS Visual Art Standards relate to literacy?



## Appendix G

### Sample Coding Matrix

Examples of Literacy in Discipline-Specific Inquiry Projects	Arrinna	Danielle	David	Doreen	Emma	Karen	Margaret	Odette	Petra	
Using illustrations in books						*				1
Teacher-created tools						*				1
Picture Books		*		*		*		*		4
Reproductions of Art				*		*		*		3
Artifacts / Learning objects						*				1
Visual Analysis of art						*		*		2
Written analysis of art	*		*		*	*	*			5
Verbal analysis of art		*	*	*	*	*				5
Comparative analysis of more than one work of art		*		*		*				3
Written self-reflection	*		*		*	*				4
Reading written texts	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	8
Visual Thinking Strategies (specifically)				*		*				2
Demonstration of art techniques		*								1
Viewing visuals	*	*		*		*				4
Viewing film / video		*		*						2
Verbal expression in discussions	*	*	*	*	*	*				6
Creating art using meaningful imagery		*								1
Visual culture		*	*	*			*			4
Vocabulary	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	8
Art textbook	*	*			*		*			4



## **Appendix H**

### Sample Excerpt from Analytical Memo

During the first interview, it was apparent that Doreen was open to the idea of supporting literacy within her art curriculum. She was clearly not resistant but expressed hesitation as to how it was possible. “I think the hard part will be to incorporate all these ideas and still make art.” (First interview) I’m not sure if attending to the practical is a trait that art teachers seem to universally share or if that perspective is a result of the culture of [our] department of Art Education. . . probably a bit of both. Doreen recognizes the challenges of incorporating some literacy support strategies into her art curriculum, but apparently doesn’t see these challenges as insurmountable or a reason for resistance. She notes a few particular ideas in which she is interested in trying: having a classroom library, book clubs and classroom discussion, and she seems interested in making time for these literacy support learning experiences. I think she enjoyed the success she had when using a children’s book (Faith Ringgold’s *Tar Beach*) to inspire an art lesson for the Saturday Art Workshops for Young People (a methods practicum before student teaching) that she is encouraged to try that as well. I wish I had followed up on that response in more detail. Because it is well known in the art education profession that the visual arts classroom is often marginalized in terms of respect for the discipline, supply budget, and administrative support, Doreen discussed student resources quite a bit in this first interview. My interview question, in my mind, hoped to elicit what art educators might need as teacher resources for themselves in order to help support literacy in a classroom not traditionally thought of as a place where reading and writing frequently occur. This question stemmed from my own experience in being required to support literacy, but not finding any teacher resources to help me do that. I found books and websites that offered this information for science and social studies teachers, but nothing for art. I’m surprised to find that [participants] are not thinking about “teacher books” that might help them support literacy! Almost universally among all my interviews participants were more concerned with resources that students could use. . . .

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