

AVODAarts

Advancing Jewish Learning Through the Arts



JEWISH EDUCATION AND THE ARTS: What We Can Learn from the General Education Field

A Review of Literature

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introduction

The Jewish people have often been called the “People of the Book.” Perhaps nowhere has this title been more duly earned than in Jewish day schools, Hebrew schools, and supplementary schools. Jewish education has traditionally been largely text-based, and teachers today continue to emphasize Hebrew literacy and adherence to a unique literary heritage.

Few would advocate abandoning the central texts that have been fundamental to Jewish life and survival over the centuries. However, the arts have been an important element of Jewish expression in every period as well: Consider the gold furnishings of the ancient tabernacle, the poetry of the Psalms, the illumination of medieval Hebrew manuscripts, traditional cantorial music, Yiddish theater, and contemporary Israeli art and dance.

Increasingly, Jewish educators are seeing the value in the arts, and in using the arts alongside traditional textual approaches, to enhance their instructional aims (Backenroth, 2008).

This subtle shift is happening as evidence from the secular education world reveals the many potential benefits of an arts-

based educational approach (Rabkin & Redmond, 2006).

What, exactly, are the benefits of an arts-based pedagogy? What do the arts have to offer Jewish educators in particular? And what might broad-based arts programming look like within a Jewish educational context?

As a first step toward answering these questions, this paper will examine current research and practice within the realm of arts education. We will investigate the theoretical underpinnings of arts-based teaching, look at evidence regarding the specific educational and developmental benefits of the arts, and explore common approaches (and challenges) to implementation. Through this review of the literature, we hope to gain a basic understanding of the state of the field of arts education, which can, in turn, inform practice and policy within mainstream Jewish education.



clarification of scope

In recent decades, researchers, practitioners, and theoreticians have written countless volumes and articles on education, the arts, and the complex relationship between the two. It would be neither feasible nor fruitful for us to undertake an exhaustive exploration here of this entire body of literature. Instead, this review will focus primarily on those aspects of current and recent theory, research, and practice that illuminate potential avenues for incorporating the arts into Jewish education. Our interest is in large-scale, policy-level opportunities; therefore, we will not examine specific instructional materials or classroom methodologies. Rather, we will discuss the literature as it informs broader educational theory, policy, and infrastructure. In order to zero in on the most relevant aspects of the literature, it will also be necessary to identify appropriate working definitions for certain key terms.

What do we mean by “the arts”?

In the context of its national arts education standards, the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations has defined “art” as “creative works and the process of producing them,” as well as “the whole body of work in the art forms that make up the entire human intellectual and cultural heritage” (Consortium of National Arts Education

Associations, 1994). For the sake of this review, we will take a similarly expansive view of the arts, which we see as encompassing the creation of works in both the performing arts (music, dance, drama) and the nonperforming arts (literature, sculpture, painting, drawing, photography, and all other visual arts), as well as the study and appreciation of such works. Our definition also includes endeavors in distinctly contemporary modes of expression that sometimes blur the line between the performing and nonperforming arts, such as installation art, conceptual art, and media art.

What do we mean by “arts education”?

Jessica Hoffmann Davis founded the Arts in Education program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. In her book *Why Our Schools Need the Arts* (2008), Davis identifies nine different ways the arts have been incorporated into K-12 education. These include “arts based,” “arts infused,” “arts included,” “arts expansion,” “arts professional,” “arts extras,” “aesthetic education,” “arts cultura,” and “arts integrated.” Other writers (e.g., Ulbricht, 1998) have used additional terms, such as “related-arts education” or “correlated education,” to describe the manifold approaches that have been taken to combining education and the arts.

The terminology can be confusing, and the distinctions between categories are often subtle. For our purposes, a simpler and more useful distinction might be the division James Catterall (1998) makes between “learning *in the arts*” (for example,

taking music or watercolor painting classes) and “learning *through the arts*” (e.g., using drama or historical paintings to learn about the past).

In “learning through the arts,” or “arts integration,” the arts are interwoven with other subjects, and topics are studied through engagement with and production of works of art, as well as through other disciplinary modes (Davis, 2008; Ulbricht, 1998; Burnaford et al, 2001; Fineberg, 2004). Susannah Brown (2007) describes it this way: “Arts integration is like a weaving wherein the design may repeat a pattern or be variable. Just as the warp and weft strings are integral parts of a woven whole, the arts are an integral part of the curriculum and are valuable in all aspects of teaching and learning” (p. 172).

While there is surely educational value in teaching the arts for their own sake—that is, in learning *in* the arts (see, for example, McCarthy et al., 2004)—this review will focus primarily on literature related to “learning *through* the arts.”

Because our goal is to better understand how the arts can enhance *Jewish* education, our main thrust will be to explore the cross-curricular benefits of the arts, to examine the ways in which the arts can be integrated with other subjects, and to expose the critical factors for successful arts integration.

theoretical frameworks

As a prelude to an examination of current research and practice in learning through the arts, it will be instructive to examine some broader conceptual frameworks that may inform our understanding of the potential role of the arts in education.

The past century has produced numerous theories about art, education, and the aesthetic experience; will look briefly at five theoretical approaches that may offer useful background for the ensuing discussion.

John Dewey: Art as Experience

The writings of philosopher John Dewey (1859–1952) have contributed immeasurably to our understanding and practice of education in the 20th century and into the 21st. His work has particular implications for the arts.

Dewey understood human development as a series of experiences—transactional interactions between the self and the external world. Some interactions have the capacity to “prepare a person for later experience of a deeper and more expansive quality” (Dewey, 1938, p 28). Such “educative experiences,” Dewey said, help to engender growth and development, while other types of experiences are

developmental dead-ends. Dewey saw the function of schools as creating opportunities for educative experiences, and he believed that art experiences had the potential to be particularly educative (Jackson, 1998).

The experience of creating or appreciating art, Dewey said, was inherently fulfilling and generative. Aesthetic experiences help us see things anew and break us out of routine modes of interaction. “When the method of the teacher leads the pupil to see in the object features and relations he had not seen before,” Dewey wrote, “both teacher and pupil come into intellectual and emotional control of the situation. Then the habit of objective seeing is formed, and the habit operates in subsequent seeing.... Experience is immediately enriched, and the capacity for growth, for continuing experience, is expanded and directed” (Dewey, 1929, p 7).

An art experience carries all the elements of what Dewey would call meaningful experience: intensity, clarity, concentration, and integration. Furthermore, according to Dewey, art experiences are not fundamentally distinct from everyday experiences—only more intense. We can thus use our experiences with art as models for other interactions, to help us infuse aesthetic qualities into ordinary experience. In other words, art does not transport us to other worlds; it reveals the potential in this world (Jackson, 1998; Dewey, 1934).

Dewey emphasized the importance of aesthetic education early on in his work, writing about the educational role of museums in his 1902 book *The School and Society* (Leddy, 2008). Dewey also understood play to be an important part of a child’s development and saw art as a way to reach this goal. He wrote, “Education has no more serious responsibility than making adequate provision for enjoyment of recreative leisure; not only for the sake of immediate health, but still more if possible for the sake of its lasting effects upon habits of mind. Art is again the answer to this demand” (Dewey, 1916, p. 241).

Piaget and Vygotsky: Constructivism

The Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget (1896–1980) is considered by many to be the father of the educational theory known as Constructivism. Like Dewey, Piaget conceptualized human development not as the passive absorption of information, but as a dynamic process built on interaction with one’s environment. Specifically, Piaget believed that children *construct* their own knowledge as they interact with objects in the world around them. As learners encounter new experiences, they actively try to assimilate these experiences into existing cognitive structures. When the information does not fit, new structures are created to accommodate the input. Through this ongoing process of cognitive restructuring—assimilation and accommodation—the mind makes sense of the world around it (Martin, 2001; Efland, 2002).

Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934) was born the same year as Piaget, and his own theory of Social Constructivism builds on Piaget’s work. He too saw development as a process of interaction. But while Piaget believed that knowledge was constructed primarily through interactions with the physical environment, Vygotsky contended that human development occurred through experiences in the social sphere (Althouse et al, 2003).

Vygotsky observed that children performed tasks at a higher level when they collaborated with an adult or a more capable peer than when they worked alone. He identified the difference between what children could do individually and what they could do collaboratively as the “Zone of Proximal Development” or ZPD. Vygotsky said that all learning takes place within the ZPD, as the learner internalizes the meanings that are first expressed in the social context (Vygotsky, 1978).

How do the theories of Piaget and Vygotsky help us understand the place of the arts in education? Like Dewey, Piaget and Vygotsky understood that learning occurs through doing. Arts projects (as well as other forms of constructivist engagement) enable students to explore and integrate new experiences within both their physical and social environments. In particular, Vygotsky’s emphasis on the social context of learning suggests the powerful potential of collaborative arts projects as educational tools.

Maxine Greene: Aesthetic Education

In her work, contemporary philosopher Maxine Greene focuses on the educative—and transformative—role of *aesthetic experience*; that is, the inherent value of engaging with works of art. Her influential ideas form the theoretical basis of the Lincoln Center Institute’s Aesthetic Education Program (Smith, 2005).

Like Dewey, Greene believes that perceiving a work of art is an active process that requires personal involvement (Greene, 1990). But unlike Dewey, Greene sees authentic encounters with artworks—what she calls “privileged objects”—as fundamentally unique and distinct from other human experiences. “Privileged objects, for me, include paintings, sculptures, poems, novels, plays, musical pieces, and dance performances,” she writes, “with unique capacities to complicate and deepen our experiences in the world and with each other. They have the potential as well to plunge us into adventures of meaning and to open new perspectives on an always problematic world” (Greene, 1990, p. 149). By experiencing, interpreting, and reflecting on artistic works, Greene believes, we can gain new perspectives, see new patterns, create new meanings, and reach new levels of awareness. But, she says, what one receives from the experience is dependent on what he or she puts in. Therefore, we must train students to be open and sensitive to the aesthetic experience. This is the goal of Greene’s approach to aesthetic education—to help

individuals learn to connect with works of art so they can access the inherent value these privileged objects offer (Greene, 1990; Greene, 2001; Smith, 2005).

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi: The Flow Experience

Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi has spent years researching and writing about the phenomenon he calls “flow.” Through hundreds of interviews with individuals who engage in a wide range of activities, from mountain climbing to computer coding to music making, he has identified the flow experience as a state of intrinsic motivation. It is a sense of engagement and fulfillment one feels when participating in certain pleasurable and challenging activities (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Csikszentmihalyi has described the flow experience as “being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost” (Geirland, 1996).

In a study of art museum professionals, Csikszentmihalyi and co-researcher Rick Robinson have found personal engagement with works of art to be a distinct form of flow. They note many similarities between aesthetic encounters and other examples of the flow experience. Both involve a heightened state of consciousness, an experience of becoming lost in the activity, and a sense of rising to the challenge.

Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson also point out the powerful educational role that flow experiences in general—and aesthetic experiences in particular—can play: “All flow experiences lead to a more intense interaction with the environment, to a development of potentialities... The aesthetic experience develops sensitivity to the *being* of other persons, to the excellence of form, to the style of distant historical periods, to the essence of unfamiliar civilizations. In so doing, it changes and expands the being of the viewer” (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990, p. 183). Flow theory thus suggests an important place for the arts within human development.

Howard Gardner: Multiple Intelligences

Harvard University’s Howard Gardner has been one of the most influential voices in educational theory over the past several decades. His theory of multiple intelligences backs up what many educators have known intuitively for years: that different students have different learning styles, different ways of knowing, and different ways of communicating their understanding.

In his research, Gardner observed that children’s development often proceeds differentially; that is, young people learn new skills and competencies unevenly. They do not simply “get smarter;” rather, a student may become adept in one area but not develop appreciably in another.

Gardner also studied individuals who had suffered brain damage and found that brain injuries often affect certain abilities but not others, depending on the location of the damage. In addition, he examined cognitive development from a cross-cultural perspective to learn what counts as “intelligence” in other human societies. Gardner’s research led him to challenge the notion that intelligence is a singular entity “integrally connected in what Piaget would call a ‘structured whole’” or that it is something that can be measured with a simple pen-and-paper test (Gardner, 1990). Gardner redefined intelligence as “an ability to solve problems or to fashion a product, to make something that is valued in at least one culture” (Gardner, 1990, p. 16), and he identified at least eight discrete and unique types of intelligence. These include (but ultimately may not be limited to): linguistic, logical, spatial, musical, naturalistic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and bodily-kinesthetic. Educators have traditionally focused on the first two, but, as Gardner points out, we may fail to reach the majority of students effectively when our methods of teaching and assessment neglect the other six (Gardner, 1990; Gardner, 1999; Burnaford et al, 2001).

Significantly, Gardner’s list of intelligences does not include “artistic intelligence.” He notes, “I do not believe that any intelligence is inherently artistic or non-artistic. Rather, intelligences singularly or in combination can be put to artistic uses” (Gardner, 1990, p. 20). Furthermore, he says, “As I see it, every intelligence has the

potential to be mobilized for the arts” (Gardner, 1999, p. 5).

Thus, in Gardner’s framework, the arts carry a rich potential to reach students across intelligences, to connect learning within different forms of intelligence, and to allow students opportunities to express their learning through a variety of intelligences. Gardner’s theory has, in fact, formed the conceptual basis for many arts-in-education programs, including the Arts PROPEL curriculum, developed by Harvard University’s Project Zero.

recent research

Educational theory clearly suggests that the arts have a significant role to play in the effective education of our children. But how, specifically, do students (as well as teachers, schools, and communities) benefit from the incorporation of the arts into ongoing teaching and learning? In this section, we will examine some of the recent research that has attempted to answer this question.

The Arts and Academic Achievement: The Question of Transfer

Arts advocates have long recognized the intrinsic value of the arts. But the culture wars of the early 1990s forced many arts advocates to seek more measurable, extrinsic benefits of the arts (McCarthy et

al, 2004). Since then, much of the research on arts and education has sought to identify the links between arts study and academic achievement. In particular, many scholars have tried to prove the existence of “transfer”—the capacity to apply learning in one discipline (e.g., the arts) to performance in another (such as math or reading).

In 2002, the Arts Education Partnership (a coalition of educational, arts, government, and philanthropic organizations working to promote the essential role of the arts in education) published *Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development*. The report summarized and reviewed sixty-two published studies that looked at the relationship between student achievement and exposure to music, dance, drama, and the visual arts. Richard Deasy, editor of *Critical Links*, concluded that there was evidence to support the notion that “well-crafted arts experiences produce positive academic and social effects,” including assisting in the development of critical academic skills such as literacy and numeracy (Deasy, 2002, p. iii). The publication featured a two-page chart listing sixty-five academic and social outcomes correlated to arts learning, including spatial reasoning, mathematics proficiency, and reading readiness.

Cognitive Dispositions / Habits of Mind

Some scholars, however, have challenged the notion of direct transfer. In 2000, Ellen

Winner and Lois Hetland, both of Harvard University’s Project Zero, published a meta-analysis of studies that had investigated the links between art study and specific academic outcomes such as verbal achievement, mathematical achievement, spatial reasoning, nonverbal reasoning, and visual and verbal creative thinking. Winner and Hetland found the evidence for transfer lacking. Although they noted some correlational relationships between the arts and academic achievement, causation was often not clear (Winner & Hetland, 2000). In a subsequent publication, Hetland, Winner, and colleagues (Hetland et al, 2007) proposed that while arts learning might not *directly* improve academic performance in other areas, the arts do cultivate broader *dispositions* that have the potential to transfer to other areas. Based on a study of five arts classrooms, they suggested that the arts help students expand their capacity in the following areas: developing craft, engaging and persisting, envisioning, expressing, observing, reflecting, stretching and exploring, and understanding the art world. These capacities would likely be applicable across many disciplines. This list echoes the work of Elliot Eisner, Professor Emeritus of Art and Education at Stanford University, who has written extensively on the arts and education.

Like Winner and Hetland, Eisner has noted that the evidence for transfer of specific skills is not clear, and has proposed that the arts instead train students in particular

“habits of mind.” His list includes: attention to relationships, “flexible purposing” (that is, the ability to shift direction while solving problems), using materials as medium, expressing self through form, imagination, seeing the world from an aesthetic perspective, and translating experience into verbal expression (Eisner, 1992; Eisner, 1998; Eisner, 2002). A number of other writers (e.g., Davis, 2008; Efland, 2002; Perkins, 1994) agree with both Eisner and Winner & Hetland, noting that the development of cognitive and social dispositions—such as creativity, flexibility, and the ability to consider multiple interpretations—may be a more important benefit of the arts than transfer of specific skills. There is research to support this idea. In his study of the SPECTRA+ arts program in Hamilton, Ohio, for example, Richard Luftig (2000), found evidence of enhanced creativity among students in arts-infused schools.

Researchers at Teachers College also found that students in “arts-intensive” settings showed more creativity and cooperation, and better articulation of ideas and feelings than children in other schools (Fiske, 1999). And Shirley Brice Heath has shown that arts-based after-school programs for at-risk students offer excellent opportunities for developing communication, complex-thinking, and problem-solving skills (Fiske, 1999). In reviewing the evaluations of six large-scale arts partnerships, Rob Horowitz concluded, “Looking cumulatively at the studies, it appears there is a relationship between

arts-integrated programming and learning across academic areas when they are more broadly defined than through the skills contained in high-stakes tests” (Horowitz, 2004, p 26).

Emotional Connection and Student Motivation

In addition to the potential cognitive benefits, the arts have the capacity to reach students on an emotional level. Efland (2002) points out that thinking and feeling are not mutually exclusive (as is often assumed), and that engagement with the arts carries both cognitive and affective components. As Burnaford et al note, “The arts integrate thought, feeling, and action” (Burnaford et al, 2001, p 10). This powerful combination of emotional and intellectual content may enable the arts to captivate students in a way that other approaches do not.

Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi’s flow theory suggests that the very nature of the arts experience may provide intrinsic motivation (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990). Some researchers have explored the degree to which arts experiences are inherently motivational and perhaps able to engage students more fully. Michael Gazzaniga (2008), for example, has shown that interest in the performing arts can engender a high state of motivation, which can lead to greater attention and improvement in other cognitive domains. Similarly, an experimental research design by Michael Posner and colleagues (Posner et al, 2008)

supports the theory that arts training among those with an interest in the arts leads to increased motivation and thus increased attention and improved cognition. And Craig Sautter (1994) has cited a 1990 study by the Florida State University's Center for Music Research that documented the role of the arts in motivation and drop-out rates among high-school students. The study showed that attendance was positively affected by arts participation. Sautter quoted the study as saying, "This enthusiasm for expressing oneself through the various art forms seems to be a motivating force for student attendance in these classes." (Sautter, 1994, p. 436).

Community and Culture

In addition to the benefits the arts offer individual students, research has shown that arts programs can be effective in forging connections within communities and among cultures.

In 2001, Jessica Hoffmann Davis used a combination of observation, interviews, and contextual analysis to study school culture and learning at three elementary schools with a strong arts focus. She found that in each case members of the school community experienced a strong feeling of connectedness. Davis reported that each school had managed to "engender a strong sense of community within the school by fostering collaborative endeavors among all constituents even as they cultivate the involvement of members of the broader community" (Davis, 2005, p. 118). In

another study of six community arts centers, Davis and her colleagues found that the most educationally effective centers were able to nurture strong relationships among community constituents and help young people transform or articulate their personal identities (Davis, 2005).

In their seminal review, *Gifts of the Muse: Reframing the Debate About the Benefits of the Arts*, McCarthy et al (2004) have noted the particular power of group art projects to help build and strengthen community. They point out that the communication required in such situations and the trust associated with revealing one's creative expression help make group projects especially effective in forging connections, bridging social divides, and communicating cultural heritage.

Charles Fowler also looked at the role of the arts in several arts-infused schools. He found that not only was there a greater sense of connection to the larger community and a "humanization" of the learning environment, but that students were also better able to connect across cultures: "[The arts] were a key ingredient in encouraging students and teachers to examine their intuitive and emotive selves, to develop empathy and compassion, and to share and appreciate different cultures" (Fowler, 1996, p. 144). As Merryl Goldberg points out, art always occurs in a specific cultural context and can serve as a kind of cultural text. She writes, "Indeed, using the arts of different cultures as primary

sources of learning history introduces children to the ‘feel’ of a culture in addition to the ‘facts’ of a culture” (Goldberg, 2001, p 11).

Specific Benefits of Learning *Through* the Arts

It is worth noting that in much of the literature cited above, little distinction is made between “learning in the arts” (i.e., arts instruction) and “learning through the arts” (i.e., arts integration). In examining the broad benefits of the arts in education, researchers have often lumped together these different approaches. This may result partly from the fact that many of the “arts-rich” schools studied simultaneously utilize multiple modes of arts education, including instruction in specific arts disciplines as well as arts integration across the curriculum. But where the specific effects of learning *through* the arts can be isolated, the educational benefits of the integrated approach have been shown to be particularly strong.

Rob Horowitz has noted, for example, that in studying the effectiveness of the Chicago Arts Partnership in Education (CAPE) program, evaluators found instruction falling along a continuum of integration, defined by the amount and depth of the interaction between disciplines and concepts. The researchers found that in the more integrated settings, “students seemed to be more intrinsically motivated, were challenged by their work, and were more

interested in pursuing the content outside of class” (Horowitz, 2004, p. 19). Burnaford et al (2007) have cited a series of evaluations that looked at the effects of an arts integration program in Minnesota called Arts for Academic Achievement (AAA). The studies showed increases in student achievement in the AAA schools particularly among disadvantaged learners, and Burnaford and her colleagues point out that “it was not the mere presence of arts integration but rather the intensity of the initiative that related most directly to gains in student learning” (Burnaford et al, 2007, p. 36).

Some writers (e.g., Eisner, 1998; McCarthy et al, 2004) have warned that an arts-integration approach carries a risk that the intrinsic value of painting, sculpture, drama, poetry, and other art forms will be de-emphasized. They worry that using the arts instrumentally to teach other subjects will lead to a diminishing, a “watering-down,” of arts experiences. It is important for educators and policy-makers to bear this warning in mind when devising arts-based curricula. Learning through the arts must incorporate authentic, robust engagement with a range of art forms, so that individual works of art—as well as the artistic process itself—can be appreciated on their own merits (Fineberg, 2004; Trent et al, 1998).

promising practices

The apparent benefits of the arts, as suggested by educational theory and recent research, have led many schools, districts, and community organizations to create a greater arts presence in their programming. In 1999, the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities and the Arts Education Partnership published *Gaining the Arts Advantage: Lessons from School Districts that Value Arts Education*. Designed to document some of the best practices in arts programming, the report highlighted the efforts of ninety-one districts around the country, while noting that “hundreds more were identified by state and national education and arts organizations as having outstanding arts education throughout their schools” (President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities and the Arts Education Partnership, 1999, p. 4). Many more arts-in-education programs are currently being implemented by individual schools, cultural associations, community partnerships, and institutions of higher learning. It should be noted, as well, that arts integration programs are being successfully implemented across a range of ages from elementary through high school (Arts Education Partnership, 2002).

On the next few pages, we will briefly examine the work of just a handful of arts programs to get a sense of the range of available models and approaches. In keeping with the goals of this review, we will focus particularly on large-scale programs that take an arts-integrated approach.

These programs represent a range of programmatic methodologies, including visiting artists and artist residencies, professional development for teachers, community partnerships, intensive arts instruction, collaborative teaching, visits to cultural institutions, and dissemination of curriculum materials and instructional models. Often, a single program will incorporate several approaches simultaneously.

In subsequent sections, we will explore some of the challenges these (and similar) programs face and some of the critical factors that can help ensure their success.

Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE)

Community partnerships, collaborative teaching, and artist residencies

The Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education began in 1992 with support from several Chicago foundations and corporations. The goal was to “bring local artists and arts agencies into partnerships with teachers at

all grade levels” (Catterall and Waldorf, 1999, p 48). Schools were invited to apply for grants that would support teacher-artist collaborations, combining instruction in an art form with teaching in an academic discipline.

Since then, CAPE has continued to support long-term co-planning and co-teaching partnerships between teachers and artists or arts organizations. CAPE’s “Artist in the Classroom” program, for example, provides multi-session artist residency placements, facilitated planning meetings for participating program teams, and professional development workshops for educators.

As noted above, a 1999 summary evaluation of the CAPE program revealed that CAPE participants experienced educational benefits, as well as positive changes in school climate, including enhanced principal leadership, focus on instruction, positive collegiality, and widespread participation in important decisions (Catterall and Waldorf, 1999).

A+ Schools, North Carolina

Professional development, collaborative teaching, and intensive arts instruction

The A+ program, run under the umbrella of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, combines rigorous daily instruction in the arts with interdisciplinary arts teaching. Forty-three schools across the state of North Carolina are part of the

A+ network. Participating teachers and principals attend ongoing professional development sessions and planning retreats, and schools are encouraged to exchange ideas with other schools in the network. Professional development topics include not only arts training but also strategies for creating partnerships with local community resources. The A+ program does not disseminate a specific set of curriculum materials; rather, it encourages schools to participate in a distinct approach to curriculum development, based on the ideals of multiple intelligences, enriched assessment, experiential learning, and collaboration.

In their 2007 review of literature related to arts integration, Burnaford and colleagues cited three evaluations of the A+ program. The authors noted: “In addition to the usual measures of student achievement and school success (expected gains in test scores, student and teacher attendance, student discipline, and parental involvement), the A+ Schools Program evaluators identified the unique contributions that the arts in education make to students’ intellectual, social, and emotional growth” (Burnaford et al, 2007, p. 34). Its ongoing professional development opportunities and statewide support network were both cited by evaluators as contributing to the success and sustainability of the A+ Program.

Lincoln Center Institute

Artist residencies, collaborative teaching, professional development, and visits to cultural institutions

Founded in 1975, the Lincoln Center Institute offers unique artist residencies to participating schools in the New York City area. LCI-trained teaching artists work closely with classroom teachers to plan multi-session thematic units. Teachers are required to attend a summer professional development institute as well, where they are trained in the arts and aesthetic education techniques. At the core of the Institute's mission is first-hand engagement with works of art, so each unit is based on a particular work of art (visual or performing) as the primary text. Related activities generally involve a variety of arts activities and connections to other curriculum areas.

Arts PROPEL

Dissemination of curriculum materials and instructional models

Arts PROPEL is an instructional and educational assessment model for middle and high schools developed collaboratively by Harvard University's Project Zero, the Educational Testing Service, and the Pittsburgh Public Schools. The Arts PROPEL curriculum approach is student-centered and based firmly on multiple intelligence theory. The Arts PROPEL method incorporates the three fundamental processes that are believed to form the core

of student learning: production, perception, and reflection. Central to the Arts PROPEL approach is the domain project—a student-defined arts project that tackles real-life, open-ended problems and offers students opportunities for self-assessment. Student development is also assessed through the use of a portfolio, or “processfolio,” which records the student's path toward the final product. The Arts PROPEL approach has been formalized and adopted by a number of school systems around the country (Gardner, 1993).

ArtsBridge

Community partnerships and collaborative teaching

With programs on 22 college campuses around the country and in Northern Ireland, ArtsBridge helps bring the arts to schools in urban and low-income areas. In the ArtsBridge model, fine arts students and university faculty mentors plan and implement arts projects in nearby schools and communities. Projects are intended to actively engage students in the arts while offering a bridge to other curriculum areas. While of course benefiting the participating students and schools, the ArtsBridge website points out that the program is also “a means for university students to provide creative service to their communities while learning the value of social activism and developing long-term commitments to help the disadvantaged.” A 2005 evaluation of the ArtsBridge program confirmed these benefits for university students who

participated as teaching artists. Findings also indicated that “important interdisciplinary connections could be made, mentor relationships developed, and a nurturing environment for the development of creativity built through ArtsBridge program activities” (Burnaford et al, 2007, p. 39).

factors for success

As we have seen, large-scale arts integration programs can take many forms, focusing in some cases on artist residencies and in other cases on team teaching strategies or alternative instructional models. Researchers have found, however, that regardless which models are adopted, certain common features are evident again and again in the most successful of these programs. In this section, we will examine some of these critical factors for success.

Community Involvement

In their 1999 report, *Gaining the Arts Advantage*, the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities and the Arts Education Partnership reviewed the accomplishments of 91 school districts that had developed successful arts programming. Through phone interviews, examination of written documents, and selected site visits, the review committee

found that the single biggest factor for success was community involvement. According to the report, quality arts education requires “an exceptional degree of involvement by influential segments of the community which value the arts in the total affairs of the school district: in governance, funding, and program delivery” (President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities and Arts Education Partnership, 1999, p. 4). They found that in the most successful programs, segments of the community frequently assisted in teaching, advocating for the arts, providing venues for student work, and using the school facilities as community arts venues. In many cases, the school districts had established formal partnerships with community organizations, but often the strongest districts created a range of both formal and informal relationships within the community (see also Rabkin & Redmond, 2006).

Critical to all community partnerships are clear, mutually understood expectations and responsibilities (Remer, 1996). In their study of nine integrated arts education programs funded by the Ford Foundation’s National Arts Education Initiative, Spilka and Long found that effective partnerships typically have “tiered levels of engagement, with clear accountability guidelines” (Spilka & Long, 2008, p. 22). It is especially important when schools engage in such partnerships that they explicitly take into account the various goals, needs, and missions of all participating organizations.

Significant time, effort, and finesse are often needed to identify appropriate partners and manage the ongoing relationships (Nelson, 2008).

Professional Development

In 2000, the Arts Education Partnership and President's Committee for the Arts and Humanities organized a follow-up conference for school leaders representing the districts profiled in *Gaining the Arts Advantage*. At the conference, participants commented on the fundamental need for ongoing professional development of teachers (Arts Education Partnership and President's Committee for the Arts and Humanities, 2000). This need has been echoed by other writers (see Horowitz, 2004; Nelson, 2008). In particular, the conference participants cited the importance of professional development programming that not only improves instruction but also enhances teachers' skills in working with community groups and raising the visibility of their programs within the community. Burnaford et al (2007) agree. They write: "Teacher education programs do not always prepare teachers for collaborative planning, working with art specialists in schools or teaching artists in communities" (p. 75). Teaching artists frequently need training, as well, particularly in the areas of classroom management, child development, and lesson planning (Fineberg, 2004).

Administrative Leadership and Commitment

The challenges of implementing an effective program of arts integration require strong leadership within a school. This leadership typically comes from the principal (or other administrator) or a dedicated arts coordinator. He or she is generally tasked with coordinating the work and schedules of teaching teams, visiting artists, and professional development consultants, while maintaining relationships with school boards, community members, and partner organizations. Effective school leaders must also push for clearly articulated arts policies and even consider aesthetic and arts-programming requirements when renovating or developing new facilities (Horowitz, 2004; President's Committee for the Arts and Humanities and Arts Education Partnership, 1999; Nelson, 2008).

Parental Participation

At the *Gaining the Arts Advantage* follow-up conference in 2000, organizers found that "without exception, school districts with strong arts education credit supportive parents as the rock on which their community base is built" (Arts Education Partnership and President's Committee for the Arts and Humanities, 2000, p. 4). The conference report offered a few examples of successful engagement with local parents. In Illinois's Township High School District 113, for instance, a Fine Arts Board made up mostly of parents

met regularly with district leaders and arts faculty on arts programming issues. The group even helped the district secure funds for a new theater facility. And in San Jose, CA, the school district held several “Community Conversations” to engage parents in the process of shaping their children’s education.

Advocacy

Successful arts programs are able to strengthen community support and often invite additional funding by developing evidence-based advocacy strategies. This frequently means creating opportunities to showcase student work as well as using program data to make a case for continued implementation. A clear set of arts education policy goals can be a useful tool for advocacy and communication as well (Spilka & Long, 2008; Nelson, 2008; President’s Committee for the Arts and Humanities and Arts Education Partnership, 1999). Arts leaders have found that educating the public about the arts and education is generally more effective than simply implementing a PR campaign (Arts Education Partnership and President’s Committee for the Arts and Humanities, 2000).

Quality Arts Instruction

As noted above, it is not just the presence of art in the curriculum that is important, but the quality of the arts instruction (Fineberg, 2004). In their study of arts learning, Steve Seidel and colleagues

identified four lenses through which to view an arts experience and gauge its quality. One must assess the level of teaching (that is, how the lesson is conceived and implemented), the social dynamics in the classroom, and the physical environment, as well as the activity of the students. All four measures contribute to the richness and strength of the arts experience (Seidel et al, 2009).

The presence of art specialists and teaching artists is often crucial to achieving this quality, as they bring a necessary level of expertise to the classroom. Artists and teachers who are actively engaged in the arts also bring a compelling vibrancy to their instruction (President’s Committee for the Arts and Humanities and Arts Education Partnership, 1999). And they are able to express an authentic appreciation for and engagement in the complex artistic process (Amdur Spitz & Associates, 2000). In some programs, teaching artists are asked to train classroom teachers to deliver instruction in their particular medium, but this approach is usually less effective than direct engagement between artists and students (Fineberg, 2004).

In addition to the quality of the arts experience, the depth of the experience is a significant factor for success as well (Horowitz, 2004; Fiske, 1999). McCarthy et al (2004) note that the benefits of the arts are most likely to ensue from sustained involvement in artistic endeavors. Therefore, successful arts

programs typically engage students in long-term projects.

common challenges

The arts offer many exciting opportunities for educators and students, but there are also numerous obstacles to implementing a successful program of arts integration. One of the most-cited challenges is, of course, funding. In their evaluation of nine large-scale arts integration programs, Spilka and Long noted, “Once institutional will and commitment are in place, the biggest factors inhibiting model scale-up continue to be adequate arts staffing and sustainable funding” (Spilka & Long, 2008, p. 22). Many programs have effectively established three-way partnerships between schools, community groups, and foundations as a way to deal with the funding challenges (Fineberg, 2004). Others have successfully raised money through advocacy and community outreach.

If money is one common challenge, time is another (Remer, 1996). Many programs integrate the arts through team teaching, wherein teachers develop and implement lessons collaboratively with visiting artists or other educators. But significant planning and meeting time is necessary to produce rich, integrated lesson plans. Allowances for additional planning time must therefore

be explicitly incorporated into programs from the beginning, as many teachers already feel intense time pressure in their jobs (Arts Education Partnership, 2002). Enough time must also be allotted for other tasks, as advocacy and partnership-building work often take more time than schools initially expect (Spilka & Long, 2008).

The crucial feat of achieving buy-in for any arts program from parents and other sectors of the community can of course be challenging, but significant resistance to change often comes from within the educational system as well. Teachers may be unwilling or unable to modify entrenched teaching practices or may complain that their time is already committed elsewhere. Administrators may similarly balk at the increasing demands arts integration can place on their resources. And even when teachers and administrators are committed to implementing an arts program, schools often face the ongoing challenge of staff turnover and the need to train new educators from scratch (Horowitz, 2004; Arts Education Partnership and President’s Committee for the Arts and Humanities, 2000).

Finally, schools attempting a program of arts integration face the problem of assessment. Traditionally, student learning (and by extension school performance) has been measured on a cognitive scale, often through standardized tests. But arts-based learning includes sensory and affective

dimensions as well, and as we have noted, many scholars question the utility of traditional testing methods in trying to assess this type of complex learning (Winner & Hetland, 2000; Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). Schools teaching an arts-based curriculum may need to engage alternative assessment techniques in order to track their students' learning as well as the success of their educational program. Jessica Hoffmann Davis has noted that the complexities of the art process itself are informing new multi-layered assessment measures that take into account qualitative, narrative, contextual, and process-based elements (Davis, 2005).

conclusion

Established theory, recent research, and current practice in the general field of arts education, it seems, may carry significant implications for Jewish educators and educational policy-makers. Arts integration, in particular, offers a powerful framework for enhancing instruction in Jewish schools, camps, and other formal and informal settings.

In general, an integrated arts approach would enable Jewish educators to enrich their ongoing teaching of Jewish text and tradition. Fundamental to the idea of arts integration—or learning *through* the arts—is the notion that art study does not

replace learning in other disciplines. The arts merely provide alternative tools, frameworks, and lenses through which to explore important content and concepts. They add an affective and sensory layer to learning, and can enhance a student's capacity for creativity, collaboration, and interpretation. These benefits can only increase a Jewish educator's ability to reach more students more deeply and more effectively. In the words of Dr. Elliot Eisner: "Life is a multimedia event, and the meanings that we secure from life are not simply contained in text; they yield their content through a wide variety of forms" (Eisner, 2002, p. 154).

Furthermore, because the arts function as cultural texts, an arts-rich approach can help students connect with their own Jewish identity and appreciate the diversity of the worldwide Jewish community. Thus the arts do not only serve an instrumental role; art in a variety of forms is a prominent dimension of both historical and contemporary Jewish civilization. An arts-rich educational setting creates opportunities for students to engage with this rich tradition of Jewish art while offering a chance to bring contemporary Jewish artists more fully into the mainstream. "The arts connect," write educator Allen Trent and his colleagues, "Like links in a chain, the arts connect us with the past, anchor us in the present, and enable us to forge bonds to the future" (Trent et al, 1998, p. 33)

The arts are uniquely suited to Jewish education in other ways, as well. For example, research shows that engagement with the arts—including both the examination and the creation of works of art—is motivational. Furthermore, the arts have the capacity to connect students to a range of topics they might otherwise be uninterested in or unable to access, by tapping into a range of varied intelligences. These factors may be especially relevant in Hebrew school and supplementary school contexts, where student engagement frequently drops off precipitously over time. In his 2009 report, *Schools That Work: What We Can Learn from Good Jewish Supplementary Schools*, Jack Wertheimer notes that over one-third of students in Jewish supplementary schools drop out within a year after bar or bat mitzvah. Within two years, more than half stop attending (Wertheimer, 2009). As Hebrew schools increasingly compete with other extra-curricular activities for students' attention, any approach that may increase motivation should be seriously considered.

The time is ripe now to explore opportunities for arts-integration in Jewish education. More than 450,000 children are educated in American Jewish day schools and supplementary schools (Wertheimer, 2008; Schick, 2009). Jewish supplementary education in particular has been severely criticized in the past for its mediocre programs and a failure to engage students, but the last two decades have seen

renewed interest from many quarters in improving quality.

In 2007, an AVI CHAI foundation report on recent trends in supplementary Jewish education noted: "The field of supplementary Jewish education is brimming with new ideas and curricula, a raft of new initiatives, new strategies, and dozens of schools actively engaged in a process of reinvention" (Wertheimer, 2007, p. 3). One trend in particular has been the restructuring of supplementary schools as settings for informal, rather than formal, study, and a greater focus on affective learning (Wertheimer, 2001).

In *Schools That Work*, Wertheimer identified several characteristics of effective instruction in Jewish supplementary schools. These include: an active attempt to develop community among students, teachers, and parents; a sophisticated curriculum that goes beyond rote learning; opportunities for students to engage in experiential Jewish education; and an effort to create a culture of collaboration and self-reflection (Wertheimer, 2009). A program of arts integration could help schools achieve all of these goals. As noted above, collaborative art projects and community-based art partnerships often lead to increased community interaction and stronger feelings of connectedness both within and beyond the school setting. By connecting with multiple intelligences and incorporating multiple perspectives and interpretations, arts-integrated approaches

also foster a deep engagement with educational content. Furthermore, arts experiences are inherently experiential, and the nature of the artistic process naturally leads to collaboration and self-reflection.

Of course, Jewish educators, school administrators, community leaders, funders, and policy-makers will face real challenges in implementing a successful program of arts integration. Sufficient time for planning and implementation is always an issue, and students and teachers in Jewish day and supplementary schools are often especially pressed for time. Many supplementary schools in particular lack curriculum coordinators who can help teachers translate curriculum goals into practical lesson plans (Wertheimer, 2009). Vision, guidance, and ongoing support will need to be provided from outside the schools. Educational planners will need to take to heart the lessons learned by others and recognize that what works in one setting or community may not work in another. They will need to put careful assessment procedures into place and acknowledge that success may be measured in many different ways. Challenges are inevitable, conflicts likely, and disappointments unavoidable. But the potential benefits for our children, schools, and communities are great.

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