2012-06-01

Analysis Skills and the Adolescent’s Creative Process

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http://hdl.handle.net/2144/3821

Boston University
Final research project

Analysis Skills and the Adolescent’s Creative Process

By

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of
MA in Art Education
Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my facilitator, Marion Beram, whose patience and perseverance was invaluable to me during this research study. I would also like to thank my peers. Their professionalism, support, and constructive comments made my research stronger and has inspired me to become a better educator. I respect each and every one of my peers, and I am honored to be counted among them.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends who understand first-hand the work and sacrifices that have gone into my research project. My two sisters, Lisa and Donna, were great help during the editing phases of my drafts. The love and support of my friends and family helped me through the more difficult phases of my study, and for that I am very grateful.
Abstract

Language informs the understanding and creation of art. This action research study was a focused examination of descriptive language intended to strengthen students’ analysis abilities, thereby giving them a broader base upon which to construct original visual ideas and solutions. The study connected students to artwork, their environment, and aspects of life through meaningful, descriptive language. An instructional unit was developed to incorporate these concepts and goals, and samples of student responses are given with brief analyses. Several methods of data collection were used including surveys, formal and informal interviews, observations, artwork, open-ended responses, and formative and summative assessments. Twenty-seven students in Lisbon High School’s Art Foundations classes participated in this study. These students were chosen as a general representation of the school’s population. The participants were a mix of boys and girls in grades nine through twelve representing diverse skill levels in visual arts and literacy, as well as a range of motivations, interests, and personalities. This research explored and documented creative benefits students experienced resulting from improved analysis skills.

Key words: Adolescent, creative problem solving, analysis, language, motivation
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .................................................................................. ii

ABSTRACT .................................................................................................... iii

LIST OF TABLES ............................................................................................ viii

LIST OF FIGURES ....................................................................................... ix

CHAPTER

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY ....................................................... 1
   Background to the Study ........................................................................... 1
   Research Goals ....................................................................................... 3
   Research Questions ................................................................................ 3
   Conceptual Framework .......................................................................... 4
   Theoretical Framework .......................................................................... 5
   Significance of the Study ....................................................................... 6
   Limitations of the Study ....................................................................... 7
      Time constraints ................................................................................ 7
      Participant access ............................................................................. 7
   Conclusion ............................................................................................. 7

2. LITERATURE REVIEW ........................................................................... 9
   Conceptual Framework .......................................................................... 9
   Review of the Literature ........................................................................ 12
      Analysis, Criticism, and Inquiry ......................................................... 12
      Description ....................................................................................... 13
   Language and Dialogue ....................................................................... 13
3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Design of the Study

3.2 Data Collection

3.3 Research Methods

3.3.1 Participants and setting

3.3.2 Survey and open-ended response

3.3.3 Informal interviews

3.3.4 Professionals

3.3.5 Students

3.3.6 Journaling and sketching

3.3.7 Artwork

3.3.8 Critiques

3.3.9 Artwork rubric and open-ended reflection

3.3.10 Peer reviewed data

3.4 Data Analysis

3.5 Conclusion

4. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

5. CONCLUSION
ANALYSIS SKILLS AND THE CREATIVE PROCESS

Significance of the Study……………………………………………………………28
Bias and Validity……………………………………………………………………..30
  Limitations of the study……………………………………………………………..31
Analysis of the Data…………………………………………………………………32
  Qualitative language assessment………………………………………………..32
  Researcher’s art-based data……………………………………………………….33
  Informal interviews and observations…………………………………………34
  Student surveys…………………………………………………………………….34
  Artwork, rubric, and open-ended reflection………………………………………35
  Critiques……………………………………………………………………………42
  Unanticipated factors and conclusion………………………………………….42
5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION………………………………………………..43
  Discussion…………………………………………………………………………..43
  Personal impact of the study……………………………………………………..43
  Impact on practice…………………………………………………………………45
  Recommendations………………………………………………………………46
  Conclusion of this Research Study………………………………………………47
  Advice to the Field of Art Education…………………………………………..47
  Advice to Art Educators…………………………………………………………..48
REFERENCES………………………………………………………………………..49
APPENDICES

Appendix A
- A1 Unit Plan
- A2 Qualitative Language Handout
- A3 Teacher Exemplar

Appendix B
- Figure 3.1 Cliché Imagery Scale
- Figure 3.2 Student Survey Responses
- Figure 3.3 Rubric
- Figure 3.4 Interview Questions for Literacy Specialist and other Professionals
- Figure 3.5 Qualitative Language Assessment
- Table 4.1 Qualitative Language Tally and Comparison
LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1 Conceptual Framework ................................................................. 11
Table 3.1 Data Collection Methods ............................................................ 22
LIST OF FIGURES

4.1 Cliché Imagery Scale Results.................................................................34
4.2 Example of Student “A” Art and Reflection............................................35
4.3 Example of Student “I” Art and Reflection..............................................37
4.4 Example of Student “N” Art and Reflection..............................................38
4.5 Example of Student “Q” Art and Reflection..............................................39
4.6 Example of Student “C” Art and Reflection..............................................40
4.7 Example of Student “V” Art and Reflection..............................................41
Chapter One: Introduction

Background to the Study

Adolescents are repeatedly bombarded with visual clichés: Light bulbs represent bright ideas, keys represent “unlocking the future,” and, even more mundane, hearts represent love. A telling statistic stated by Taylor and Ballengee-Morris (2003) is that “…students consume popular culture in its many forms for more hours than they are in the classroom” (p. 23). When students are challenged with a visual problem, these ingrained icons quickly surface. Bronson and Merryman, (2010) state “creativity scores had been steadily rising. . .until 1990. Since then, creativity scores have consistently inched downward” (para. 1). Popular images have been more securely imprinted in the minds of adolescents over the last 20 years due to increased exposure facilitated by technological and media advancements. While visual culture is an integral part of students’ lives and deserves analytical attention, it can also limit visual vocabulary when students rely on it for lack of more original ideas. Cliché and simple ideas reflect little depth of thought or self-discovery. The results are images that are typical, over-used, and uninspired. Art educators must guide students towards more personal, original, and unique visual solutions. In this action research study, the researcher helped students develop a broad visual language base and a sensitive, personal approach to visual problems by enhancing their art analysis abilities.

Analysis provides students the opportunity to explore the depth of thought behind other artists’ images. Artists’ approaches to idea development can be uncovered during the analysis process. Barrett (2003) states that before beginning this process, it is important to understand "Denotations are what you literally see in a picture; connotations
are what the things and words imply or suggest by what they show and how they show it" (p. 11). This process of investigating and looking beyond the surface of imagery is beneficial to all students by building more complex layers to their understanding of artwork and the creative process. Tollifson (2011) explains, “language influences how humans perceive their environment” (p. 12). Therefore, to help students become more sensitive to their visual surrounds, it is logical to teach them the descriptive language to help interpret it.

Literacy strategies utilized to improve students’ ability to analyze artwork can change students’ understanding of their own creative problem-solving process. Helping students develop a firm understanding of adjectives, verbs, adverbs, metaphors, similes, and analogies, art educators thus, “set the stage for critical reflection, redirected awareness, and heightened appreciation” of art (Moore, 1994, p. 6). These language skills can be applied not only to the analysis of art but also to the creation of art. Through the use of metaphors, similes, and analogies, “teachers can help students think about possible relationships between qualities in their daily lives and qualities in works of art” (Tollifson, 2011, p. 11). Creating these connections between students and art will lead to greater personal understanding of and general motivation in the creative process.

This action research study draws on the researcher’s 23 years experience as an artist-teacher working at a small Maine high school. This experience generated the motivation to provide more effective strategies for students as they plan and create solutions to their visual problems. Adolescent participants were challenged to create surreal self-portraits. Self-portraits by their very nature beg reflection, introspection, and
unique, original responses. Students created mixed media self-portraits with increased complexity and depth of thought.

**Research Goals**

This action research focused on strengthening adolescents’ abilities to construct original visual ideas and solutions by improving their art analysis abilities. This research explored ways of personally connecting adolescents to artwork, their environment, and other aspects of life through meaningful, descriptive language. Creative and motivational benefits were investigated, documented, and assessed as students experienced improved analysis skills. The research data provided new ideas for improving teaching practice, expanding knowledge base, and contributing to the practices of others in art education. The data from this research will help art educators develop curriculum designed to meet students’ needs for language skills to express their personal connections to works of art and their environment. Learning to think reflectively and critically will benefit all subject areas, thus reinforcing the interconnectedness of all things (Blandy & Hoffman, 1993, p. 24). In addition, these skills are vital in reaching state educational standards in the arts and core subject areas.

**Research Questions**

This study investigated the research question: Will enhancing adolescents' ability to analyze works of art help them better plan and create solutions to their own visual problems? The researcher explored ways of personally connecting students to artwork, their environment, and other aspects of life through meaningful, descriptive language. Moore (1994) states, “For it is through aesthetics that the questions get asked, the controversies raised, and the values assessed that elevate the business of the arts from
production and delectation to a thoughtful, influential force affecting and being affected by the rest of life” (p. 11). This research explored and documented creative benefits students experience resulting from improved analysis skills.

Conceptual Framework

This action research study was conducted in the art classroom utilizing a variety of data collections and teaching methods relevant to the research question. Students reflected on open-ended questions both on surveys and in informal interviews. Assessments were developed to determine students’ baseline descriptive vocabulary and analysis abilities prior to lessons. Prior artwork was collected to determine pre-instruction levels of creativity and problem-solving abilities. Existing literature was investigated, and interviews of the district literacy specialist and peer art educators were conducted to search for methods to teach analysis techniques and strategies. These resources were used to develop lessons that challenged students to create surreal metaphorical self-portraits. Notes from observations of videotaped lessons and writing samples were also utilized. The data collected was organized into categories to facilitate comparisons and analysis.

This research study was grounded in the researcher’s experience that understanding engenders excitement, confidence, and motivation. Students need to be guided to “understanding” and heightened sensitivity to the visual world around them. It is logical to teach them the descriptive language to help interpret it. Figuring out the possible ideas and meanings behind artwork is intriguing and challenging; each artwork is a visual code to be cracked. If one has the ability to analyze the meaning behind
imagery, one could potentially apply those same concepts to create original visual responses.

**Theoretical Framework**

The concepts developed in this research study were primarily influenced by the work of Jerry Tollifson (2011). Tollifson asserts the power of qualitative language as a vehicle of art analysis and understanding. He believes, “teaching and learning in art is mediated to a large extent and enhanced by language’s qualitative characteristics” (p. 11). Qualitative language, including adjectives, verbs, adverbs, metaphors, similes, and analogies, helped students connect more personally to the artwork they were viewing. Students were able to relate personal sensations and experiences to artwork through the use of these literary concepts.

Moreover, for students to experience personal growth in and through art they must make personal connections with their art experiences. Victor Lowenfeld (1947) wrote, “We do not paint and draw objects in our world; we paint and draw our relationships with them” (as cited in Burton, 2000, p. 333). Adolescents must search out their unique connections to and feelings about the world rather than default to overused, desensitized imagery pervading our culture. These unique connections and insights can be fostered through meaningful art analysis and dialogue. Burton (2000) supports this concept stating, “A dialogical way of teaching… supports the journey of learning and functions to unblock artistic stagnation. Dialogue creates the space in which focused and open ended interchange, reflection, and learning can occur between two learners, teacher, and pupil” (p. 333). Dialogue supported by strong descriptive language can enhance adolescents’ creative vision. Burton (2000) continues stating the virtues of art analysis,
A good dialogue will allow an interweaving of personal sensory, affective and cognitive responses as youngsters reflect on their experiences and, through imaginative reconstruction, give them voice in and through visual materials…. In addition, a thoughtful dialogue will offer youngsters insights into how ideas are constructed, related to each other in sequence, and build in complexity to larger ideas. It gives meaning to an individual’s personal development, by opening them to the powers of scrutiny, investigation, inquiry and questioning by others.

(p. 344)

Here, Burton (2000) expresses succinctly the overwhelming benefits of developing descriptive language to personal growth in the creative process.

**Significance of the Study**

Research is needed to study the possible effects of teaching literacy strategies to enhance adolescents’ analysis skills. Changes were analyzed and examined regarding the impact on student’s understanding and involvement in the planning and creation of artwork. Some artists, such as Roni Horn, use language as a means to arrive at their visual responses. Horn explains, “My relationship to my work is extremely verbal… extremely language-based. I move through language to arrive at the visual” (Art 21, 2005). The data collected supports the theory that a broad and varied descriptive vocabulary helped students utilize and benefit from language-visual connections. The data was analyzed and compared within the study as well as cross-referenced with existing literature. This study resulted in a deeper understanding and a broader base knowledge of the connections between adolescents’ literacy skills, analysis skills, and creative process skills.
Limitations of the Study

Limitations of this study included logistical concerns, such as limited time and access to participants. The researcher’s knowledge of language teaching strategies was limited to her experiences within the scope of teaching visual arts. This deficit was addressed through interviews with peers, the district literacy specialist, and research of existing literature. It was not possible to exhaust all literature on this topic, therefore, articles most relevant to this study were chosen. Due to time constraints some relevant materials may have been overlooked.

Time constraints.

Lisbon high school has seven periods of 43-minute classes each day. This short timeframe did not allow for particular teaching methods that require more time. Short classes interrupted lesson flow and required students to retain concepts between classes. Short daily classes further strained class time due to review needs. These time issues impeded progress and effectiveness of new teaching strategies and lessons.

Participant access.

The researcher’s schedule restricted access to a larger representation of adolescents. The range of participation in this study was limited to two general art foundations classes in the rural town of Lisbon Falls, Maine. The results of this study cannot be interpreted as representative of all adolescents.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this background to the study is explained as a focus on the affects art analysis abilities may have on adolescents’ creative planning and problem solving. The study investigated existing literature, peer and student contributions, and the
researchers personal experiences and observations. Limitations of the study were acknowledged as time constraints, limited participation, and researcher’s limited knowledge of teaching language. Chapter Two explores scholarly literature relevant to the affect of analysis skills on adolescents’ understanding of and responses to visual problems.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

This researcher investigated the question: Will enhancing adolescents' abilities to analyze works of art help them better plan and create solutions to their own visual problems? It is challenging to elicit original responses from students when most adolescents have been exposed from a young age to mass imagery defining and limiting their visual vocabulary. Chapman (2003) proposes, “American life is dominated by mass-circulated images...delivering cultural fare to the maximum number of people at multiple points of reception. They favor forms of artistry that ordinarily require little formal training for their appreciation and use” (p. 231). Thus influenced, many Lisbon High School students respond to visual problems with cliché and mundane imagery despite efforts to inspire and teach them to reach more original solutions. This action research study explored how utilizing literacy strategies to improve students’ abilities to analyze artwork changed students’ understanding of their own creative problem-solving processes and expanded their visual responses. Specific lessons and strategies built students’ understanding of adjectives, verbs, adverbs, metaphors, similes, and analogies, thus, “setting the stage for critical reflection, redirected awareness, and heightened appreciation” of art that was applied not only to the analysis of art, but to the creation of art (Moore, 1994, p. 6).

Conceptual Framework

This researcher has observed adolescents’ art responses to visual problems for 23 years. A variety of lessons have been taught that were intended to inspire original thinking and unique responses. However, students have typically generated responses consisting of simple, over-used imagery, such as peace signs, tear drops, and smiley faces.
In an effort to expand students’ creative thinking, this researcher investigated methods of developing student art analysis skills. Heightening students’ perception and analysis abilities enhanced the generation of creative ideas as well as students’ personal connections with their creative experiences. Enhanced perception allowed for sensitive interpretations and emotional connections. When students felt more intimate with their artwork and their creative process, they were more motivated in the art classroom. This investigation generated lessons and methods that may improve the teaching practices of art educators.
### Table 2.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOALS: What I hope to understand and accomplish while working towards an answer to my research question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assess students' descriptive language and abilities to analyze artwork</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assess students' creative problem-solving abilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop students' descriptive language and improve students' abilities to analyze art</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase students' creative visual problem-solving abilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase students' motivation and involvement in the art room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop more effective lessons to enhance students' analysis abilities, creative abilities, motivation and involvement in the art room</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Will enhancing adolescents' ability to analyze works of art help them better plan and create solutions to their own visual problems?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop surveys and assessments to determine descriptive vocabulary baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect pre-instruction data: Collect prior artwork and rubrics to determine pre-instruction levels of creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect data: Research existing literature and interview literacy specialist to understand and search for strategies to teach descriptive language for analyzing art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop lessons to teach and utilize descriptive language in the analysis and creation of art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect data: Notes from observations of video taped lessons, interviews with students, surveys, artwork rubrics, and writing samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compare data: Compare baseline vocabulary and creative levels before and after conducting lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review goals in light of new data, determine answers to research questions, and revise lessons</td>
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<tr>
<th>METHODS I will use to gather data to answer my research question</th>
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Review of Literature: Effects of Analysis Skills Development on Creative Skills

The literature investigated to ground this action research study is organized into four areas of significance: Analysis, creative problem solving, verbal-visual relationships, and motivation. These areas are reviewed in scholarly literature as they pertain to the research question: Will enhancing adolescents' ability to analyze works of art help them better plan and create solutions to their own visual problems?

**Analysis, criticism, and inquiry.**

The processes of perceiving, questioning, and interpreting are vital to the understanding and appreciation of art. It is only after careful observation, questioning, and thought that deeper comprehension can occur. Verbal description and analysis shared in a classroom setting can facilitate understanding and appreciation. Analysis is a form of verbal-visual problem solving in which students utilize both verbal and visual skills as they discern the possible meanings behind the elements and content of a work of art. The skills involved in analysis are akin to those skills utilized when conceptualizing an original response to a visual problem. Understanding and developing analysis skills enhanced visual problem-solving skills used in the creative process. “Encouraging students to reflect upon their own perspective, as they bring themselves before the work of art, has been observed to have profound effects because ‘knowing how we see and read helps us to see and read things differently’” (Stibbs, 2001, as cited in Pike, 2004, p. 33).

Understanding the process of analysis enabled students to better analyze, further improving their abilities to plan and create original artwork.
**Description.**

Analysis begins with looking at artwork and describing it. Feldman (1970) rationalizes the need to begin analysis with description as students are forced to slow down and look more carefully at details before moving too quickly to an interpretation. Students generated their descriptions only after careful observation. These preliminary descriptions aided students in making even deeper, more sensitive observations. Perkins (1977) states, “Words and phrases…are partly a report, but also tools for seeing. Describing what we see…helps to heighten and stabilize perception” (as cited in Tollifson, 2011, p. 14). Heightened perception generates infinite possibilities for describing a single piece of art just as there are infinite possible responses to a single visual problem. “There can be no such thing as a complete description of something because that thing can always be re-described [sic] from some other point of view” (Geahigan, 1999, p. 217).

Descriptions should be more than objective inventories listing the contents of a work. Geahigan (1999) emphasizes that critical descriptions should be written in an animated style using language that is “literate, colorful, and provocative” (p. 222). Critics do not restrict themselves to simplistic, objective language, but rather use engaging and colorful language.

**Language and dialogue.**

Colorful, engaging language was cultivated in adolescents. Tollifson (2011) explains students’ use of “qualitative language such as adjectives, verbs, adverbs, metaphors, similes, and analogies” result in enhanced analyses and interpretations (p. 11). Chapman (2003) reinforces the significance of language, “As a source of imagery,
language...becomes important. It is used to construct narratives, evoke feelings, and allude to qualities of experience through adjectives, adverbs, metaphors, and analogies” (p. 232). Language helped students process what they see and engage more fully with artwork. Language is a powerful tool and when used as verbal dialogue—a vital avenue of teaching and learning.

Dialogue has come to mean an open-ended communication, investigation or inquiry, between teachers and learners. Instead of conveying knowledge as the sole possession of the teacher, to be acquired by the learner, teaching through dialogue presupposes a free and continuous interchange of ideas directed towards reflection, discovery, and a new understanding. (Burton, 2000, p. 343)

Descriptive, qualitative language used in dialogue enhanced observation and understanding of artworks and the ideas behind their creation.

In addition, adolescents are typically social creatures. They learned from each other through their social experiences. Social interactions in the art classroom strengthened students’ responses to artwork during the critique process (Pike, 2004, p. 31). Classroom dialogues created a beneficial exchange of ideas and insights developing an environment where students learned from each other as much as from the teacher.

Visual-Verbal Relationship in Art.

Language and artworks are very different in the manner they are engaged by their audience, however, they hold important similarities in their development, content, and interaction with one another—particularly with regard to analysis. “Analysis of the artwork require[s] the engagement of both visual and linguistic modes of thinking”
Part of this duality of engagement is due to the importance of supporting one’s opinion about artwork. Students found verbal expression to describe their visual experience with artwork, and they supported their ideas with evidence observed within the artwork itself.

**Metaphor.**

Metaphor provides an important link between visual and verbal modalities crossing both modes of expression. Pugh, Hicks, Davis, and Venestra (1992) state, “As metaphorical thinking attends to likenesses, it ‘cuts across subject and discipline boundaries by making knowledge in one domain a guide for comprehending knowledge in another’” (as cited in Manifold, 2005, p. 60). Adolescents understood the complexities of metaphors and fully utilized them. Understanding metaphors, like creating visual expressions, is:

- a momentous and mysterious step in children’s development, for by taking one thing and using it to embody or refer to some other experiential content, it opens myriad possibilities for knowing the world beyond the self—and thus the self—in entirely new ways. However, such a step is not a casual one, nor do symbols emerge overnight; rather, they are born out of a lengthy period of preparation and learning. (Burton, 2000, 336)

Teachers must facilitate students’ understanding of metaphor as an important aspect of understanding artwork and the creative process.
Creative problem solving.

Developing creative problem solving abilities in adolescents is increasingly difficult in the face of contemporary, mass produced, iconic imagery. Chapman (2003) states “these mass arts are an inescapable dimension of contemporary life” (p. 233). Despite the bombardment of mass produced imagery, creative problem solving can be fostered through personal insights and connections to the visual problem. Classroom dialogues and critiques “inspire insights into self that compel some students to reconsider the purposes, processes, and products of their own art making” (Manifold, 2005, p. 62). These insights motivated students to create works expressing new truths discovered about themselves and the world around them.

Moreover, these insights and personal connections cultivate emotional connections. “Students empathize or feel into their work, thus enabling them to experience qualities that are beginning to emerge in their works or are already present in them” (Tollifson, 2011, p. 15). Heightened sensitivities foster more personal, unique solutions to visual problems, thus helping students be more attentive to the qualities of media, subject matter, and form in their own artwork. Classroom dialogues about artwork improved student understanding and connection to artworks and help students develop original, personal visual responses.

Motivation.

This researcher realized the daunting task of combating student apathy with regard to writing and analysis in the art classroom. Geahigan (1999) observed, “students view the task of producing written descriptions as a tedious exercise, and that orally describing
works of art creates boredom and alienation in students” (p. 224). Incongruously, having students take the time to describe a work of art can also benefit students’ motivation. Geahigan (1999) cites description as commonly used “to pique interest and curiosity” (p. 218). This researcher used description and analysis to motivate and interest students towards a deeper appreciation of art.

Employing qualitative language, students engaged all their senses creating a more involved, motivating relationship with art versus merely naming or identify the elements in an artwork. Chapman (2003) supports this idea stating, “Imagery is often multi-sensory” (p. 232). Heightened perception along with other engaged senses created new understandings of self that motivated students to create art “related to the newly acquired self-knowledge” (Manifold, 2005, p. 64). New and unique visual possibilities surfaced in light of unique, personal insights and motivations.

Child-centered.

Motivation is largely developed from a sense of ownership and personal connection. “Artists have always created works from the ‘stuff’ of their experience” (Burton, 2000, p. 333). It is important that art educators build their teaching around student-centered experiences and connections. “For only if learning is situated in compelling personal contexts will it be grounded enough to inform new ways of knowing, thinking and representing” (Burton, 2000, p. 343). These personal contexts make the learning experiences more relevant to students.

In addition, adolescents are struggling with identity issues about who they are and who they want to become. Because of this identity struggle adolescents can be motivated
by the ontological nature of art. The processes of discussing and making art can “raise issues of existence and being to the level of consciousness” (Pike, 2004, p. 24). Centering the analysis and creation of art around relevant adolescent issues, such as identity, was very motivating in efforts to elicit more original creative visual responses.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, this action research study employed specific lessons and strategies to build students’ understanding of qualitative language to improve students’ abilities to analyze artwork. The question was whether these improved analysis skills would change students’ understanding of their own creative problem-solving processes. This researcher developed strategies and lessons to guide adolescents to more thoughtful, creative, informed responses to visual problems.

In the next chapter the researcher will address data gathering methods and strategies. The data collected was analyzed in an effort to answer the research question: Will enhancing adolescents’ abilities to analyze works of art help them better plan and create solutions to their own visual problems?
Chapter Three: Methodology

Design of the Study

This action research study was conducted in the art classroom utilizing multiple data collections and teaching methods relevant to the research question: Will enhancing adolescents' abilities to analyze works of art help them better plan and create solutions to their own visual problems? Students reflected on open-ended questions about their own and exemplar artwork, both in surveys and informal interviews. Assessments were developed to determine students’ baseline descriptive vocabulary and analysis abilities prior to lessons. Prior artwork was also collected to determine pre-instruction levels of creativity and problem-solving abilities. Existing literature regarding the relationship between art analysis and the creative process was investigated, and interviews of the district literacy specialist and peer art educators were conducted to search for methods to teach analysis techniques and strategies. These resources were used to help develop lessons, followed by students creating surreal metaphorical self-portraits. Notes from observations of video taped lessons and writing samples were also utilized. The data collected was organized into categories to facilitate comparisons and analysis.

This research study was grounded in the researcher’s experience that understanding engenders excitement, confidence, and motivation. Students need to be guided to “understanding” and heightened sensitivity to the visual world around them. It is logical to teach them the descriptive language to help interpret it. Figuring out the possible ideas and meanings behind artwork is intriguing and challenging; each artwork is a visual code to be cracked. If one has the ability to analyze the meaning behind
imagery, one could potentially apply those same concepts to create original visual responses.

**Data Collection**

Lisbon High School was the primary site for data collection. Lisbon High School is a small school currently serving 444 adolescents in Lisbon Falls, Maine. The majority of the student population at Lisbon High School is Caucasian with only a few African American, Asian, and other races. Forty-five percent of LHS students are from low-income homes and receive free or reduced-cost lunch.

Students described Kahlo’s *Self Portrait with Thorn Necklace, Hummingbird, Cat and Monkey* to determine students’ baseline descriptive vocabulary and analysis abilities prior to lessons. Prior artwork was also collected and a simple scale was used to determine pre-instruction levels of creativity based on the frequency of cliché imagery (see Figure 3.1, Appendix B. p. 63).

Existing literature has been investigated and interviews of the district literacy specialist as well as English educators have been conducted to understand and develop methods to teach analysis techniques and strategies. The methods included teacher directed interactive discussions, word charts, and competitions between student teams. These art analysis lessons were followed by a lesson challenging students to create surreal metaphorical self-portraits. A variety of collection methods were utilized to provide varied, rich, and accurate data. Maxwell (2005) explains, “triangulation of observations and interviews can provide a more complete and accurate account than either could alone” (p. 94). Notes from observations of videotaped lessons, informal
interviews with students, artwork rubrics, and written open-ended responses were also utilized.

The following describes the methods that were used; the sources of data, how the data collection was gathered, the time frame for the plan of collection, and where the data collection took place (see Table 3.1).
Table 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<td>Student Data Collection</td>
<td>• Survey</td>
<td>February 27-</td>
<td>Lisbon High School, Lisbon Falls, Maine</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Informal interviews</td>
<td>March 9</td>
<td>Art Foundations Classes, room 104</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Open-ended responses</td>
<td>March 12-</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Participant observations (live &amp; video-taped)</td>
<td>March 16</td>
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<td>• Survey</td>
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**Research Methods**

The following data collection methods were determined feasible for the time limits and resources of this action study. These methods are described and were utilized to develop a comprehensive plan of action that was conducted during February and March of the 2011-2012 school year. This research action plan was designed to determine how
enhancing adolescents' abilities to analyze works of art might affect students’ ability to plan and create solutions to visual problems.

**Participants and setting.**

Twenty-six students participated from the primary researcher’s two Art Foundations classes. There were 13 students enrolled in each class. These were mixed grade level classes with students in grades 10-12. The students in these classes were between 15 and 18 years. A teacher-student relationship had been developed during the prior 2011-2012 classes.

**Survey and open-ended response.**

Students completed a post lesson survey asking them to reflect on their new knowledge and the impact it had on their creative process. In addition, students were asked to discuss their engagement and motivation during the lessons. The lessons conducted began by asking students how we are able to talk and think about art. Students were guided to the answer: “Language.” Then the researcher reviewed descriptive language: Adjectives, verbs, adverbs, metaphors, similes, and analogies. After the review students broke into teams to compete against each other as they generated as many descriptive words as possible for the artwork. Another competition was held which challenged each team of students to create a rap, song, or poem using the student generated qualitative language. The researcher analyzed the data provided to assess students’ opinion about the effectiveness of the lesson (see Figure 3.2, Appendix B. p. 64).
Informal interviews.

The researcher conducted interviews with both professionals and students to inform this research study and to gather data. (See Figure 3.3, Appendix B. p. 65)

**Professionals.**

The researcher consulted with the district literacy specialist and local English teachers regarding the literacy material taught and the handouts used in this unit. Questions were developed to guide these interviews. (see Figure 3.4, Appendix B. p. 67) These sources helped develop the researcher’s understanding of students’ previous learning experiences in descriptive language, specifically adjective, verb, adverb, metaphor, analogy, and simile.

**Students.**

The researcher conducted informal interviews with students throughout the unit. These questions asked about their motivation and their ideas about creativity. The researcher moved throughout the classroom conducting interviews while checking for student understanding of the assignment. The informal interview was used to begin a basic inquiry into what aspects of the lessons motivated students and how these lessons may have helped develop creativity. The findings from these interviews were not used to substantiate any data. A starter list of interview questions was created for before, during, and after the lessons with the understanding that questions may be modified and/or added, based on observations and/or discussions with students.
Journaling and sketching.

Students brainstormed and created thumbnail sketches for their portrait ideas in their sketchbooks to record their thoughts about aspects of the class and the creative process. These journals were collected and analyzed using a simple scale (see Figure 3.1, Appendix B. p. 63).

Artwork.

The researcher photographed and analyzed student artwork to collect data regarding the frequency and use of cliché and original imagery (see figure 3.1, Appendix B. p. 63).

Critiques.

Students participated in a class critique upon completion of the surreal self-portraits. This researcher guided class critiques as students discussed strengths, characteristics, and meanings of the subject matter, media, form, and metaphors. This critique was videotaped and viewed later to note student participation, understanding and disclosures that may have informed what motivates them to create inventive, original images.

Artwork rubric and open-ended reflection.

Students completed rubrics for their surreal metaphorical self-portraits. They also wrote open-ended reflections explaining their artwork. These rubrics were analyzed for student opinions about their own creativity and use of metaphor. The open-ended reflections provided rich data and insights regarding student understanding of qualitative language and their creative process (see Figures 4.1-4.6, p. 34-41).
Peer reviewed data.

This researcher investigated peer-reviewed literature on descriptive aspects of literacy and its connection to student creativity. The researcher compiled a literature review of the sources explored.

Data Analysis

This action-based study generated a variety of data requiring several qualitative methods, including analytic induction to effectively analyze the results. This researcher analyzed data collected from observation, interviews, surveys, rubrics, journals, artwork, and open-ended responses. Both the formative and summative assessments were reviewed as sources of data (see Figure 3.4 Appendix B. p. 67). The data was coded, organized and categorized into four main categories to facilitate comparisons and observation of patterns. These categories documented student use of cliché and original imagery, use of qualitative language, and student motivation. Data before and after the lessons were compared to determine lesson effectiveness and change in students’ abilities and understanding with regard to these areas. In addition, categorizing the data aided in developing theories regarding student motivation and improvement of student art analysis abilities and creativity. Data gathering was determined successful since the resulting data informed these areas of investigation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this action research study employed specific lessons and strategies to build students’ understanding of qualitative language to improve students’ abilities to analyze artwork. The question was whether these improved analysis skills changed students’ understanding of their own creative problem-solving processes.
This researcher plans to use this action research data to develop additional strategies and lessons to guide adolescents to more thoughtful, creative, informed responses to visual problems.
Chapter Four: Results of the Study

Data is presented in both narrative and visual form to investigate the researcher’s question: *Will enhancing adolescents' ability to analyze works of art help them better plan and create solutions to their own visual problems?* Data was collected before, during, and after teaching students about qualitative language to enhance their art analysis skills. The researcher then gathered data about the students’ creative process before, during, and after students created surreal metaphorical self-portraits. The data gathering process created opportunities to discover correlations between students’ art analysis skills and their creative problem solving abilities. In addition, unanticipated factors played influential roles in the outcomes of this study.

**Significance of the Study**

The data gathered during this research study was found to be supportive of the theory that enhancing students’ art analysis abilities will, in most cases, improve their creative problem solving abilities. Students showed significant increase in complexity of thought after experiencing the qualitative language lessons. This enhanced complex thinking was observed during the creation of their metaphorical surrealist self-portraits.

These findings give increased and deeper understanding about the correlation between art analyses and art creation. In this study, the increased vocabulary and understanding of descriptive language not only improved students’ abilities to analyze and think about art they look at, but also improved their abilities to think about the artwork they were assigned to create. This observation is supported by Stibbs’ (2001) findings, “Encouraging students to reflect upon their own perspective, as they bring themselves before the work of art, has been observed to have profound effects because
'knowing how we see and read helps us to see and read things differently’” (as cited in Pike, 2004, p. 33). This ability to see and read things differently translates visually into more original, diverse responses to problems. Enhanced language can enhance thinking and creating. Pugh, Hicks, Davis, and Venestra (1992) state, “As metaphorical thinking attends to likenesses, it ‘cuts across subject and discipline boundaries by making knowledge in one domain a guide for comprehending knowledge in another’” (as cited in Manifold, 2005, p. 60). After students gained a better understanding of the complexities of metaphors, they were then able to utilize metaphors in the creation of their own artwork. Learning descriptive language “inspire[s] insights into self that compel some students to reconsider the purposes, processes, and products of their own art making” (Manifold, 2005, p. 62). These insights motivated students to create works expressing new truths they discovered about themselves and the world around them.

Thus, the researcher found enhancing descriptive language and art analysis abilities in adolescents does, in most cases, improve their creative thinking and problem-solving abilities. This deeper understanding of the correlation between language, art analysis, and creative problem solving is significant to the improvement of art education for adolescent students. Art educators can use this understanding to build stronger, more effective art experiences for their students.
Bias and Validity

Several strategies were used to maintain objectivity during the planning, implementation, and analysis of this study. As Dr. Kantawala (2012) states, “Objectivity is key to a valid study” (Developing a research question and a plan, para. 5). Subjective language that implies assumption or is judgmental or normative was avoided. Rubrics were clearly written to describe specific criteria analyzed, while interview and survey questions were objective and open-ended to avoid leading the participant. Data collected from interviews were triangulated with memos and notes from observations. Neither of these methods of data collection would be truthful representations of the subjects’ knowledge and behaviors, but analyzed, in comparison, these data presented an accurate perspective. Maxwell (2005) explains, “triangulation of observations and interviews can provide a more complete and accurate account than either could alone” (p. 94). In addition, a range of data was collected from existing literature regarding literacy strategies, art analysis, and creation. It was not possible to exhaust all literature on these topics, therefore, articles most relevant to this study were chosen. The findings were shared for feedback from peers in order to check biases and assumptions. As Maxwell (2005) states, “the goal in a qualitative study is not to eliminate this influence, but to understand it and to use it productively” (p. 109). Understanding bias and assumption led to a more rational analysis of the data.

Analogies were explained during the qualitative language lessons, but they were never practiced by students during the qualitative language competitions or the final art pieces. Since analogies are more involved, they did not lend themselves well to this
timely research. If more time had been allowed and specific assignments developed, analogies could have been better integrated into the lessons.

The visual products were rushed to be completed within the timeframe, however, written explanations show evidence of deep thought. Again, if more time were allowed, the visuals may have been further developed and may have shown a more dynamic visual impact. While this research data supports the theory that enhanced art analysis skills improves creative problem solving and motivation in the art room, the researcher observed that enhanced art analysis skills do not improve technical skills and abilities with media.

**Limitations of the study**

The range of participation in this study was limited to two general art foundations classes in the rural town of Lisbon Falls, Maine. The results of this study cannot be interpreted as representative of all adolescents. The art foundations classes “adequately capture the heterogeneity in the [school’s] population” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 89). Maxwell (2005) cautions, however, “there is no guarantee that these informants’ views are typical” (p. 91). A congenial working relationship with each student was established during the first half of this school year. These relationships were complex and likely changed during the course of the study.
Analysis of Data

This section of the report will analyze specific data gathered in each collection method.

Qualitative language assessment

Student descriptions were analyzed in a pre-assessment to establish a baseline for descriptive vocabulary used for art analysis. The descriptions were dissected into specific qualitative language then tallied (see Table 4.1, Appendix B. p. 70). Three formative assessments were given to check student comprehension during the qualitative language lessons. The formative assessments were simple verbal questions asking about students’ understanding of the specific descriptive parts of speech studied: Adjectives, verbs, adverbs, metaphors, similes, and analogies. For example, in the first two assessments students indicated “yes” or “no” to whether they understood what a metaphor is. The last formative assessment required students to label the examples for descriptive part of speech (see Figure 3.5, Appendix B. p. 68).

After these lessons were completed a summative post-assessment was given to determine student understanding of adjectives, verbs, adverbs, metaphors, similes and analogies. Five students were absent for either the pre- or post-assessment, therefore, their data was inconclusive, and their assessments were not included in the final tallies.

Comparing the resulting totals between the pre- and post-assessments showed a dramatic increase in student use of qualitative language. Students in period one Art Foundations used 135 descriptive words and phrases in the pre-test and 277 in the post-test. Students in period six Art Foundations used 127 descriptive words and phrases in the pre-test and 255 in the post-assessment. In both classes the researcher observed
students using qualitative words twice as much to describe artwork after the lessons. The researcher also observed a significant increase in the complexity and quality of students’ description of artwork. Only three similes were observed in the pre-test in each class, however, in the post-test 25 similes and four metaphors were used in period one and 11 similes and four metaphors were used in period six. These changes in students’ observations and descriptive complexity were reflected in their metaphorical surreal self-portraits. Students went beyond literal imagery that simply represented their likes and dislikes. Rather, they attempted to convey more subtle, unique feelings and ideas through visual metaphors. For example, student I has a dinosaur image tumbling out of his bag of “life” along with other images (see Figure 4.3, p. 35). The dinosaur is not there because he likes dinosaurs, rather the dinosaur represents the past, specifically his childhood. The dinosaur is now gone--extinct—and so is his childhood, never to be recovered (Student I, personal communication, 2012). This complex thinking demonstrates the students’ abilities to transfer verbal metaphorical thinking into visual metaphors.

**Researcher’s art-based data**

The researcher analyzed students’ previous artwork noting the frequency of cliché and mundane imagery. Approximately half the independent sketchbook images were found to be cliché, unoriginal, or mundane, such as sports/brand logos, stick figures, hearts, suns in the corner of the page, copied comic characters, calculators, and cell phones (see Figure 4.1). These images were created very blandly with flat, simple compositions, and little or no shading or dynamic rendering.
The average score for the 17 sketchbooks was 3.17.

In these pre-language lesson images the teacher-directed assignments were found to be less mundane than choice assignments. Teacher instructions directed students’ to think and create original imagery. However, the researcher observed there was still significant use of cliché imagery in these assignments.

**Informal interviews and observations**

Informal interviews were conducted throughout the lessons. The researcher checked for students’ understanding, motivation, and creative thinking. Students expressed that thinking about themselves in terms of metaphors was very challenging. Each participant was given an alphabetical designation for data collection purposes. Student V stated, “This is the hardest assignment you’ve given us!” Students expressed the need to look through magazine images to generate metaphor ideas. Students were given the choice of media. Twenty-five of the 26 students used magazine images in their metaphor self-portraits. Only one student generated her piece completely from her imagination and her original drawn images.

**Student Surveys**

One of the challenges the researcher faced was finding a method of teaching the descriptive language material in a manner that would engage and motivate adolescents.
The researcher created student teams and employed a competition format to stimulate student interest and motivation. Each team competed to generate the most qualitative words for a specific piece of artwork. Student surveys were one of the methods used to gauge student motivation during these lessons and competitions. Students gave open-ended responses regarding whether or not they liked the lesson activities and/or whether they felt they learned more than they knew before the art analysis lessons (see Figure 3.2, Appendix B. p. 64). Seventy-one percent of the responses regarding the qualitative language lessons were positive. Almost three quarters of the students felt they learned from the experiences and most enjoyed them. This data indicates that using competitions and prizes are effective motivations for most adolescent students.

**Artwork, Rubric, and Open-Ended Reflection**

Students had five, 43 minutes classes to create surrealistic metaphorical self-portraits. Students created mixed media pieces and described their visual metaphors with detailed explanations. The following are samples of students’ artwork with parts of their explanations. These samples show evidence of students’ creative problem-solving and dynamic thinking using metaphors. Compared to previous open-ended responses to assignments, these explanations are significantly more in depth.

Figure 4.2

![Student “A”](image-url)
Student A’s (2012) reflection:

The balloon represents my life…. It is constantly rising to achieve goals…. The ropes are holding it down, not letting the balloon rise. The soccer ball, the dog, and the baseball represent stressors. The dog represents family and friends. The car above represents ‘wants.’ It is split in two because you’ll never really own it. There will always be something else to pay for…. The mountain and shovel symbolize work. It’s going to take a long time to move a mountain with a shovel. (Student A, personal communication, March 21, 2012)

This explanation clarifies the metaphor Student A is making by comparing the characteristics of a hot air balloon and moving a mountain to the challenges in his life. His stressors, desires, and fears have been manifested visually through otherwise unrelated images of a dog, cars, and balls. Previously, students would have been more likely to illustrate these challenges in a literal manner, or they might not have had any visual strategies at all to communicate these ideas.
Figure 4.3

Student “I”

Student I’s (2012) reflection:

I have things coming out of a bag in a jumble and in a clutter because
that’s how my life is; full and busy…. I put the skeleton because… I look
for people’s inside personality. I put a dinosaur because they are from
long ago… [when] things were simple, like my childhood, which I miss….
The random pieces of magazine represent my… interest in being
spontaneous. The pieces are random and unexpected…. The bag is ripped
open because that’s how I [wish] I could be, open instead of shy and
nervous all the time. (Student I, personal communication, March 21, 2012)

Student I uses an inventive metaphor of a ripped open snack bag to express his
longing for a more outgoing personality. Moreover, this example illustrates how using
metaphor causes students to think more critically about composition and visual elements
and principles in their work. Student I purposely chose to place his bag outside the frame
of his image to allow the contents to spill randomly onto the space. The contents of his life are randomly spilling out of the bag deepening his metaphor by expressing his inner desire for spontaneity.

Figure 4.4

![Image of a mixed media artwork with various objects representing different aspects of life.]

Student “N”

Student N’s (2012) reflection:

It shows that I’m bright and random… [with] high goals. I tried to use movement to make the viewer look around my picture…. The diamond, wrench, and money stands for how I work for the best things in life, but money problems and frustrations get in the way. (Student N, personal communication, March 21, 2012)

Glitter representing money is woven throughout student N’s piece illustrating her belief that money is crucial for her to realize her goals. Through the use of metaphors, students think about possible relationships between ordinary, everyday objects, aspects of their lives, and means of visual expression of identity. In student N’s piece, a wrench serves as a metaphor for the problems and frustrations that prevent her from reaching her goals.
Student Q’s (2012) reflection:

My pointing hands kind of represent my strong difficulty to make decisions. The tree… shows how my life always feels like I’m being pulled in different directions. The wire is for parts of my life feeling everywhere and scattered. The pizza represents how I am very set apart and none of my friends go to school with me, so I am very set apart in school. (Student Q, personal communication, March 21, 2012)

These visual solutions were the results of students being challenged to reflect on their identity in such a way that intensified their understanding of themselves. Sharing similarities with his friends, student Q sees himself and his friends as a pizza, yet he is literally pulled apart from the group as a piece of pizza separated from the rest of the pie. The researcher observed student Q struggle with this assignment and express frustrations. During the process of writing his reflection, student Q noticed ideas and metaphors in his art that he did not originally intend to create. Olshansky (2008) proclaims, “through literature studies of both pictures and words, students come to understand not only the literary parallels but also how the two languages complement each other and work together….” (preface, xii). In some cases, the artwork seemed to
transcend students’ initial understanding of themselves, but then deeper understanding and connections were made during the verbal articulation and reflection on their artwork.

Figure 4.6

Student C (2012) reflects, “The different backgrounds like the beach and the woods describe the different stages in my life and the things I have gone through. The clock represents time passing through your life/getting older” (Student C, personal communication, March 21, 2012).

Stages of life are expressed through specific landscapes in student C’s piece. Again, this illustrates metaphor was an avenue of seeing familiar things in a new way. Student C’s art also shows students made new connections between the world around them and characteristics of their lives.
Student V’s (2012) reflection:

I used many media because I couldn’t explain my life with just one. The burnt edges on the outside is a metaphor for the struggles and worries I have been through in my life, such as my dad leaving and how hard it was to get over the feeling of abandonment…. The pearl earring is a metaphor for my need to have material items. This is something I’m not proud of, however, it’s true. After my dad left I think I felt I needed to fill that gap with something, and I did it with material items. (Student V, personal communication, March 21, 2012)

The researcher observed student V’s intense motivation with this assignment. The student took the piece home to burn the edges, and she wrote a three-page reflection explaining her piece. She felt a strong need to express these feelings and ideas, and she
experimented with paint, crumpling the paper, and using brads and other materials in her piece. With her understanding of metaphor and her identity came an excitement, motivation, and confidence evidenced in her risk-taking with unusual methods and materials.

It is apparent in these examples each students’ depth of thought and self-discovery. The participants increased their descriptive vocabulary and analytical skills and applied those complex thinking skills to create original visual responses. Students reached deeper into the unique aspects of their identities through metaphor, and they generated more unique, original visual expressions.

**Critiques**

The researcher observed that some students were reluctant to share and discuss their metaphors during a critique since their work reflected some very personal issues. There were other students, however, that were very open about their metaphors. All students were involved during the critique. They seemed motivated to listen to each others’ explanations and to share comments about their artwork.

**Unanticipated Factors and Conclusion**

The researcher observed students with inconsistent attendance missed various days of the lessons and were not experiencing the complete unit as intended. These students made the majority of the negative comments about the lessons. Attendance has a direct correlation to the students’ understanding and perception of the experience.

In Chapter Five possible meaning and implications for informing art education practice will be discussed regarding this study’s resulting data. In addition, related research opportunities will be suggested.
Chapter Five: Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter discusses the impact of the action research study that explored whether enhancing adolescents' ability to analyze works of art helps them better plan and create solutions to their own visual problems. This chapter explores how the primary researcher has been personally impacted as well as how the resulting data and analysis might impact colleagues' art education practice. In addition, recommendations are made in light of this research experience and resulting data which is intended to inform and improve future research surrounding adolescents' creative development. Rationale for a unit plan (see Appendix A) based on this action research study is also addressed.

Discussion

The researcher designed this action research to investigate how improving students' abilities to analyze artwork might improve their abilities to develop their own original ideas for artwork. Rather than students imitating cliché responses, it was the hope of the researcher that students would think more deeply and creatively when planning their art. The results of this study have impacted the researcher's teaching practice in several ways, including placing more emphasis on teaching art analysis skills and increasing students' descriptive vocabulary. Moreover, the conclusions may help other art educators be more successful in their practice.

Personal Impact of the Study

This study revealed a significant improvement in students' abilities to describe and analyze artworks as a result of the specific lessons taught by the researcher. The researcher found that there was a correlation between this heightened analysis ability and students' creative problem solving in art. The students’ written reflections about their
creative processes demonstrated an increased depth of thought and creativity in their solutions to surreal metaphorical self-portraits. The researcher also observed an increase in students’ motivation when planning their solutions, despite the greater complexity of the assignment relative to past art assignments.

These results hold several implications that have affected the researcher’s practice. The researcher previously assumed students had a workable understanding of descriptive language, including adjective, verbs, adverbs, metaphors, and similes. However, reviewing these language terms and improving students’ descriptive and analytical abilities in art class dramatically increased the depth with which students thought about art. This complex thinking also translated into more complex solutions to their visual art assignment. According to this research data, teaching language skills as they directly relate to art does, in fact, improve adolescent students’ creative thinking in art.

The researcher successfully employed contests as a teaching methodology to motivate students to practice descriptive vocabulary. Over 75% of the participants learned and enjoyed the descriptive vocabulary lessons. Language skills are not typically taught to the extent they were taught in this research study. Language skills are also not thought to be a necessary component of art class, particularly by the researcher’s students. These students generally view learning language skills as dull and uninteresting. However, creating teams and challenging them to compete was a successful motivational strategy when teaching language skills. Explaining and experiencing the relevance of learning language in art class proved valuable to students’ motivation.
The researcher was pleased to observe increased language and analytical skills resulted in longer, more complex student reflections about their artworks. Previously, students may have written a paragraph as a reflection on an art assignment, but after these lessons students typically wrote a whole page, and many wrote more than a page. The content of these reflections was also notable. Students analyzed their own artworks in great depth, citing details in the content, the composition, the elements and principles, and the use of media. They related these visual aspects to personal characteristics and deep insights about their identities. These reflections showed evidence of the heightened complexity of students’ thinking before, during, and after the creative process.

**Impact on Practice**

The results of this study demonstrate the significant role language plays in the creative process. While language is primarily taught in English class, it cannot be ignored as an important part of art class. Well-developed language skills give students the tools to think about and respond to art that will further build their thinking and analysis skills as well as enhance and inform their art making. Critiques have been long accepted as a vital component of growth in the creative process. Building language skills will help students participate in critiques in increasingly meaningful ways. Activities and lessons must be designed to include descriptive language and creative writing to give students ample opportunities to utilize and develop these skills in the art room.

Students today are bombarded with cliché, mundane images and shortcuts in language in the form of text messages, Tweets, and Facebook posts. These modern social networking tools of today’s youth encourage shallow communication and quick responses requiring little effort or thought. Art educators must give students the tools and
help them build the skills to think and create on more complex levels. Improving
students’ analysis abilities by developing their understanding of descriptive language will
help students plan more original responses to visual problems.

Students need to understand the relevance of learning language skills in art class,
therefore art educators must explain how learning descriptive language will help students
better understand, plan, and create art. Language skills must be directly related to art and
taught in ways that motivate and engage students. Team formats that require students to
work together motivate adolescent students through their natural social inclinations. In
addition, including a competitive element between the teams increases the students’
excitement and motivation.

**Recommendations**

Additional surveys and interviews could give more insight to students’
perceptions and understandings of their own creative process and how it is affected by
their descriptive and analytical language skills.

This study focused on descriptive language and creative problem solving.
Increased time could allow more emphasis on and development of specific media skills.
The researcher observed improved depth of thought in this study, but acknowledges that
improved thought does not lead to improved technical skills. Future assignments could
increase focus on building media skills by narrowing media options for students. The art
educator could limit the assignment to paint and collage with magazine, for example.
That lesson could then include specific training related to the possible uses and
characteristics of collage and paint to enable students to produce more effective visual
responses.
Art education practice would benefit from further research into the correlation between language skills and creative problem solving. Future investigations could include coordination with English teachers and their curriculum, and could evolve into a longer timeframe provoking additional questions. Related studies are necessary to fully explore the complexities and scope of the relationship between language and art.

**Conclusion of this Research Study**

This study improves understanding of the correlation between art analysis skills and creative problem solving for adolescents. Future research about the relationship between language and the creative process will continue to expand our ability to effectively teach creative problem solving in art classes.

**Advice to the Field of Art Education**

Art analysis and descriptive language need to be integrated into a comprehensive art program for adolescent students. Enhanced descriptive language can help adolescents communicate ideas, analyze artwork, and heighten their sensitivity to and perception of their environment. Moreover, improvement in these abilities will help students search for more unique, inventive visual expression, thus improving adolescents’ creativity and problem-solving skills. The data from this research can help art educators develop curriculum to meet adolescent language needs, thus empowering students to experience and express personal connections with art. Learning to think reflectively and critically is beneficial in all subject areas, thus reinforcing the interconnectedness of all things (Blandy & Hoffman, 1993, p. 24). Reinforcing the relationship between visual arts and language helps reinforce the vital role art plays in the education of all children, in all subject areas.
Advice to Art Educators

Art educators can increase the integration of language into their curricula. Putting more emphasis on learning descriptive language will benefit students’ creative thinking skills and their self-reflection with regard to creative processes. The importance of language in art class, and moreover, the connection of art to English and all other subjects should be continually emphasized. In addition, it is vital to use creative methods of teaching these concepts and skills to heighten student interest and motivation. This study demonstrated the value of teams and competitions to motivate adolescents. By improving students understanding of descriptive language and working toward stronger student analysis skills, art educators can provide more effective strategies for students as they plan and create solutions to their visual problems.
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Appendix A

Figure A1 Unit

Art Analysis: A tool for creative problem solving

Unit Rationale
This unit will develop students’ creative solving abilities through enhancement of art analysis skills. Analysis provides students the opportunity to explore depth of thought and approaches to idea development behind other artists’ images. Barrett (2003) states the analysis process begins by defining, “Denotations are what you literally see in a picture; connotations are what the things and words imply or suggest by what they show and how they show it” (p. 11). This process of investigating and looking beyond the surface of imagery is beneficial to all students by building more complex layers to their understanding of artwork and the creative process. Tollifson (2011) explains, “language influences how humans perceive their environment” (p. 12). Therefore, to help students become more sensitive to their visual surrounds, they must be taught the descriptive language to help interpret it.

Helping students develop a firm understanding of adjectives, verbs, adverbs, metaphors, similes, and analogies, art educators thus, “set the stage for critical reflection, redirected awareness, and heightened appreciation” of art (Moore, 1994, p. 6). These language skills can be applied not only to the analysis of art but to the creation of art. Through the use of metaphors, similes, and analogies, “teachers can help students think about possible relationships between qualities in their daily lives and qualities in works of art” (Tollifson, 2011, p. 11). Creating these connections between students and art may lead to greater personal understanding of and general motivation in the creative process. This unit challenges students to understand qualitative language and to apply these concepts to the analysis and creation of artwork.

GOALS:
The following goals are based on Visual Art Standards in the Maine Learning Results (2006). Students should...

KNOW
- Elements of Art and Principles of Design and composition.
  a. ELEMENTS OF ART: line, shape, space, color, texture, form, and value (MLRVA: A2a)
  b. PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN: balance, pattern, emphasis, rhythm, unity, movement, and proportion (MLRVA: A2b)
- Describe expressive qualities of subject, media, and form in artwork (MLRVA: A3)
- Students choose subject, media, and form based on expressive qualities to create original surreal self-portraits (MLRVA: A3)
- Vocabulary: Adjective, verb, adverb, metaphor, analogy, and simile (MLRVA: B3b)

UNDERSTAND
- Visual literacy through the artist’s purpose as he/she expresses their ideas, identity, time, and culture through artwork (MLRVA: A1)
- How artists use metaphor, analogy, and simile to express through art (MLRVA: B3)
• Artistic problem solving using multiple solutions in the creative process
• How to describe and analyze their own and others’ artworks
• How artists find inspiration for art (MLRVA: C1)
• How artists explore and express personal identity through art (MLRVA: B3)
• How their knowledge of art description and analysis relates to other career and life decisions including that the arts are a means of renewal and recreation.

**BE ABLE TO**

• Apply brainstorming strategies to think deeper about ideas and concepts. (MLRVA: C1)
• Describe analyze, interpret, and evaluate artworks by peers, Kahlo, Magritte, and Dali. (MLRVA: D1a)
• Analyze and evaluate varied interpretations of works of art using evidence from observations. (MLRVA: D1b)
• Make connections among the arts and other disciplines (MLRVA: E2)
• Demonstrate positive interpersonal skills and reflect on the impact of interpersonal skills (i.e. getting along with others, respecting differences, working as a team/ensemble, managing conflict, accepting/giving/using constructive feedback, accepting responsibility for personal behavior, demonstrating ethical behavior, following established rules/etiquette for observing/listening, demonstrate safe behavior) on personal success. (MLRVA: E5)
• Set short- and long-term goals based on rigorous criteria and related to time management, interpersonal interactions or skill development that will lead to success in the arts.

**INSTRUCTIONAL CONCEPTS:**

Students at the high school level typically generate responses to visual problems with simple, over-used imagery, such as peace signs, tear drops, and smiley faces. In an effort to expand students’ creative thinking, this unit will develop student art analysis skills. Heightening students’ perception and analysis abilities may enhance the generation of creative ideas as students’ personal connections with their creative experiences. Enhanced perception allows students to form more sensitive interpretations and emotional connections with artwork. When students feel more intimate with artwork, they could be more motivated in the art classroom.
LESSONS

Lesson One:
Student generated descriptions are used to assess baseline descriptive skills. Students learn about descriptive language and the definitions of adjective, verb, adverb, metaphor, analogy, and simile (see Figure A2, Appendix A, p.). Students learn about qualitative language as it relates to the subject, media, and form of artwork. The teacher will guide class discussion of these terms while looking at artworks. Relationships between the descriptive aspects of artworks are discussed and utilized to form ideas about possible meanings behind the artworks. Students work in groups to write a poem, story, or rap about artwork. Students write another description of an artwork to assess changes in students’ analysis abilities.

Lesson Two:
Students will be introduced to the surreal self-portraits of Frida Kahlo. Students will apply their heightened analyses skills to describe, analyze, and interpret Kahlo’s work. Students will plan and create original surreal self-portraits using their choice of media. The teacher will conduct a class critique of student self-portraits. Students will self-evaluate using a rubric and open-ended reflection (see Figure 3.3, Appendix B, p.).

Materials:
Paper- 8½” X 11” lined
Paper-White tag 12”X18”
Pencils
Sticky notes
Magazines
Exactos
Scissors
Glue
Colored papers
Paint
Markers
Colored pencils
Small found objects
Treats/prizes (3 different sets of 4- art supplies, candy, etc.)

Exemplars:
• My Dress Hangs There, 1933, Frida Kahlo
• Self Portrait on the Borderline Between Mexico and the US, 1932, Frida Kahlo
• Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace, 1940, Frida Kahlo

Supplemental Exemplars:
Teacher’s mixed media metaphorical self-portrait (see A3, Appendix A, p.)
Teacher’s process and product visuals:
Chart of Feldman’s four-step critique process
Handout of qualitative language definitions (see A2, Appendix A, p. )
Starter list of qualitative words (To be developed with Students)
Handout “Exploring Self”

ASSESSMENTS:
1. Observation and dialogue during class discussions, planning, and creation. Observation of meaningful participation and analysis of group/individual written responses, -- formative
2. Final description/analysis of Kahlo’s artwork and student’s own artwork with evaluation/rubric-- summative

REFERENCES:
Maine State Learning Results retrieved April 16, 2012 from
<http://www.maine.gov/education/lres/vpa.htm>
Figure A2

QUALITATIVE LANGUAGE IN ART

1. Vocabulary that describes the visual qualities of works of art.

- **ADJECTIVE**: serves as a modifier of a noun to denote a quality of the thing named, to indicate its quantity or extent, or to specify a thing as distinct from something else

Example: Monet used soft, fuzzy brushstrokes. “Soft” and “fuzzy” are adjective that describe the brushstrokes.

- **VERB**: expresses an act, occurrence, or mode of being; an action word

Example: Van Gogh’s trees sway in the wind. “Sway” is a verb (to run).

- **ADVERB**: serves as a modifier of a verb, an adjective, another adverb, a preposition, a phrase, a clause, or a sentence, expressing some relation of manner or quality, place, time, degree, number, cause, opposition, affirmation, or denial.

Example: The lines point violently at the face in the portrait. “Violently” is an adverb. How did the lines point? Violently. Adverbs often end in “ly.”

2. Figures of speech make you think about relationships between qualities in life and qualities in artwork. (A figure of speech is the use of words that is different from the literal meaning of the words.)

- **METAPHOR**: A figure of speech in which an implied comparison is made between two unlike things that actually have something in common. Adjective: metaphorical.

Can you imagine these metaphors as visual images?

Examples:

1. “He was drowning in paperwork” is a metaphor in which having to deal with a lot of paperwork is being compared to drowning in an ocean of water.

2. "I can mingle with the stars, and throw a party on Mars; I am a prisoner locked up behind Xanax bars." (Lil Wayne, "I Feel Like Dying")

3. "The rain came down in long knitting needles." (Enid Bagnold, National Velvet)
SIMILE: a figure of speech comparing two unlike things that is often introduced by like or as (as in cheeks like roses)

Examples:
"Good coffee is like friendship: rich and warm and strong." (slogan of Pan-American Coffee Bureau)
"You know life, life is rather like opening a tin of sardines. We're all of us looking for the key." (Alan Bennett, Beyond the Fringe, 1960)

ANALOGY: a comparison between two different things in order to highlight some point of similarity—typically a longer, more complex comparison than metaphors or similes.

Examples: In the following example of an effective analogy, science writer Claudia Kalb relies on the computer to explain how our brains process memories:

Some basic facts about memory are clear. Your short-term memory is like the RAM on a computer: it records the information in front of you right now. Some of what you experience seems to evaporate--like words that go missing when you turn off your computer without hitting SAVE. But other short-term memories go through a molecular process called consolidation: they're downloaded onto the hard drive. These long-term memories, filled with past loves and losses and fears, stay dormant until you call them up. ("To Pluck a Rooted Sorrow," Newsweek, April 27, 2009)

Does this mean that human memory functions exactly like a computer in all ways? Certainly not. By its nature, an analogy offers a simplified view of an idea or process--an illustration rather than a detailed examination.

Pupils are more like oysters than sausages. The job of teaching is not to stuff them and then seal them up, but to help them open and reveal the riches within. There are pearls in each of us, if only we knew how to cultivate them with ardor and persistence. (Sydney J. Harris, "What True Education Should Do," 1964)
**Metaphor**

A metaphor is a figure of speech that uses one thing to mean another and makes a comparison between the two. The key words here are “one thing to mean another.” So, when someone says “He’s become a shell of a man,” we know not to take this literally, even though it’s stated directly as if this person had actually lost his internal substance.

**Simile**

A simile compares two different things in order to create a new meaning. In this case, we are made explicitly aware that a comparison is being made due to the use of “like” or “as” (He’s *like* a shell of a man). For fun, the next time someone corrects you and says “That’s a simile, not a metaphor,” you can respond by letting them know that a simile is a type of metaphor, just like sarcasm is a type of irony. Resist the urge to be sarcastic in your delivery.

**Analogy**

An analogy is comparable to metaphor and simile in that it shows how two different things are similar, but it’s a bit more complex. Rather than a figure of speech, an analogy is more of a logical argument. The presenter of an analogy will often demonstrate how two things are alike by pointing out shared characteristics, with the goal of showing that if two things are similar in some ways, they are similar in other ways as well.

“Stretching analogies is a way of generating synergistic effects, new perceptions and potent metaphors” (Roukes, 1988, p. 19).

**Resources**


Figure A3

Teacher’s Example: Surreal Metaphorical Self-Portrait Mixed Media Collage

I began my metaphor self-portrait by brainstorming. I literally listed my life roles and passions, and I sketched as I thought about possible metaphors. I came up with a rough idea, a direction in which I could start. I don’t like looking at a blank piece of paper, so I painted some darker blues, reds, greens and purples just to have color rather than a blank surface. Then as I looked through magazines, it seemed that everything I saw could be a metaphor for some aspect of my life. I cut out many objects and images. I found it difficult to simplify. I felt the need to include everything to tell the complete story. I know “less is more” sometimes, but that is a concept I sometimes struggle with.

I cut a tree form out of map paper to symbolize me. I feel a tree is rather cliché but I hope that it conveys deeper meaning within the context of my piece. The tree seemed to fit the metaphor of my life with roots representing my childhood, my home in Maine, and the support systems in my life—my family and friends. I began with a whole tree, but I decided to divide it up to emphasize the pull I feel towards different aspects of my life. I often feel torn between different responsibilities. The map represents places I want to see and explore. The map also creates the trunk texture and eventually the branches of “me.” The branches stretch out like arms. One arm on the upper right reaches towards the idealistic goal of achieving everything I strive for. The world represents this ultimate goal. Of course, it is always out of reach. There isn’t enough time or energy to have everything the way I would like it.

There are hands on the many branches. These hands are trying to balance those people, relationships and commitments that are important to me, for example, the
Madonna and child represent my effort to be a good mother. However, I never feel that I have all my responsibilities fully covered. There are usually some suffering while others are being managed. The window represents the home I try to maintain as a warm, inviting place for my children, family and friends. The three glowing starfish near the Madonna represent my three sons. The fruit and the woman in the yoga pose represent my effort towards a healthy mind and body. The Mona Lisa represents my artistic side and the mannequin represents my role as an art teacher.

The clock image in the center of the tree is very literally the passage of time. As I approach middle age and realize my mortality, I feel some anxiety about the things I still hope to accomplish and experience. I also look forward to making memories with people important to me. In the image, the points of light in the blue background represent these future hopes. I, the tree, am floating as if in the ocean. This is a reference to Maine and also to the drifting feeling I sometimes have. There is splattering of yellow, orange and red in the background symbolizing things that are out of my control.

Having explained all that, I feel I am portraying my life in a slightly negative light. However, I do know that there is a lot of beauty in my life for which I am grateful, hence, I scattered a variety of flowers around the bottom of the tree. With all the goals I am working toward and with my responsibilities, I sometimes wonder where and who “I” am. I feel I can relate to my students—I am still searching for and developing my identity too.
## Appendix B

### Figure 3.1

Simple scale to rate use of cliché imagery in artwork and sketchbook journal entries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cliché/</td>
<td>Cliché/</td>
<td>Cliché/Mundane</td>
<td>Original</td>
<td>Original</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mundane</td>
<td>Mundane</td>
<td>and Original</td>
<td>Images</td>
<td>Images</td>
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<td>Images</td>
<td>Images</td>
<td>Images</td>
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</table>
### Figure 3.2
**Student survey responses**

<table>
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<th>Question #</th>
<th>No Answer</th>
<th>Negative Response</th>
<th>Positive Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction to Qualitative Language (handout, discussion)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>“Boring, not interesting”</td>
<td>“It was a good thing we did it, because it jogged our memory about qualitative language.”</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“It was difficult for me this way because all my classes are like this and I think art should be different.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Boring...I could have been drawing.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Team competition to come up with the most qualitative words and phrases</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>“Used a lot of sticky notes, but still not fun. I let smarter people do it.”</td>
<td>“Fun to compete, makes it more fun to work”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I did not enjoy the activities. They weren’t fun.”</td>
<td>“Fun because we had teams.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I did not enjoy the activities. They weren’t fun.”</td>
<td>“Good, also to help understand.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Had fun finding things on the pictures to put into qualitative words.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Team competition to create a rap, song, or story using classmates’ qualitative words for Kahlo’s <em>My Dress Hangs There</em></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>“I was forced to read a story I had no part in and made no sense.”</td>
<td>“It was fun getting out our creativeness.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I did not like them. They made me rap… I thought they were stupid.”</td>
<td>“Competition makes people work harder.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Having a prize…was great incentive.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“It was extremely fun. Using descriptive words to make the story was cool.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“It was actually fun, even if we won or lost.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Do you think you learned more than you knew about qualitative language and describing art? Please explain.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>“Not exactly.”</td>
<td>“Yes, I learned how to look deeper into detail and express it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Not really.”</td>
<td>“I knew what…the words meant, but I do feel like I learned more from discussing and practicing.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“I didn’t learn anything new. I’ve done this all in English class where it needs to stay.”</td>
<td>“Expanded on what I already knew.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Yes, because we used these English terms to describe art.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Yes, more in depth talk than English teachers give us.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Figure 3.3
**Surreal Metaphorical Self-Portrait Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surreal Metaphor Expressing Personal Identity</th>
<th>EXEMPLARY</th>
<th>PROFICIENT</th>
<th>BASIC</th>
<th>DEFICIENT</th>
<th>SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supporting statements</td>
<td>Sophisticated Demonstration (exceeds standards) 4</td>
<td>Proficient Demonstration (meets standards) 3</td>
<td>Partial Demonstration (partially meets standards) 2</td>
<td>Attempted Demonstration (does not meet standards) 1</td>
<td>Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brainstorming/Thumbnail Sketches-Evidence of planning</td>
<td>14-15 pts.</td>
<td>13 pts.</td>
<td>12 pts.</td>
<td>Only one thumbnail sketch shows lack of thought about metaphors and composition.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Media and evidence of effective communication using visual vocabulary</td>
<td>Five or more thumbnail sketches show great depth and thorough thought about possible metaphors and composition (placement in relation to meaning and idea communicated).</td>
<td>Four thumbnail sketches show depth and thought about possible metaphors and composition (placement in relation to meaning and idea communicated).</td>
<td>Two or three thumbnail sketches show some thought about metaphors and composition (objects’ placement in relation to meaning and idea communicated).</td>
<td>Poor use of media to communicate and describe identity. Demonstrates little understanding of metaphor or design elements and principles. Portrait addresses simple ideas. Form and content are weak. Communicating superficial aspects of identity.</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPOSITION - Evidence of critical thinking about how placement effects mood &amp; ideas communicated</td>
<td>Dynamic composition utilizing the entire space. Interesting repetition, placement of elements visually leads eye through piece to focal point.</td>
<td>Good composition utilizing the space in a visually interesting way. Eye moves throughout piece through repetition.</td>
<td>Composition may utilize some space in an interesting way, but too much negative/dead space. Lack of repetition stifes movement.</td>
<td>Poor composition. Boring. Limited elements. Maybe too small. Lack of visual movement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CREATIVITY and reflection of personal identity Evidence of critical thinking</td>
<td>Image is dynamic and inventive with strong visual impact. Image demonstrates confident understanding of metaphor as a creative vehicle of visual communication.</td>
<td>Image is original and interesting with good visual impact. Image demonstrates clear understanding of metaphor as a creative vehicle of visual communication.</td>
<td>Image has some original elements. May contain some cliché imagery. Metaphor is weak but evident.</td>
<td>Image is limited, cliché, and visually weak. Little sense of metaphor. Imagery is direct and obvious.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRAFTSMANSHIP - Evidence of care, patience, attentiveness to process and learning</td>
<td>Media is very well handled in keeping with the mood and meaning communicated. For example, cut edges are smooth with clear, sharp edges defining the forms. Values have excellent transitions. No smudging, fingerprints. Clearly, great care has been taken.</td>
<td>Media is well handled in keeping with the mood and meaning communicated. For example, cut edges are fairly smooth with clean edges defining the forms. Values have good transitions. No smudging, fingerprints.</td>
<td>Media is handled inconsistently with regard to the attempted mood and meaning communicated. For example, some cut edges may be rough. Some values have awkward transitions. A little smudging, fingerprints.</td>
<td>Media is handled poorly communicating little mood or meaning. For example, cut edges are rough and values have awkward transitions. Smudging, fingerprints.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRITTEN</td>
<td>A complete, thoughtful and</td>
<td>A complete and</td>
<td>Some difficulty</td>
<td>Little explanation or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFLECTION - Artist statement</td>
<td>clear explanation of the metaphor for expressing personal identity.</td>
<td>somewhat clear explanation of the metaphor for expressing personal identity.</td>
<td>explaining the relationship between the visual metaphor and identity.</td>
<td>evidence of understanding of metaphor or how identity is communicated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**EFFORT**

- Evidence of excitement for learning, positive contributions to class, shows respect for self and others, takes responsibility for own behavior, listens

| Effort and excellent craftsmanship are evident. Open-minded attitude toward class and suggestions made. Clean-up done well without reminders. Excellent attendance and focus during class. | Directions are followed. Effort and good craftsmanship are evident. Good attitude toward class and suggestions made. Clean-up done well. Good attendance focus. | Most directions are followed. Effort and some craftsmanship are evident. Sometimes has a good attitude toward class and suggestions made. Clean-up done. May have missed a class and not made up the time. Inconsistent focus during class. | Some directions are not followed. Poor effort and craftsmanship are evident. Sometimes a poor attitude toward class and/or not open to suggestions made. Clean-up may not be done. Poor attendance. |

*Please explain your visual metaphor and how it expresses your personal identity. Discuss your use and understanding of the elements and principles of art. Also, what was your initial idea? How did your idea grow and develop as you worked? Do you feel it is original and creative? Why or why not? What do you like best about your piece and what would you do differently another time? Please write on the back of this paper or attach lined paper.

**LISBON HIGH SCHOOL**

TOTAL SCORE: _______

NAME________________________________________ PERIOD________
**Interview Questions for Literacy Specialist and other Professionals**

1. Do you have any experiences using art in adolescent literacy lessons?
2. Do you have any ideas for using art in adolescent literacy lessons?
3. What are some successful strategies you have used when teaching descriptive vocabulary?
4. In what grades do you teach these language concepts: Adjectives, verbs, adverbs, metaphors, similes, and analogies?
5. How well do you think students retain this information?
6. Have you tried group work when teaching vocabulary?
7. What lessons or activities do you feel have best helped students understand metaphors, similes, and analogies?
8. How do you assess their understanding?
9. How do you make writing fun for adolescents? How do you motivate them?
10. (Briefly explain my action research plan) Do you have any suggestions for me?
The *churning sky* in Van Gogh’s *Starry Night* effectively expresses wind like swirls of melted candies.

**Match the parts of speech below with the letter corresponding to the appropriate part of the sentence above.**

1. Adjective________
2. Verb________
3. Adverb________
4. Simile________

**Fill in the blanks:**

1. __________ -serves as a modifier of a noun to denote a quality of the thing named
2. __________ -expresses an act, occurrence, or mode of being; an action word
3. __________ -serves as a modifier of a verb, an adjective, another adverb
4. __________ -a figure of speech in which an implied comparison is made between two unlike things that actually have something in common
5. __________ -a figure of speech comparing two unlike things that is often introduced by *like* or *as* (as in *cheeks like roses*)
6. __________ -a comparison between two different things in order to highlight some point of similarity—typically a longer, more complex comparison

**On the lined paper provided please write a description about Frida Kahlo’s *Self-Portrait on the Border Line Between Mexico and the United States*.**
How did you feel about the qualitative language activities you participated in this past week? Did you like/enjoy any of them? Which one’s? Why/why not?
Qualitative language activities:

Introduction to Qualitative Language (handout, discussion)

Team competition to come up with the most qualitative words and phrases

Team competition to create a rap, song, or story using classmate’s qualitative words for Kahlo’s *My Dress Hangs There*

Do you think you learned more than you knew about qualitative language and describing art? Please explain.
Table 4.1
Qualitative Language Tally and Comparison

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<th>noun</th>
<th>adj</th>
<th>verb</th>
<th>adv</th>
<th>met</th>
<th>sim</th>
<th>anal</th>
<th>total #1</th>
<th>Quality Language</th>
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