

Colorado Art Education Conference
Breckenridge, Colorado
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Group Process in the Art Room: Basis for Increased Success

Understanding and applying the principles of group development in the classroom are basic to building a healthy climate and personal relationships, encouraging creativity, and stimulating achievement. Effective Group Process makes the difference between classes that are “ho-hum” and “WOW!”. Participants will learn the elements and flow of group dynamics and how to facilitate of this process.

Facilitator:

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Group Process in the Classroom: Basis for Increased Success

Workshop Goals and Methods

This workshop will use cognitive and hands-on approaches to explore what makes a great classroom. The ideal classroom covers course objectives and expectations, but encourages the students to set and achieve their own goals while experiencing acceptance, encouragement and recognition.

Contents Covered:

1. Purpose for and Necessity of Group Development in the Classroom.

“The greatest of all talents, and the one most important for us, is the talent for humanity. And what is this talent? It is involvement. And the talent for being humane operationally means involvement in the welfare of one’s fellowman...This most basic of all opportunities is the right to grow and develop as a human being who has been deeply involved in love of others, for the health and identity of the person consists in the meaningfulness of his/her interrelationships.” Montagu

In a classroom which focuses not only on cognitive standards, but on meaning and interrelationships, the teacher/facilitator will help the group and each student:

- acquire self-understanding
- develop an acceptance of self and others
- develop sensitivity and caring toward self and others
- learn to encourage others to develop communication skills
- gain individual insights
- learn to take risks in their growing and learning
- learn to become actively involved with others in the group
- develop an eagerness for changing themselves
- gain insights into problem areas
- develop empathy for others
- learn to give and receive support
- develop problem solving skills
- learn to maintain confidentiality
- explore feelings of self and of others
- acquire new coping skill
- to develop a non-judgmental attitude .

(Gold/Roth)

2. The Teacher as Facilitator

According to Webster to “facilitate” is to make easier. The effective Facilitator interacts directly with students. The facilitator sets the emotional tone, gives meaning to the experience, deals with emotions which surface, encourages healthy group interactions, and handles logistical issues.

The facilitator influences the climate, facilitates the group process, counsels and instructs.

3. Stages of Group Development in The Classroom

In order to facilitate classroom learning and enable the students to coalesce as a group, it is essential that the teacher be aware of and encourage the group process.

Stages of Group Development in the Classroom					
	ONE	TWO			
	THREE	FOUR	FI VE		
Task					
Outcomes	Commitment	Clarification	Involvement	Achievement	Recognition
Relationship					
Outcomes	Acceptance	Belonging	Support	Pride	Satisfaction

4. Skills for Understanding and Facilitating Group Development are

- demonstrating commitment
- communication
- problem solving
- acceptance
- use of time
- humor
- emphasizing total wellness

5. Reflection, Celebration, and Moving Forward

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Anne Frank from February 23, 1944 when she was hiding

“The best remedy for those who are frightened, lonely or unhappy is to go outside; somewhere they can be alone, alone with the sky, nature and God. For then and only then can you feel that everything is as it should be. As long as this exists, and that should be forever, I know that there will be solace for every sorrow, whatever the circumstances. I firmly believe that nature can bring comfort to all who suffer.”

Using EcoArt to Increase Creativity and Self-Understanding

In this session, participants become aware of the meaning and importance of environmental art and how it can enrich the lives of their students and themselves. Environmental Art or EcoArt, has many dimensions, each of which can encourage creativity, self-understanding, and awareness of wider environmental issues. These elements will be expanded and explored.

Participants will construct an art piece from natural materials. Reflection and discussion will encourage additional insights about creativity, nature and themselves.

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Thoughts about Environmental Art (EcoArt)

What is Environmental Art?

In a general sense, environmental art is art that helps improve our relationship with the natural world. There is no definition set in stone. This living worldwide movement is growing and changing constantly.

Some environmental art::

- Informs and interprets nature and its processes, or educates us about environmental problems
- Is concerned with environmental forces and materials, creating artworks affected or powered by wind, water, lightening, even earthquakes
- Re-visions our relationship to nature, proposing new ways for us to co-exist with our environment
- Reclaims and remediates damaged environments, restoring ecosystems in artistic and often aesthetic ways.

Lynne Hull 2009 greenmuseum.org

What Environmental Art Projects Can I Use with My Students?

- Start creating and listing these yourself
- Check the web, library, book stores and magazines
- Share with other teachers, artists, ecologists,
- Reflect on and adapt to the learning styles of your students
- Make a Morph Grid to brainstorm ideas
- Share what you love to create in art in nature
- Find out what your students enjoy creating in nature

Why Do Environmental Art?

“The outer world is necessary for the inner world; they’re not two worlds but a single world with two aspects: the outer and the inner. If we don’t have certain outer experiences, we don’t have certain inner experiences, or at least we don’t have them in a profound way. We need the sun, the moon, the stars, the rivers and

the mountains and the trees, the flowers, the birds the song of the birds, the fish in the sea, to evoke a world of mystery, to evoke the sacred...Apart from that our souls shrivel and our imagination is dulled.”

Thomas Berry

“When we draw away from Nature and substitute our own tamed, diminished, created versions, we cut our selves off from the information Nature contains about how the world works: inclusively, exquisitely, fearlessly. It is at the same time how we work, how we must work: inclusively, exquisitely fearlessly. This information we are clearly not yet in possession of. We cut our Selves off from the benefits of being knowledgeable and in accord with the rest of the universe: a sense of belonging, of legitimacy, of sanity, wisdom, health, peace of mind, graciousness, joy.

Peter London

Drawing Closer to Nature: Making Art in Dialogue with the Natural World

“Artists who are oblivious to the forces that affect the state of Nature, that affect the quality of all human existence and that of one’s own self, that inflect the very possibility of drawing closer to Nature, deny themselves a major source of authority to declare on their subject. We want to draw closer to Nature in every aspect of our Selves and in every aspect of Nature; otherwise it would be not our true Self or actual Nature that might meet. We want everyone to have the opportunity to so choose and to do so. We want an art that flows from this kind of firsthand knowledge and unequivocal commitment to being a member in good standing of this world.”

Peter London

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