

Artsonia: A Digital Tool for Enhancing Family Engagement in Perceiving and Responding to Student Artwork

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Running head: ARTSONIA: A DIGITAL TOOL FOR STUDENT ARTWORK

BOSTON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS

Final Research Project

**Artsonia: A Digital Tool for Enhancing Family Engagement
in Perceiving and Responding to Student Artwork**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Art Education

Abstract

This study focuses on how introducing Artsonia, an online student art gallery, to Narragansett Elementary School families might enhance their response and perception to student artwork. Triangulation was used to collect data from a variety of sources including Artsonia activity, Artsonia comments, Artsonia survey, family interviews, and student-initiated Artsonia discussions. Data demonstrated a high percentage of Narragansett Elementary School families interact with Artsonia in a variety of ways. As a digital tool, Artsonia connected families and friends from across the state and even the country to view and discuss student artwork. Fan club members expressed their gratitude for Artsonia's ability to view artwork that would otherwise go unknown to extended family members. Through use of the project description feature on Artsonia, the researcher uploaded project descriptions including possible discussion topics to enhance student artwork discussions. Data collected from a variety of sources demonstrates an increased perception of student artwork as project descriptions made learning visible in the art classroom. All participants in the study, including the researcher, families, and students, demonstrate deep interest in Artsonia and its ability to enhance response and perception to student artwork.

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Chapter One

In the digital age of the twenty-first century, information can be displayed, shared, and analyzed at high speeds and to extensive communities. As explained by technology professors Brown and van Tryon (2010), “Web-based avenues for display and sharing of student original work opens up the classroom to entirely new and larger audiences” (p. 237). Teachers within the field of art education handle artwork displays in a variety of ways. Families are not often an audience to hallway art displays appreciated by students and faculty. While off-campus student art exhibits can be viewed by the entire community, the burden of these events can limit their frequency. Even more limiting, some art teachers may send home artwork infrequently or without the proper protection required for families to view the artwork in an undamaged state. Consequently, community members, including families and colleagues, may be unaware of the valuable learning within the art classroom. However, the digital tools available to art educators can enhance the view-ability and perception of student artwork with displays online.

The researcher is interested in exploring how the online gallery of Artsonia can be used to enhance engagement in perceiving and responding to the student artwork. Artsonia is an online gallery utilized by art educators to display student artwork. Brown and van Tryon (2010) explain, “One resource for displaying student work on the Internet is Artsonia (www.artsonia.com), a site that claims to be the world’s largest children’s art museum” (p. 237). In addition to displaying artwork, visitors to the online gallery are allowed to interact with the artist by commenting on artwork. Another interactive aspect of Artsonia allows students to each have their own fan club. However, posted artwork to Artsonia is only visible to the online viewer if a parent has granted permission for the artwork to be seen on the world wide web. By connecting family and friends

to student artwork, artwork is viewed at a higher frequency, which therefore enhances their engagement in perceiving and responding to the artwork.

Background to the Study

Personal Interest

Although the researcher is in her fifth year in the Narragansett School System in Narragansett, RI, this is her first year teaching at Narragansett Elementary School. Earning a Bachelor in Science from the State University of New York at New Paltz, provided her a comprehensive education in studio art, art history, and the theory and practice of art education. The curriculum for the elementary art classes in grades kindergarten thru fourth consists of the elements and principles of design in various mediums.

When the researcher started teaching, she was surprised to notice how little the arts were valued in both the school and local community. The visual arts are often stigmatized as an elite field to only be discussed by experts. For example, referencing museum galleries, Housen and Yenawine (2001) explain “They sometimes make new or infrequent visitors feel as if their personal responses are unwelcome. It is even possible to feel that discussion is discouraged” (para. 2). However, after beginning to use Artsonia last year, the researcher realized this online art gallery could be used as to enhance family art experiences. For instance, Brown and van Tryon (2010) explain “Teachers may facilitate students’ evolving understanding of audience and the implications of publicly displaying one’s work by encouraging class participation in online collections of creative work and discussing the results of this involvement” (p. 237). The researcher is interested in initiating family discussion about student artwork in a meaningful way.

Especially with younger students, parents often provide baseless, yet well-intentioned compliments to the budding artist. The researcher considers the average adult to be in second stage of aesthetic development when viewing professional artworks. As Housen (2001) explains, “Their sense of what is realistic is the standard often applied to determine value” (p. 4). However, when viewing the artwork of their children, these same adults seem to step back into the first stage of aesthetic development as Housen (2001) describes, “judgements are based on what is known and what is liked. Emotions color their comments” (p. 4). Unknowingly, families are devaluing student artwork when responding to the artwork in a lower aesthetic developmental stage than they are capable of.

Existing Research

The fields addressing aesthetics, including but not limited to art education and museum studies, have investigated visual literacy. Especially in the age of high stake testing, art educators are pressured into validating their curriculum against standards such as the Common Core and standardized tests. Burchenal, Housen, Rawlinson, and Yenawine (2008) cite Winner and Hetland (2007) as stating, “As schools cut time for the arts, they may be losing their ability to produce not just the artistic creators of the future, but innovative leaders who improve the world they inherit” (p. 1). By bringing attention to the value of art experiences in a student’s education, the importance of visual literacy is established.

Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) is a tool used to provide students with the skills to analyze an artwork. Burchenal, Housen, Rawlinson, and Yenawine (2008) explain, “Abigail Housen and her colleagues developed VTS originally based on Housen’s lengthy research into thinking of viewers as they look at art” (p. 1). By conducting research exploring how people

view art, Housen and her colleagues paved the way in the field of visual literacy. Although this research was intended to be specific to families looking at and discussing the artwork of their children, the researcher believes research on VTS has expanded her knowledge on the topic and informed the action research.

Research Goals

New to the elementary school age, the researcher hoped this research would provide valuable information as to how families discuss student artwork. By learning more about how student art is valued at home, the researcher believed parents will validate art education as a meaningful learning experience. As the only art educator in the school, the researcher needs to serve as an agent for change and develop a visual literacy that meets the needs of the students and their families. By first researching the complexity of student artwork-based family discussions and their frequency, the researcher has strengthened art experiences outside of the art classroom.

Research Questions

Art has the value of the visual artifact. Students can show their families “what they did today” with a visual, tangible object. The researcher was interested in how the product produced in art class connected a family to the art room learning. The research question for this action research is: How might connecting Narragansett Elementary School families to Artsonia enhance their engagement in perceiving and responding to student artwork? This study took place both within and outside the art classroom at the Narragansett Elementary School. Student artwork, project descriptions, and guiding questions were posted to Artsonia to make the goal more reasonable for busy families.

In addition, sub questions include: How might Artsonia expand the viewing audience of student artwork? To what extent do Artsonia viewers utilize the tools such as project descriptions, informational links, and guided questioning? Considering families who do not view student artwork online, what are factors that could encourage them to connect to Artsonia?

Conceptual Framework

Educational experience, art teaching history, and experience using Artsonia all factor into prior knowledge on initiating aesthetics based discussions. Areas of research consist of parent participation and interest in discussing their child's artwork and the value of art education as a meaningful learning experience.

Since the researcher did not have direct control of when student artwork goes home and the condition the artwork is in, posting artwork on Artsonia strengthened this research strategy. Not only is student artwork visible, project descriptions and guiding questions are displayed with the artwork as well as additional resources such as information web links to further understanding of the displayed art lesson. In addition to monitoring activity on Artsonia, the researcher interviewed three families, analyzed student-initiated Artsonia discussions, and gained data from surveys sent to parent emails with Google Forms. The survey link was sent using the Art Room News feature of Artsonia. By using this newsletter tool, the researcher knew only participating parents will receive the survey and therefore encouraged a higher participation percentage than if it had been sent to parents via the school listserv. Questions in the survey asked families to qualify specific aspects of Artsonia including the value of project descriptions, discussion questions, and Artsonia as a whole (see Appendix A.6).

Furthermore, the researcher uses the data to strengthen her teaching practices in both the short and long term. As the family dynamic is an imperative part of this action research, the

researcher established and developed positive relationships with families while developing an aesthetically well-versed community. The data also informed the future teaching practices of the researcher. This action research informed educational skills in teaching visual literacy and therefore improve further practices in promoting student artwork centered family discussions.

Theoretical Framework

Despite the intrinsic value of art education, there is little education available to families to explain the significance art plays in the development of their children. When young students come home with a new project, many parents praise their child and move on: A pretty picture was created, the child had fun creating it, and the family moves on. However, for understanding of the art activity, a deeper connection must be made. Housen and Yenawine (2001) explain “The VTS is based on the premise that a personal connection to art is the essential first step in building a long-term relationship to it” (para. 1). Families can utilize Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) when viewing student artwork to enhance their connection to their child’s art education and therefore strengthen the intrinsic value of art education.

As families become increasingly busy, meaningful discussions regarding student artwork can become an implausible happening. Yet, Sweeny (2014) suggests, “Contemporary networked digital experiences offer new opportunities for...engagement” (p. 4). Since Artsonia allows student artwork to be seen simultaneously from any location, families can view and discuss student artwork with ease.

Significance of the Study

Visual Thinking Strategies are a valuable resource in understanding the complex society inhabited and created by the human race. For example, Burchenal, Housen, Rawlinson, and Yenawine (2008) explain, “integrating art in the curriculum is not just ‘Art for art’s sake,’ but

clearly contributes to students' critical thinking and measurable academic achievement as well" (p. 3). By providing families with the tools necessary to perceive and respond to student artwork in a meaningful way, the art educator prepared both the student and the family to analyze the visual world that surrounds them.

Limitations of the Study

Although Artsonia is a valuable tool enjoyed by millions of fan club members, the study was faced with certain limitations. Currently, approximately five percent of Narragansett Elementary School students do not have artwork viewable on Artsonia due to lack of parent approval. The researcher believed these families do not oppose Artsonia and hypothesized their lack of participation is due to lack of diligence in returning the permission slip. However, this percentage is significant in limiting the research since only a portion of the students are able to participate in Artsonia. In addition, there are many parents who provided permission for their child's artwork to be visible on Artsonia, but did not create an account to receive emails and notifications regarding the posting activity of artwork. The researcher anticipated parents who have not created accounts, have little to no interaction with Artsonia and their child's artwork posted on the site. Therefore, by limiting the research to a small group of families, the researcher was able to learn more about how the use of Artsonia might enhance family's perception to student artwork.

Data collection within the family dynamic served as another limitation of the study. Since the researcher is not directly a member of her students' families, she was not be able to truly witness the discussions that might take place regarding student artwork. Therefore, the researcher had to trust the data provided to her during family interviews and surveys.

Conclusion

Chapter One has provided an introduction and background information into the action research question: How might connecting Narragansett Elementary School families to Artsonia enhance their engagement in perceiving and responding to student artwork? Chapter Two will provide an academic background of aesthetics-based discussions and the use of digital visual culture in the field of education.

Definition of Terms

Artsonia is an online student art gallery

Fan Club members receive automatic email updates whenever the artist publishes new artwork and has new comments. Each artist has a fan club, established by a parent, which family and friends can join.

Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) is a tool used to provide students with the skills to analyze an artwork.

Chapter Two

To extend art experiences out of the art classroom and into the family dynamic, art educators must find a way to make both the learning process and the art product visible in a way that is easily accessible to family members. As the technology of the twenty-first century is ever evolving, educators must adapt their teaching approaches to make learning relevant to the contemporary community. By utilizing digital methods of documenting the learning process, the researcher connected the community to the art classroom. However, the incorporation of Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) with technology, further improved family art experiences.

Research Question

The proposed research question for this action research was: How might connecting Narragansett Elementary School families to Artsonia enhance their engagement in perceiving and responding to student artwork? To provide a solid foundation for the study, the researcher conducted a review of the literature. To further understanding of the research topic, three sub-categories within the literature review were researched. First, visualizing learning in the art classroom and changing public perception of the arts provided valuable information on how community members, including families, perceive art education and the standards they hold to their child's learning. Second, Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) were thoroughly researched to educate the researcher in the stages of aesthetic development. Finally, research concerning the importance of technology use in the field of education was considered.

Conceptual Framework

As an experienced art educator but a new teacher to the building, the researcher was challenged to make a plethora of connections between art education, school families, and herself.

Although the researcher's experiences with Artsonia were mainly to support the delivery and documentation of the middle school art curriculum, she realized Artsonia could also be used to enhance how Narragansett Elementary School families respond and perceive student artwork.

In addition, the Narragansett School District, predominately the Narragansett Elementary School, have a partnership with the Harrington School of Communication and Media at University of Rhode Island to foster digital literacy in the public school setting. Director of the Media Education Lab at the Harrington School, Renee Hobbs (2014), defines digital literacy as:

Digital literacy is a student-centered pedagogy that is rooted in inquiry, explicitly emphasizing meaning-making and problem-solving by activating collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and communication skills. It's vitally important to help children and young people to be able to use, analyze and reflect upon the ever-expanding array of digital texts, tools and technologies in their lives, both in and out of the classroom. Students must be able to express what they are learning by creating and composing messages, using language, image, sound and multimedia. (R. Hobbs, personal communication, September 10, 2014)

After the Superintendent of Narragansett School District explained this unique partnership, the researcher was intrigued to become a dynamic contributor to this collaboration by using Artsonia as a form of digital literacy in the Narragansett Elementary School art room.

As the researcher allowed students and families to interact with student artwork in a digital format, she collected data based on how families perceived and responded to the artwork. The researcher also surveyed parents who had created Artsonia accounts. Also, three families with high interactivity in Artsonia, based on the number of comments and fan club members,

were interviewed to learn more about how Artsonia has affected the way they view and respond to student artwork. The researcher used open-ended questions when interviewing the families. By analyzing data collected from these various methods, the researcher was able to inform her future teaching practices.

Table 1. Visual Conceptual Framework

Prior Knowledge	Areas of Research	Research Strategy	Connections
Experience with Artsonia	Parent participation and interest	Posting student artwork on Artsonia with project descriptions which contain web links	Art education advocacy in school and then district
Daily discussions with students regarding their artwork at various age levels	Parent value of art education as a meaningful learning experience	Sending home project descriptions and questions to ask student about the artwork	Development of an well-versed community in aesthetics
Vast aesthetics analyzation	Students taken out of art class for interventions, early dismissal, absences	Interviews with families	Influence common core implementation by working with colleagues to encourage artist statements written by students
Strong project development history with a focus in creating for meaning	Lack of Artsonia interaction in student homes	Discussions with students in class regarding Artsonia and their art art experiences outside of the classroom	Further establish and develop positive relationships with families
		Monitoring comments posted online to student artwork	Develop and adapt tips for artwork discussions

Review of the Literature

Public Perception of Art Education

Last year, the researcher began to use Artsonia as a way to find immediate use for the SmartBoard installed in her art classroom. Many students enjoyed seeing their artwork on the “big screen” and the researcher found many of Artsonia’s functions, such as the slideshow feature, valuable in delivering her curriculum. However, moving to the elementary school, within the same district, altered the researcher’s mindset in utilizing Artsonia. Without a projection system in the elementary classroom, the researcher was motivated to use Artsonia as an extension of the art classroom into the homes of her students. As Stastny (2005) cites Broudy (1972) as stating, “It is vitally important that arts education leaders work diligently and deliberately to fuel interest in and support for a comprehensive view of human potential and achievement, and the arts are basic to both” (p. 17). To do so, art educators must directly inform the school community of the learning inside the art classroom.

In addition to fueling creativity and assisting in the delivery of curriculum within the art classroom, Artsonia is a window that allows families and community members to watch student artists develop and learn. Stastny (2005) explains, “The advancement of quality arts education requires a commitment to the production and documentation of excellent learning experiences and the artifacts that result from effective instruction” (p. 20). Artsonia as an online student art gallery allows the art educator to invite families to view digital documentation of student artwork on their own schedule and encourages families to review the student’s entire portfolio with each new artwork posted.

When transitioning from the middle school to the elementary level, the researcher first noticed the drastic difference in instruction frequency per class. Although only seeing students for a trimester, each class came to the art room for fifty minutes, four times at week, in the middle school. Conversely, the elementary students are only allotted forty minutes of art once a week during the course of the school year. Stastny (2005) reflects, “one of the most serious problems facing arts education leaders is the competition for instructional minutes among all the subjects that exist within the total school curriculum” (p. 21). This infrequency of art class could translate into a weakening of student learning. Artsonia, however, encourages families to connect back to art experiences between class meetings by viewing and commenting on student artwork.

In addition to displaying student artwork, Artsonia is equipped with several features that visualize student learning to the community. The field of fine arts is often viewed as a skill of the elite and therefore adults confuse art class as “fun time.” Although many students agree that art is indeed “fun,” important learning takes place during art education. By visualizing the actual process of learning, the community is more likely to understand the value of art education. Juno (2010) describes:

Learning, like falling in love or other significant changes that take place in that complex and not fully understood nexus of the mind/heart/body, is for the most part invisible....As an educator, I am focused on my students’ learning, but the transformational process itself is elusive. (p. 57)

Therefore, posting a painting online will not validate the learning that took place in the actual creation and development of the painting. Instead of viewing the artwork as a meaningful learning experience, it will be easy for the community to see the painting as a “pretty picture.”

By establishing project galleries online, equipped with project descriptions, family discussion topics, and informative web links, families can be better equipped to study the artwork beyond the surface value. In the broad field of education, art education is unique in providing a visual artifact of learning. Yet, art educators need to remember learning that is visible in student artwork to the trained eye is often invisible to the rest of the school community. Juno (2010) states, “As educators, we face an inherent challenge when displaying finished artwork and hoping the entire learning process might shine through to people who were never in the classroom witnessing it unfold” (p.58). Utilizing Artsonia to its fullest potential allows art educators to sheath the double-edged sword of the visual artifacts created in class. Families are often excited to view the artwork and strike conversation with the young artist. Juno (2010) explains, “Students do not generally, naturally, or effortlessly articulate their learning” (p. 58). However, when Artsonia provides a project description and discussion topics, family members have the tools to extend the classroom learning at home.

Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS)

Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) are a tool used to provide students with the skills to analyze an artwork. As the primary researcher in the development of Visual Thinking Strategies, Housen (2001) describes, “The Stage I viewer starts with a random concrete observation....Here, judgments are based on what is known and what is liked” (p. 5) and then describes how Stage II viewers, “reflect interest in how things are made, how well they are done, and whether the rendering fits into the viewer’s idea of what is normal” (p. 6). The stages continue in advancement and sophistication, ending at Stage V. The researcher agrees with Housen’s (2001) assessment that, “the predominance of adult viewers at or near only Stage II” (p. 6). However,

these same adults who view artwork with a Stage II mindset often respond to student artwork at Stage I. By lowering their perception and analysis of the artwork, they are unknowingly devaluing the student's art experience. For example, Juno (2010) describes:

A common response from a parent about a finished artwork is simply 'Wow!' Parents often view the presentation of student work as if it magically appeared full grown like Athena born from the head of Zeus. They exclaim, 'Our kids are so talented!'....The awe-inspiring growth a child makes learning through the arts is often rendered invisible by the sheer glamour of the finished artwork. (pp. 57-8)

Instead of sizing up student artwork based on their value of realism and beauty, families immediately extend their unconditional love of their child directly onto the child's artwork. Although this affectionate response is a common parental behavior and the artwork is understood as an extension of their love for the child, the lowering of aesthetic response actually belittles the student's learning experience.

The use of Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) can assist in elevating family response and perception to student artwork. Even out of the art classroom, meaningful discussions can further understanding of student artwork. For example, Yenawine (1998) explains, "structured interaction...even in the absence of someone of greater capability, can produce growth in the realm of aesthetic cognition" (p. 8). Therefore, family members who utilize the information provided in Artsonia project descriptions, in addition to the student artwork, have the tools for meaningful artwork discussions. In addition, by using student artwork, rather than the artwork of professionals, families are motivated to expand their aesthetic development. As Yenawine (1998) states, "To start any discussion, and keep it going, there must be a topic that interests all

participants and gives them a sense that they have something worthwhile to contribute” (p. 8). As previously stated, many families have an inherit love for their children which often extends to student artwork. Therefore, using student artwork, in conjunction with Visual Thinking Strategies, might enhance aesthetic development within the family dynamic.

Although the creative capability of art education often seems to coincide with rigid standardized testing, Visual Thinking Strategies can be utilized to support Common Core Standards. For instance, Franco and Unrath (2014) proclaim visual art education has, “the opportunity to demonstrate that the capacities upheld by the CCSS-ELA are authentically invited by the unique content of art and can be richly developed through comprehensive, high-quality art education programs” (p. 29). By allowing student artwork to be viewed virtually on any device internet capable, Artsonia allows *any* teacher to encourage students to make sense of an image in either the classroom or at home.

Digital Visual Culture

Reviewing literature pertaining to twenty-first century technology is essential in understanding how Artsonia can enhance families in perceiving and responding to student artwork. Although considered a young teacher, technological developments define the researcher’s own elementary school experiences much differently than those she experiences as an educator in the Narragansett Elementary School. Although into the second decade of the twenty-first century, the use of technology is still considered a new paradigm in the field of art education. However, Sweeny (2014) suggests:

At a moment when public education is coming under fire, it may be relevant to look to technological models that are collaborative, dynamic, and socially engaged. This process

will inevitably push art education further from a traditional center that many find comfortable. (p. 5)

Despite being pushed out of comfort zones, art educators cannot afford to miss the opportunity to connect to students with the use of twenty-first technological tools.

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are only a small sampling of the popular social media sites that have become unanimous with the social development of the contemporary student. Although educational information can be accessed, shared, and utilized instantly without physical or geographical constraints, students need to be aware of disadvantages of technology. Brown and van Tryon (2010) state, “More than ever before teachers need to help students understand the potential scope of a near-instant action; pressing ‘send’creates a need to develop a micro literacy in terms of communicating sophisticated ideas with very few keystrokes” (p. 236). When introducing students to Artsonia, students frequently compared the website to Facebook. Although there are great similarities between the two social media sites, Artsonia requires students to monitor the activity of their artwork in conjunction with their parents to encourage conscious thought before posting comments or artwork. Parents are required to grant permission for student artwork to be visible on Artsonia. In addition, parents must approve any comments posted to their child’s artwork before the comments are visible to the artwork. By parents and teachers modeling proper social media conduct, the student is more likely to transfer the knowledge of Internet safety and conduct to their own social media pages.

Also as the student’s fan club registrar, the parent is able to invite fan club members with their child. Fan clubs are an innovative feature on Artsonia that encourage members, usually extended family members to view student artwork. As the family dynamic is becoming ever

busy, student artwork is not often a topic of conversation students have with family members living near or far away. Brown and van Tryon (2010) explain, “Because physical and geographical constraints are much less of a limitation than they once were, participation in activities outside of the local community becomes relatively easy” (p. 237). Artsonia allows grandparents who live down the street and cousins living across the country access to the same information as the parents at home. The extension of the art classroom, and therefore art experiences, increases in correlation with the rise of technology.

Since the art educator was diligent in posting artwork with project descriptions, discussion topics, and links to further viewer understanding of the project, family members had the tools to hold a meaningful conversation regarding the student artwork at their own convenience. As Weida (2007) explains online comments allow, “This interweaving of conversational time and space allows us to ask basic questions or go on...tangents without breaking the etiquette and flow of real-time conversations” (p. 186). By allowing access to student artwork online, families have the tools to respond to student artwork in a new way that meets the needs of the twenty-first century.

Conclusion

In studying how Artsonia might enhance Narragansett Elementary School families in perceiving and responding to student artwork, the researcher found a review of relevant literature imperative to provide a foundation for her qualitative study. Belleville (2014) proclaims, “Art is alive and well on the Internet, and so are our students” (p. 16). Smartphones and tablets strengthen the ability for students and their families to connect to twenty-first technology. Artsonia, as a social media site monitored by both teachers and parents, can be a tool for students

in becoming members of society who critically analyze and understand digital visual culture. In addition, reviewing both Visual Thinking Strategies and public perception of art education, the researcher was prepared to conduct action research encouraging families to respond to student artwork in a meaningful way.

Chapter Two has provided an academic background of relevant literature for the action research question: How might connecting Narragansett Elementary School families to Artsonia enhance their engagement in perceiving and responding to student artwork? Chapter Three will explain the methodology of the qualitative study.

Chapter Three

Design of Study

Artsonia is a powerful tool that goes beyond the scope of an online student art gallery. Since visitors are allowed to comment on artwork, join fan clubs, and read project descriptions, the researcher was able to collect data in a variety of ways. In collecting data for the qualitative research study, the researcher observed activity on Artsonia, monitored comments on Artsonia, surveyed parents, interviewed families regarding their participation and interactivity with Artsonia, and encouraged student-initiated conversations regarding Artsonia in the classroom. By using this method of triangulation for data collection, the researcher was able to gain insights on various perspectives within the study. For example, Maxwell (2013) explains, “Collecting information using multiple methods is common in qualitative research....to gain information about different *aspects* of the phenomena that you are studying” (p. 102). Data collected in this qualitative study was mostly from art experiences outside of the art classroom.

Research Methods

The researcher is the only art educator at the Narragansett Elementary School in Narragansett, Rhode Island. The Town of Narragansett is recognized as a wealthy, beach-side community which is home to a predominate upper-middle class population. However, there is a growing poverty level within Narragansett. The Narragansett School System is a small community with only three schools. Many of the young families relatives live within the community. Although music and theatre are central to the school system, the visual arts do not hold the same importance.

Although the researcher has previous experience with Artsonia as a tool for curriculum delivery, she wanted to know more about using Artsonia as a tool to connect families to student artwork. McNiff and Whitehead (2009) explain, “Seeing the action as a means of finding out something you did not know before” (p. 38). In addition to the researcher’s previous experience with Artsonia, she used the benefits of Artsonia’s digital format to strengthen data collection in the brief time period of the study. For example, Brown and van Tryon (2010) state, “The amount of time necessary to distribute information is different in the twenty-first century. One can...share information almost instantaneously” (p. 236). Since Artsonia allowed the researcher to upload student artwork in a seamless fashion, families had increased opportunities to interact with student artwork on Artsonia.

Data Collection

This qualitative research study is unique in the context of the source and collection of data. Student artwork was posted to Artsonia, an online art gallery. The artwork posted was created in the art classroom under the instruction and guidance of the researcher. As this qualitative research concerns posting and responding to artwork and not artwork creation, the researcher followed the Narragansett Elementary School art curriculum. However, data results were collected from the *response* to the student artwork posted on Artsonia predominately *outside* of the art classroom. Although most families interact with Artsonia within their households, Artsonia can be accessed virtually anywhere with the use of smartphones, tablets, or any device with internet access.

As the researcher uploaded student artwork to Artsonia on a daily basis, data from many of the data collection methods provided data on a constant basis. However, three family interviews were conducted in November 2014.

Artsonia Activity

Initially, the researcher collected data by monitoring interactivity on Artsonia. Even a cursory review of Artsonia provides a solid foundation for the various levels of family interactivity with the website. Even though the researcher posted all student artwork created in class, artwork is only visible with parental permission. However, even if parents sign the permission slip, they still need to establish an Artsonia account to receive updates on their child. Parents without accounts setup are likely to have little to no interactivity with Artsonia. On the other hand, parent accounts do not ensure Artsonia activity as they only promise receipt of Artsonia activity. When clicking on a single artwork, Artsonia displays the amount of views of the particular image. This data informs the researcher if anyone, likely parents, has viewed the artwork.

In addition to parent accounts and artwork views, Artsonia allows for parents to establish fan clubs for their child artist. The researcher was able to quickly use the student award feature to see which students have five or more fan club members. By narrowing down data collection to families with high activity, the researcher was able to focus her research. Weida (2007) suggests, “The Web is a virtual communal space we extend as we build groups....Web communities can both substitute for and/or extend real-world communities” (p. 186). Observing the varied levels of Artsonia interaction informs the researcher of who is using Artsonia to extend family communication.

Artsonia Comments

Visitors to Artsonia student galleries are welcomed to comment on student artwork. Even though Housen (2001) states, “we find the predominance of adult viewers at or near only Stage II” (p. 6) in references to Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), most parents regress to Stage I of VTS when responding to artwork created by their own children. When reviewing comments posted on Artsonia, the researcher determined who is interested in only professing their unconditional love for the child and who was interested in understanding the learning of the child.

Since the researcher was interested in enhancing how Narragansett Elementary School families perceive and respond to student artwork, she utilized the project description feature to visualize the learning within the art classroom. Housen (2001) explains, “We cannot take aesthetic progression for granted” (p. 6). Therefore, the researcher continued to use project descriptions to explain the steps in creation, provide discussion topics, and include web links to further understanding on the art activity. As described by Brown and van Tryon (2010), “A need to develop a micro literacy in terms of communicating sophisticated ideas with very few keystrokes” (p. 236). In the past, Artsonia has provided the researcher with experience in reviewing a hierarchy of comments when responding to student artwork.

Artsonia Survey

To gain further insight into how Artsonia affect the family dynamic of student artwork discussions, a survey was created in Google Forms. Using the Artsonia Art Room News feature, the survey was only emailed to parents with Artsonia accounts. The Art Room News feature allowed the survey to only get sent to people who were already using Artsonia and therefore

further validated data collected from this method. Questions asked in the survey were devised to provide qualitative information to the quantitative data collected from Artsonia activity and comment analysis (see Appendix A.6). Although anonymous, responses to the survey provided important feedback from individuals in the Narragansett Elementary School community.

Family Interviews

Although over ninety-five percent of Narragansett Elementary School students have permission to display their artwork on Artsonia, only a fraction of these families have a high level of participation visible to the researcher. After collecting data from Artsonia activity, including comments posted to Artsonia, the researcher can easily identify the families who frequently interact with Artsonia. As the researcher is interested in learning more about how Artsonia can enhance how families respond and perceive to student artwork, she believed interviewing families who seem to be interacting with Artsonia at a higher level of Visual Thinking Strategies, would best inform what the researcher should focus on in the future.

Based on the researcher's percentages of family involvement, three families were selected for family interviews to further inform the researcher on how Artsonia might be enhancing how they perceive and respond to student artwork. Since the researcher already determined these families to exhibit Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) at a higher level than other families, the researcher developed the interview questions, as seen in Table 2, to reinforce and remind families of ways to enhance discussions based on student artwork. Housen (2001) explains, "There is an active process of trying out strategies in order to build knowledge....which tells us that learning does not come in 'pre-packaged' answers. Effective learning is discovery built from firsthand understandings" (p. 7). Since the personal interaction between the researcher

and families welcomed input and further discussion, families strengthened their VTS skills while providing valuable data to the researcher. Therefore, the interview process had dual benefits to both the researcher and the interviewed families.

Table 2. Interview Questions

Interview Questions
In what ways, if any, did your family discuss student artwork?
What are your thoughts around using Artsonia as a tool in the art classroom?
To what extent do the project descriptions further guide your responses to the artwork?
Are there any ways in which the suggested discussion topics influence conversations regarding student artwork?
How has the online format of Artsonia impacted your ability to share artwork within the family network?
Do the project descriptions, discussion topics, and rubric sent home with the physical artwork, influence your response and/or perceptions to the student artwork?

Student-Initiated Discussions

As the researcher uploaded artwork to Artsonia and families digitally interacted with student artwork, students might initiate discussions based on their experiences. The researcher had introduced her students to Artsonia in class. Even though students were excited to see their artwork online, the researcher collected data from any students who began discussions based on how they interacted with Artsonia with their families. The researcher valued any data collected from the spontaneous conversations valuable information can be provided from students with both visible and invisible Artsonia activity.

Data Analysis

As data was collected, the researcher began to analyze results. However, after the researcher conducted the family interviews, she reviewed any and all collected data from each of the data collection methods. For the purposes of this action research, an analytic induction provided the researcher with the most benefit.

Last year, the researcher began to use Artsonia while teaching art at the Narragansett Pier Middle School in Narragansett, Rhode Island. With her experience using Artsonia, the researcher began the current school year with knowledge in utilizing Artsonia to full potential. Previously, a lot of time was spent learning things like uploading student artwork, monitoring fan clubs, and observing viewer activity. Additionally, the researcher's experience with the Narragansett families provided valuable information in how to best meet the needs of the community.

Artsonia is archival and although in a different school, the researcher can still view and study Artsonia data from the previous year. Since the researcher previously used Artsonia as a curriculum delivery method, she spent little focus on developing project descriptions and promoting family interactivity. Although, the students and curriculum are different, the researcher can assess the comments to Visual Thinking Standards (VTS) and compare to quality of comments in the current year.

Unit of Study

To strengthen the aesthetic experience for all students, especially those whose families do not participate in Artsonia, the researcher proposes a unit of study based on exhibition and reflection. Although Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) will play a strong role in the development

of discussion questions, the researcher proposes divergence on a few foundational elements of VTS. For example, Housen (2001) explains the VTS curriculum as:

The VTS is a student-centered curriculum design for the general classroom. It is comprised of developmentally appropriate questions, which prompt students to examine and discuss structured sequences of images. At each grade level, the classroom teacher facilitates all lessons. (p. 7)

Although VTS provided a valuable influence on the researcher's unit of study, she suggests the students themselves become facilitators when discussing artwork with their peers. Furthermore, rather than using known artworks, student artwork will be the topic of discussions. Since the researcher cannot directly instruct the students' families, she believes the students themselves should practice initiating discussion about their own artwork.

Artwork Exhibition

Artsonia's classroom mode feature allows the students to upload their own artwork images. To produce quality images of their artwork, the researcher must provide instruction on photographing artwork within the art classroom. Equipped with cameras and internet access, iPads offer a seamless uploading process and are the researcher's preferred method of technology in uploading student artwork to Artsonia. Furthermore, before the student artwork is officially posted to Artsonia, the researcher is required to approve the photograph. This approval requirement allows the researcher to review artwork documentation with any student necessary, providing a valuable formative assessment. The researcher believes students who personally upload their own artwork to Artsonia are more likely to become invested in Artsonia and promote their Artsonia portfolio amongst within their family dynamic.

Classroom-based Student Artwork Discussion

With the availability of technology within the Narragansett Elementary School, the researcher can instruct students in Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) to further the aesthetic experience while introducing students to Artsonia. Students will be broken up into small groups to discuss student artwork posted on Artsonia. Housen (2001) proposes a beginning question for VTS as, “What is going on in this picture?” (p. 7) as, “The...question allows the students to be active and successful at decoding the work of art” (p. 7). Additionally, students are becoming technologically versed by using Artsonia to respond to the artwork of their peers. As Housen believes, “By looking again, reconstructing, and developing new hypotheses, the student learns that aesthetic experience is open-ended, subject to multiple interpretations” (p. 8). The researcher encourages students discuss artwork of the same project they created but from a different class. Therefore, students are introduced to alternative perspectives while becoming excited about Artsonia. The researcher hopes the students transfer the positive energy of Artsonia and art to their families by promoting Artsonia at home.

Conclusion

Chapter Three has explained the methodology of the qualitative study including how data will be collected and analyzed. The next chapter will provide valuable information regarding the results of the study. Precise methods of how the data was analyzed will be discussed as well as significant trends evident in the data results.

Chapter Four

This study was conducted to qualify how Artsonia, an online student art gallery, might enhance Narragansett Elementary School families' perception and response to student artwork. Since student artwork is only visible after a parent provides consent, permission slips were sent home with every Narragansett Elementary School student at the beginning of the 2014-15 school year. Using artwork created from the Narragansett Elementary School art curriculum, a substantial amount of artwork was uploaded to Artsonia. In addition to uploading student artwork to Artsonia, project descriptions were written for each artwork exhibit and included suggested discussion topics to strengthen student artwork discussions. The focus of this study was to provide Narragansett Elementary School families with tools to promote meaningful student artwork discussions as well as expanding the audience of student artwork. Data was gathered from reviewing Artsonia activity, Artsonia comments, a parent survey, family interviews and student-initiated Artsonia discussions.

Significance of the Study

As the data collected in the study was provided from a variety of sources, the trends found in the data display solid and consistent results. For example, Maxwell (2013) explains, "This involves using different methods as a check on one another, seeing if methods with different strengths and limitations all support a single conclusion" (p. 102). Important data collected regarding Artsonia activity was not only quantifiable and therefore factual, it was collected by the Artsonia website. Once the artwork was uploaded, there was little the researcher could do to influence the data. Questions asked in both the survey and interviews were designed to overlap in concept to ease the transition and improve comprehension of the questions.

It is easy to understand why the researcher hypothesized Artsonia would be a successful tool in enhancing the perception and response to student artwork. However, this study provides unique insight into the family dynamic and previous art education pedagogies at the school. Although a cursory review of the Narragansett Elementary School Artsonia page would indicate the research question to indeed be supported, data provided from the survey, interviews, and student-initiated discussions provide unique insights outside of Artsonia analysis. The use of additional methods of data collection, in addition to the study of data found on the Artsonia site, deepens the meaning of the study's results.

In Chapter Two, a review of literature was conducted on the topics of Visual Thinking Strategies and digital visual culture. Data provided a hierarchy in the quality of response to student artwork as discussed by Abigail Housen (2001), "The predominance of adult viewers at or near only Stage II[*of Visual Thinking Strategies*]," (p. 6). However, despite the variety of comment quality, the digital format of Artsonia is consistent with research in the field of digital visual culture. As Brown and van Tryon (2010) explain, "Because physical and geographical constraints are much less of a limitation than they once were, participation in activities outside of the local community becomes relatively easy" (p. 237). Participants of the Narragansett Elementary School Artsonia page expand far beyond the students' immediate family dynamic.

Not only did the study answer the research question, the findings provide valuable information in the development of student artwork discussions for Narragansett Elementary School families. By providing the researcher with insight into family student artwork discussions, she can best inform and enhance her future practices. Despite previous experience with Artsonia, the researcher is new to understanding the family dynamics of the elementary

school age. Data from a variety of sources indicated families were interested in becoming more involved in discussing student artwork but were previously unaware of how to properly do so. The researcher is now aware of the need to provide artwork discussion education to entire families and not just her students.

Bias

As an art educator, the researcher has a bias towards the visual arts' integral value in a student's education. Discussion of student artwork can be a valuable experience in the development of students. Being aware of this bias during the course of the study, allowed the researcher to be sensitive to the art educational awareness of Narragansett Elementary School families. To best understand the needs of the community, the researcher used her understanding of student artwork discussions to meet families where they are in the spectrum of Visual Thinking Strategies.

Validity

To validate the data, multiple methods and sources were used. Maxwell (2013) explains, "This strategy reduces the risk that your conclusions will reflect only the biases of a specific method, and allows you to gain a more secure understanding of the issues you are investigating" (p. 102). All data findings were included to heighten the differences in the hierarchy of both the quantity and quality of student artwork discussions. As the researcher is more interested in developing her teaching practices than demonstrating success, it was important to highlight areas in need of further improvement.

Analysis of the Data

Artsonia Activity

Artsonia provides a plethora of ways to review activity of the school page as a whole as well as an individual student artist. First, to determine the number of parents who agree to have their child's artwork visible on Artsonia, the total number of students at Narragansett Elementary School in grades kindergarten thru fourth was subtracted by the number of students missing permission. However, parent permission for Artsonia provides little evidence parents interact with Artsonia. To further understand parent involvement to Artsonia, the number of students with created parent accounts was quantified. Parents who have granted permission to Artsonia but have not established a parent account are not likely to view their child's artwork on the Narragansett Elementary School Artsonia art gallery.

On the home page of the Narragansett Elementary School Artsonia art gallery, information regarding the site's activity is displayed, as seen in Figure 1. The number of fan club members was analyzed to determine how many people receive invitations to view student artwork and new comments posted about the student artwork. The number of comments was analyzed to determine the quantity of times a person communicated to the student artist using Artsonia as opposed to another form of communication such as email or verbal conversation. The quantity of these categories is put into both a state and national context by ranking the school with other schools using Artsonia. Also provided in Figure 1, is data for the total number of visitors to the Artsonia gallery. This number was used to analyze how many times the site was accessed.

Figure 1. Narragansett Elementary School Rankings



Figure 1. This image was taken off of the Narragansett Elementary School Artsonia Gallery on November 22, 2014. State rankings are in reference to the State of Rhode Island.

Artsonia awards student artists with ribbons to acknowledge high participation and interactivity regarding student portfolios. The Rave Review ribbon, is obtained when a student artist has a minimum of five comments on his or her portfolio. Although the Rave Review ribbon does not account for the quality of Artsonia comments, it does acknowledge students who have a high quantity of comments. Artsonia awards the Popular Artist ribbon to a student who has a minimum of five fan club members. As seen in Figure 2, the quantity of awarded ribbons is easily visible and allows for further inquiry. To correlate the amount of student artists receiving all ribbons and therefore high Artsonia activity in multiple categories, the quantity of Artsonia

Hall of Famers was analyzed. A student is entered into the Hall of Fame when all three ribbons (the third for three or more posted artworks). The quantity of awards was analyzed to determine how Narragansett Elementary School families were interacting with Artsonia as a whole.

Figure 2. **Narragansett Elementary School Student Awards**



Figure 2. This is taken from the home page of Narragansett Elementary School art educator and researcher, Kristen Bryce.

Artsonia Comments

In addition to the quantity of Artsonia comments, the quality of comments posted on Artsonia was analyzed. Each comment was read and placed in one of three categories including: comments professing only love for the artist, comments on the elements and principles of design to the specific artwork, and comments posted in efforts to extend the art learning experiences out of the classroom and promote intellectual discussion based on the student artwork. Furthermore, relationship of the commenter to the student artist was analyzed. Two categories of parents and extended family/friends were used to determine who was commenting on the artwork. Parents were considered to have a higher opportunity to discuss the student artwork directly with the student while the extended family and friends who commented on the artwork were considered less likely to have the opportunity to talk to the student in person.

Artsonia Survey

Google Forms was used to create a survey sent to Narragansett Elementary School parents via the Art Room Newsletters feature on Artsonia. Artsonia sent the newsletter, containing the link to the survey, to all parents with emails registered with Artsonia. The quantity of responses was used to analyze how many parents read the newsletter and desire to respond to their Artsonia experiences. The data yielded from the survey was analyzed for patterns among all responders to a specific question and laterally of all questions answered by a single person. In addition the ratio of responses to the short response question and total number of responders was used to determine the quantity of people who felt strongly in getting their opinion heard. However, it should be noted that the survey only yielded thirty-eight responses. Each question's responses were analyzed individually to determine trends on a specific aspect of Artsonia and student artwork discussions and compared to data collected on a similar topic from another source. Comments in the final question made the data more personalized.

Family Interviews

In attempting to obtain further insight on student artwork discussions and the possible impact of artwork within the family dynamic, the researcher conducted four interviews within three families. In each of the four interviews, the researcher emailed the interview questions to the family member who later emailed responses to the questions back to the researcher. The candidates for these interviews were selected based on their high Artsonia activity. Data collected from these interviews was compared to data collected from other sources. Interview responses that supported data collected from other sources personified the data. Responses provided an

opportunity for the researcher to determine which stage of Visual Thinking Strategies the families were both currently and before the use of Artsonia.

Student-Initiated Discussions

Since the beginning of the school year, the researcher has been slowly introducing her students to Artsonia. Some students already had experience with the Artsonia, as they have older siblings who used it at the Narragansett Pier Middle School in previous years while the researcher was working there. The researcher documented numerous verbal comments and discussions initiated by students regarding Artsonia. Context was extremely imperative in analyzing the value of this data. Expression of the student was analyzed as well as the content and timing of the discussions to determine how Artsonia has influenced how their families respond to their artwork.

Results

The research question for this study was: How might connecting Narragansett Elementary School families to Artsonia enhance their engagement in perceiving and responding to student artwork? Data collected from the study significantly supports that Artsonia does enhance the perception and response of student artwork among Narragansett Elementary School families on a variety of levels. In addition to an increase in the quantity and quality of student artwork discussions since the implementation of Artsonia, the digital format of Artsonia allows the student artwork to be viewable to a wider audience. Furthermore, many students demonstrate an increase in pride as well as excitement towards creating artwork.

Enhanced Perception and Response to Student Artwork

Artsonia as an alternative viewing platform.

Of the four hundred fifty students in grades kindergarten thru fourth, only five and a half percent are missing parent permission, and therefore do not have artwork displayed on Artsonia. The researcher believes the lack of parent permission is not caused by disdain for Artsonia, but rather a lack of effort in returning the permission slip. However, there is one family who has denied permission to post their child's artwork on Artsonia. Upon meeting the father at open house, it was implied he denied permission because he was under the assumption photographs of his daughter, and not her artwork would be posted online. Unfortunately, he did not understand the concept when explained and never granted permission. Among the four hundred twenty-five students who have parent permission to display their artwork on Artsonia, two hundred and ninety-three, or sixty-five percent, of them have a parent account created. The researcher believes the one hundred thirty-two students who do not have a parent account established, do not visit the Narragansett Elementary School Artsonia art gallery.

Artsonia awards student artists with ribbons to acknowledge high participation and interactivity regarding student portfolios. The thirty-six Narragansett Elementary School students who have received the Popular Artist ribbon have at least five members in their fan club. The Rave Review ribbon, awarded to eighteen Narragansett Elementary School students, is obtained when a student artist has a minimum of five comments on his or her portfolio. In addition, twelve students artists earned all three ribbons (the third for three or more posted artworks), entering them into the Hall of Fame. The researcher would like to note she has only uploaded three or more artworks to students in grades kindergarten thru second. Therefore, the entire third and

Figure 3. Student Artwork on Artsonia



From exhibit "**Root Vegetable Gardens**"
by Arianna2840 (Art ID #33272080)
from [Narragansett Elementary](#)— grade 2
United States

[next artwork](#)

[Share](#) [Tweet](#) [Pin It](#) 4 artwork views

Arianna2840's Portfolio [view all art](#) [view slideshow](#)

Narragansett Elementary (4 artworks) [view slideshow](#)



Second grade artists planted these delicious root vegetable gardens. In addition to brainstorming food that grows underground, we also go to see real root vegetables to study their shape, size, and color. A ground line was drawn to separate the sky from the dirt. Once the artists filled their gardens, they outlined in oil pastel. Finally, paint was used to bring each garden to life!

Questions to ask your artist:

- Tell me what is growing in your garden.
- What did you learn when making your garden?
- How does a turnip look different than a carrot?
- Why was it important to draw where the ground meets the sky?
- What is your favorite part of your root vegetable painting? Why?

Figure 3. This figure provides an example of how the project descriptions and guiding questions are displayed with the student artwork on Artsonia.

fourth grade are not currently eligible for the Portfolio Award Ribbon or the Hall of Fame.

Finally, the Narragansett Elementary School Arstonia art gallery has had four thousand, two hundred eighty-two visitors since the beginning of the 2014-15 school year.

Artsonia allows student artwork to be available on an alternative viewing platform. In addition to viewing the original artwork, Artsonia allows the artwork to be viewed digitally on any device able to connect to the Internet. Appendix B demonstrates seventy-six percent of parents who responded to the Artsonia survey, view the artwork more than once. Although, the project descriptions, including suggested questions to ask the student artists, is sent home with the original artwork, the data stated above indicates the specific use of Artsonia significantly enhances how families respond and perceive to student artwork. Figure 3 provides an example of how the project descriptions and guiding questions are displayed with student artwork on Artsonia.

Student artwork viewable to a wider audience.

Despite any regards to quality of student artwork discussions, Artsonia allows student artwork to be accessible to a much wider audience than without the digital platform available. There are two hundred ninety-three Narragansett Elementary School students with parent accounts. However, as indicated in Figure 1, there are six hundred thirty-three fan club members. This data indicates that around half of the people interacting with Artsonia are not immediate family members of students.

Of the two hundred eighty-four comments on the Narragansett Elementary School Artsonia art gallery, approximately seventy comments are from parents while the rest of over two hundred were posted by extended family members and friends. A mother of a first grade student

explains in response to the online formate of Artsonia, “It’s been great, considering the geographic spread of the entire family. Ethan has been able to share his artwork with his godfather in Texas as well as family in Westerly, Connecticut, Florida, etc” (C. Smith, Personal Communication, November 2014). The researcher believes a majority of the fan club members who are not the students’ parents, would not have otherwise seen the student artwork and therefore not had the opportunity to interact with the students regarding their artwork.

Increased frequency in student artwork discussions.

Data collected indicates Narragansett Elementary School families have increased their frequency of student artwork discussions. Although survey results in Appendix B indicate only twenty-one percent of Narragansett Elementary School families never discussed student artwork, it should be noted the opportunities to discuss student artwork were usually few and far between. For example, one father explains, “We talk about it [art] almost daily...It [Artsonia, project descriptions, and discussion topics] certainly makes us speak about it more. Last year the artwork did not come home in a timely fashion and without any background there was not much to ask except why did you make that” (R. Ansaldi, Personal Communication, November 2014). Therefore, when analyzing the data regarding families who previously discussed student artwork, it is important to consider the frequency of opportunities available before the 2014-15 school year.

Increased quality in student artwork discussions.

Data collected indicates a significant qualitative increase of student artwork discussions. When asked, Appendix B demonstrates eighty-two percent of parents responded Artsonia has strengthened both the frequency and quality of student art discussions within their family. The

survey further indicates the project descriptions, including the “questions to ask your artist” section, provide significant value in this qualitative progression. To further personalize the data yielded from the survey, a mother of a kindergarten student explains:

It [project descriptions] helps us ask him the ‘right’ questions and we love to hear how he remembers what was taught or how he describes the process. My favorite so far was the pumpkin face. When I asked about what the pumpkin was feeling he said: ‘sad because he wants to go outside back in the patch.’ I wouldn’t have known to ask its feelings if it weren’t for the teacher’s comments about the project.... When Myles came home w/ artwork from Preschool (w/o Artsonia) we would ask him a few questions about how he made it, etc. or what it was (if it wasn’t clear to us). However, knowing the process or the artist they were replicating, helps us ask great questions. So many details that we wouldn’t know otherwise. (N. Harding, Personal Communication, November 2014)

Data collected in the study indicates parents of Narragansett Elementary School students do not know the meaning of school age artwork. Therefore, even the families who indicated they frequently discussed student artwork, often only asked simple questions as they did not know the process of instruction behind the artwork. Additionally, Gary Mazzie, grandfather of a first and third grader, describes the project descriptions, “Help a lot since grade school art is often difficult to understand” (G. Mazzie, Personal Communication, November 2014). This is yet another example of how Artsonia’s strength reaches beyond a mere art gallery and actually begin to educate a family on the Narragansett Elementary School art education program.

High quality of Artsonia comments.

The Narragansett Elementary School Artsonia art gallery has generated two hundred eighty-four comments on artwork posted this year. This high number of comments is by far the most in the State of Rhode Island with the second place school only at one hundred eight comments.

Approximately one hundred sixty of the two hundred eighty-four comments were restricted to baseless but loving statements such as the comments found in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Narragansett Elementary School Artsonia Comments



Awesome work Buddy!!! Love Momma

-- Nikki

artwork by [Tagen19](#)



I love your pumpkin best pumpkin in the world.

-- Nonna

artwork by [Myles1181](#)



I love your work Izzy! Keep up the good work! Love you, Mom

artwork by [Isabella10905](#)

Figure 4. The above three comments show a sampling of the comments found on the Narragansett Elementary School Artsonia gallery that only profess love for the artist.

However, the research considers about one hundred twenty comments were posted in efforts to extend the art learning experience out of the classroom and promote intellectual

discussion based on the student artwork. In addition, many of the one hundred twenty high level comments were influenced by the project descriptions, including suggested discussion topics, posted by the research in conjunction with the student artwork.

As read in a comment in Figure 5, Sean8442's uncle comment indicates interest in the artwork beyond mere approval when he asks the artist a few questions specific to the artwork, including one question that was suggested in the project description. The particular unit for Sean8442's artwork began with a lesson on self-portraiture and transitioned into a super hero self-portrait project. Students were prompted to use their new self-portrait knowledge and add super hero characteristics to visualize themselves as a super hero. In this comment, the uncle has most likely read the provided project description, including suggested questions, to conduct a student artwork discussion with his nephew. In addition to professing love towards Sean8442, the uncle furthered the art educational experience for the student by asking questions about Sean8442's creative decision making. Asking the student artists meaningful questions was just one way fan club members used Artsonia to enhance the perception of student art discussions.

Instead of directly asking the student a question, other fan club members posted comments on artwork that used vocabulary from the project description. For example, Figure 5 shows how Sammy reinforced Cooper3207's art learning experiences by using the word camouflage. In this artwork, students were encouraged to use either warm or cool colors, to camouflage their chameleon. Thanks to Sammy's comment, Cooper 3207 was reminded of the project's objective and the meaning of an important vocabulary word. Figures 4 and 5 show just a sampling of the Artsonia comments that demonstrate enhanced perception of the student artwork and initiation of student artwork discussions.

Figure 5. Narragansett Elementary School Artsonia Comments



Hello Seany, That's a very cool super hero. I'm curious what types of powers he has? Is he more powerful than Spiderman? Looking forward to more drawings buddy!

-Uncle Mike
-- Uncle Mike

artwork by [Sean8442](#)



Daniel, I really like how your orange bird contrasts with its blue cage! It's really cool! Love, Mom

artwork by [Daniel19050](#)



Beautiful shading, Riley! Like the expression too... That's how I feel today.

-- Cheryl

artwork by [Riley9372](#)



He is so camouflaged I can't even see him! Way to go Coop. This is a really cool piece of art.

-- Sammy

artwork by [Cooper3207](#)



This is beautiful, Katie! I am not surprised that you picked blue!!!! I love how the shade of blue slowly changes from scoop to scoop! Now I want an ice cream cone!!!! YUM! Keep up the great work in art!!!! Love, Mom

-- Mom

artwork by [Kathryn2569](#)

Figure 5. The above three comments show a sampling of the comments found on the Narragansett Elementary School Artsonia which demonstrate enhanced perception and response to student artwork.

Benefits to Student Experience Within the Art Classroom

Since the beginning of the school year, the researcher has been slowly introducing her students to Artsonia. Some students already had experience with the Artsonia as they have older siblings who used it at the Narragansett Pier Middle School in previous years while the researcher was working there. The researcher documented numerous verbal comments and discussions initiated by students regarding Artsonia. Although, only a minor population of students initiated these discussions without prompting by the researcher, the researcher believes these notes to provide valuable data in the qualitative study. The students who discussed Artsonia expressed pride and excitement regarding the artwork they created, anticipated family student art discussions, and expressed joy in interacting with Artsonia. Table 3 lists a number of significant student-initiated Artsonia discussions. For example, when a first grade girl exclaimed, “I have to make this beautiful. My whole family is going to see it” (student, Personal Communication, September 2014), she was smiling and seemingly excited in anticipation of a family art discussion.

Student pride and confidence were also noticed by parents. For instance, kindergarten mother describes, “It [Artsonia] really makes Myles feel SO proud of his work because it allows his relatives to view it online & he can hear their positive comments about each piece” (N. Harding, Personal Communication, November 2014). By discussing artwork at home, the student learning opportunities are significantly increased and continue the learning continuum outside of the art classroom. In turn, the student is better prepared for future success for art learning. Artsonia allows the student, art educator, and family to work as a cohesive unit in promoting meaningful student artwork discussions.

Table 3. Student-Initiated Artsonia Discussions

Student Quote	Student Information	Context
I have to make this beautiful. My whole family is going to see it!	First grade girl	Stated to researcher while gathering her materials after instruction.
My mommy can watch what I do in art class! It's so cool!	Kindergarten girl	Announced at the very beginning of the class following the student's first posted artwork
You forgot about my pumpkin. I want to see it on the computer with my parents!	Kindergarten girl	Mentioned during work time of the class after the project was created. (student forgot her name)
Did you see what my dad said about my ice cream cone?	Third grade boy	Mentioned towards the end of class following his first posted artwork
My parents never go on Artsonia!	First grade boy	Announced to class when researcher was handing out Artsonia Hall of Fame awards. Student was visibly upset.
My mom told me to draw a skull in art today so she can put it on a shirt....I have to make it here so it can go on the website.	Second grade boy	Stated as student entered the art classroom

Table 2. The above chart provides student-initiated Artsonia discussions as well as appropriate context.

Conclusion

Chapter Four has explained how the data from the study was analyzed. Artsonia activity, including comments, a parent survey, family interviews, and student-initiated discussions were all sources that provided solid and consistent data to strengthen the understanding of the study. Chapter Five will elaborate how the study will inform the researcher's future use of Artsonia. Recommendations will be made future research including how Artsonia can support Common Core Standards, interdisciplinary learning, and art education advocacy.

Chapter Five

Introducing the Narragansett Elementary School community to Artsonia provided the necessary tools for families to enhance their response and perception to student artwork. The study has not only impacted the researcher's view on student artwork discussions within the family dynamic, but has also informed her teaching practices. A unit of study was developed to strengthen students' digital literacy, in addition to improving the quality of student artwork discussions. Other recommendations for further research using Artsonia for interdisciplinary learning, support for Common Core Standards, and art education advocacy will be discussed in Chapter Five.

Discussion

Personal Impact of Study

This study has provided an interesting insight into the family dynamic of Narragansett Elementary School families. When writing project descriptions, including guiding questions, the researcher did not expect many families to find this information valuable. Data collected from the Artsonia survey indicated ninety-seven percent of parents read the project descriptions at least sometimes (see Appendix B). An example of this was a grandfather of two boys in grades one and three stated that the project descriptions, "Give a context to the Artwork and make it easier for us to understand and appreciate" (G. Mazzie, Personal Communication, November 2014). Data collected in the study empowers the researcher to continue to welcome the families of her students into the process of learning. Data indicated parents were interested in becoming active participants in their child's art education, but they were never provided with the tools to properly facilitate student artwork discussions.

Impact on Practice

This classroom-based qualitative study inspired a unit adapting Visual Thinking Strategies with the use of Artsonia. By connecting the questioning strategies of Visual Thinking Strategies to the digital availability of student artwork displayed on Artsonia, students further develop their abilities in discussing student artwork. In elementary school, students are beginning to dabble with technology. By middle school years, many students will be inseparable from technological communication via devices such as smartphones and tablets. Therefore, introducing students to the use of technology *before* it becomes an integral part of their lives, enhances students ability to make sound decisions and become digitally literate. Technology professors Brown and van Tryon (2010) explain:

Something that is very different about twenty-first-century life, however is the amount of information available to individuals and their ability to share that information via the Internet. . . . More than ever before teachers need to help students understand the potential scope of a near-instant action; pressing ‘send’ may have consequences that last for years. (p. 236)

By allowing students to photograph their own artwork and upload to Artsonia, art educators are not only teaching students how to properly use a camera within a device such as an iPad, they are also providing a positive foundation for digital interaction.

Instructing students how to discuss visual images as well as the use of technology and digital literacy, has become imperative in the twenty-first century. In the early stages of Visual Thinking Strategies, artwork discussions focus on story telling and concrete observations. Visual Thinking Strategy developer Abigail Housen (2001) explains, “Stage 1 is that the viewer quickly

and randomly scans the artwork, has an association, and immediately begins storytelling” (p. 8). However, by using Artsonia as a source of artwork images for student discussions, students view the artwork with previous knowledge. Since the students have created artwork under similar motivation, a foundation of information is already available to them. The students can use this information to enhance their perception and response to the student artwork they are viewing. This lesson, within the unit, provides students with the tools to discuss student artwork in a sophisticated manner. Hopefully, these skills will transfer to discussions of the visual world they live in.

Recommendations

Even though this study has provided a valuable foundation of information of how Artsonia has enhanced the perception and response to student artwork, the study could have been improved with a few changes. Prior research on how Narragansett Elementary School families discuss student artwork *before* introducing them to Artsonia would have provided unbiased data on student artwork discussions. Having students upload artwork during the study could have impacted the data in a positive way. As one parent indicated in a survey response available in Appendix B, “It’s a great way to share my kids artwork with grandparents, etc....My kids aren’t that interested in it though. They prefer to show me the actual finished art when they bring it home.” By the end of the study, after over three months after Artsonia introduction, some students were still unfamiliar with the site. Based on her previous experience in the Narragansett School District, the researcher anticipated the ability of facilitating students upload their own artwork to Artsonia during the study. However, minimal access to the necessary technology limited the ability to do so.

The wide-spread positive response from the Narragansett Elementary School community of Artsonia elicits further research. Even though the field of education is highly focused on standardized testing and Common Core Standards, additional studies with Artsonia might indicate Artsonia's abilities to transcend content boundaries. Franco and Unrather (2014) explain, "the opportunity to demonstrate that the capacities upheld by the CCSS-ELA are authentically invited by the unique content of art and can be richly developed through comprehensive, high-quality art education programs" (p. 29). Using Artsonia as a digital source of images, research could be conducted in connecting a variety of contents to art. For example, Artsonia allows students to write and upload artist statements. A study could be conducted on using student artwork images on Artsonia to inform and motivate students on meeting Common Core Standards in writing. The artist statements would then become visible next to the student artwork and could further strengthen student artwork discussions within the family dynamic.

Even though Artsonia boasts itself as the largest online student art gallery (Brown and van Tryon, 2010, p. 237), many art teachers do not participate with the site. Research, data, and results of this study could be used to introduce art educators to the benefits of Artsonia. For this study, the entire Narragansett Elementary School student body, of four hundred fifty students, were invited to participate and the almost fifteen hundred student artworks uploaded to Artsonia by the researcher. However, it should be noted art educators can interact with Artsonia in a way that best fits their schedule and comfort level. Student participation could be limited to a single grade level or class, while availability to technology such as iPads or digital cameras can allow for students to upload their own artwork. Fellow art educators should consider this research as they either continue to use Artsonia or begin to dabble with the site.

Conclusion

Advice to the Field of Art Education

The current paradigms of education do not often support the field of art education. Without proper advocacy, the field of art education can be confusing or even seen as frivolous to a school community. This lack of knowledge of the value of art education cultivates a misunderstanding or perception of learning in the art classroom. Reflecting on how Artsonia has enhanced her understanding of the learning process in the art classroom, the mother of girls in first and third grade exclaims:

I love it completely and think it is absolutely fabulous!!! Thank you so much for taking the time to do this. I truly had no idea what my girls did in art class prior to you starting with them. I now have a greater appreciation and understanding of the importance of my children receiving art instruction. (S. Meyer, Personal Communication, November 2014)

It is imperative that the field of art education meets society at their level of understanding of art and elevate their perception of art education to reflect the value of teaching art to students.

Advice to Art Teachers

As ambassadors to the field of art education, it is the responsibility of art teachers to advocate for art education within their school community. The strongest foundation for support of art education begins at making believers out of the parents. A lengthy study is not required to learn more about the needs of your students' families. Facilitating open communication between your students' families and your classroom follow best teaching practices. Using technology to enhance family interaction with the art room can be a way to encourage communication and understanding the value of art education. Art teachers who already use Artsonia should think

about taking advantage of all of the available features and data Artsonia provides. By asking, “How can Artsonia enhance the art educational experience of my students,” the art educator is strengthening their own practices while improving student learning. For art educators unfamiliar with Artsonia, set a few moments aside to experience Artsonia and consider how the site can engage the school community of students, families, colleagues, and even administration.

Appendix A

Appendix A.1 Unit of Study

Component	Explanation
Name:	Ms. Kristen Bryce
Descriptive title for the unit:	Artsonia Thinking Strategies
Goals:	<p>Students should...</p> <p>Understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • valuable artwork discussions go beyond mere approval/disapproval of artwork (RIVAS Standard: 2 Perception) <p>Know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to photograph artwork(RIVAS Standard: 4 Tools) • Artsonia is an online student art gallery (RIVAS Standard: 3 Context) <p>Be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use iPads to photograph and upload artwork (RIVAS Standard: 4 Tools) • hold a meaningful student artwork discussion (RIVAS Standard: 2 Perception)

<p>Instructional Concepts:</p>	<p>In elementary school, students are learning how to do a variety of things, including understanding the world around them. By encouraging student artwork discussions, students are learning how to not only interpret but also discuss their visual surroundings in a meaningful way. Philip Yenawine (1998) discusses Visual Thinking Strategies as a way to, “help beginning viewers develop a rapport with art and increase their aesthetic understanding” (para. 2).</p> <p>In addition to developing student skills in artwork discussions, this unit promotes digital literacy. As digital literacy is a Narragansett School System goal, specifically at the Narragansett Elementary School, many classrooms use technology on a weekly basis. Therefore, students and families are currently being educated in digital literacy. By using Artsonia, a digital tool, families are able to connect to student artwork in a meaningful way.</p>
<p>Lessons:</p>	<p>Lesson 1: Students will be introduced to the Artsonia Classroom Mode which allows for them to upload their own artwork. The teacher will use a projector to demonstrate each step of the upload process as well as provide photography tips.</p> <p>Lesson 2: With a list of suggested discussion questions, students will be separated into small groups to discuss student artwork. Students will select artworks from students in other classes and apply Visual Thinking Strategy techniques for their discussion.</p>
<p>Materials:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iPads • student artwork • Artsonia Classroom Mode directions • Student Artwork discussion questions • pencils • projector

Assessment:	<p>Students will be assessed formatively during the artwork upload process. After students edit their artwork photo, they must “send to teacher.” The teacher must approve the photograph before it is posted to Artsonia. The teacher can either upload a successful photograph, or “send back” a photograph to a student.</p> <p>During the student artwork discussion, the teacher will walk around the room with a rubric as a summative assessment. The rubric will grade students on their level of artwork discussions according to Visual Thinking Strategy stages.</p>
References:	Yenawine, P. (1998). Visual art and student-centered discussions. <i>Theory into Practice</i> , 37(4), 314-321.

Appendix A.2 Interview with Nicole Harding

Kristen Bryce: In what ways, if any, did your family discuss student artwork before Artsonia?

Nicole Harding: When Myles would bring home his artwork, we would look at it w/him & ask him questions about it if we weren't sure what it was, etc. And ask what he used to create the art.

KB: What are your thoughts around using Artsonia as a tool in the art classroom?

NH: It really makes Myles feel SO proud of his work because it allows his relatives to view it online & he can hear their positive comments about each piece. Also, I love how it explains what the theme is for each piece. It really gives quite a story behind his art & helps us to learn about different artists.

KB: To what extent do the project descriptions further guide your responses to the artwork?

NH: It helps us to ask him the “right” questions & we love to hear how he remembers what he was taught or how he describes the process. My favorite so far was the pumpkin face. When I asked about what the pumpkin was feeling he said: “sad because he wants to go outside back in the patch.” I wouldn't have known to ask its feelings if it weren't for the teacher's comments about the project.

KB: Are there any ways in which the suggested discussion topics, in the project descriptions, influence conversations regarding student artwork?

NH: Yes, please see response to #3. When Myles came home w/ artwork from Preschool (w/o Artsonia) we would ask him a few questions about how he made it, etc. or what it was (if it wasn't clear to us). However, knowing the process or the artist they were replicating, helps us ask great questions. So many details that we wouldn't know otherwise.

KB: How has the online format of Artsonia impacted your ability to share artwork within the family network?

NH: We were never able to share artwork electronically before. We have a lot of his art displayed at home for family to see when they visit or we would send family members a couple of pieces (that I could part withsmile) in the mail. Otherwise, those members whom we don't see often, never got to see his artwork before.

KB: Do the project descriptions, discussion topics, and rubric sent home with the physical artwork, influence your response and/or perceptions to the student artwork?

NH: Absolutely, because then I can see how well Myles is following directions, or how he interprets something.

KB: What is your favorite feature on Artsonia? Why?

NH: The suggested questions to ask (please see responses above for “why”) And being able to order gifts w/ his artwork on them.

Appendix A.3 Interview with Christine Smith

Kristen Bryce: In what ways, if any, did your family discuss student artwork before Artsonia?

Christine Smith: We only discussed it when it was brought home. The discussion never went much further than what a good job Ethan did.

KB: What are your thoughts around using Artsonia as a tool in the art classroom?

CS: It is great as a display tool. It provides the student with more feedback than just his/her parents. It seems it would increase self confidence and pride in work.

KB: To what extent do the project descriptions further guide your responses to the artwork?

CS: They prompt us to ask questions regarding theme, process etc. It helps the dialog between parent/family member and student.

KB: Are there any ways in which the suggested discussion topics, in the project descriptions, influence conversations regarding student artwork?

CS: See question 3

KB: How has the online format of Artsonia impacted your ability to share artwork within the family network?

CS: It's been great, considering the geographic spread of the entire family. Ethan has been able to share his artwork with his godfather in Texas as well as family in Westerly, Connecticut, Florida, etc.

KB: Do the project descriptions, discussion topics, and rubric sent home with the physical artwork, influence your response and/or perceptions to the student artwork?

CS: Yes, in that they provide a prompt as to what the instruction was from the art teacher to the student so we can elaborate and/or reinforce that with the student.

KB: What is your favorite feature on Artsonia? Why?

CS: It is difficult to pick just one favorite feature. One is, being able to see his artwork as he completes it. Another is being able to provide feedback in a public forum, as I love watching him read all the comments he receives and the pride I see on his face. It is also so nice to be able to share his artwork with so many of our friends and family.

KB: Are there any comments or concerns you would like to share in regards to how connecting to Artsonia enhances your engagement in perceiving and responding to student artwork?

CS: See number 7

Appendix A.4 Interview with Rich Ansaldi

Kristen Bryce: In what ways, if any, did your family discuss student artwork before Artsonia?

Rich Ansaldi: The boys create a lot of art at home. We talk about it almost daily as they have notebooks that they are supposed to do their work in. They also use technology to look up ideas online and then try and replicate them. They are constantly asking for feedback on their work.

KB: What are your thoughts around using Artsonia as a tool in the art classroom?

RA: I am not sure how it is used in the classroom other than the fact that we have a quicker way to access what they are working on. It is also much easier to share with family.

KB: To what extent do the project descriptions further guide your responses to the artwork?

RA: It can be used to ask the kids specific questions about what they are working on and why they did a particular thing in their work.

KB: Are there any ways in which the suggested discussion topics, in the project descriptions, influence conversations regarding student artwork?

RA: Same as above.

KB: How has the online format of Artsonia impacted your ability to share artwork within the family network?

RA: Makes it much easier.

KB: Do the project descriptions, discussion topics, and rubric sent home with the physical artwork, influence your response and/or perceptions to the student artwork?

RA: It certainly makes us speak about it more. Last year the art work did not come home in a timely fashion and without any background there was not much to ask except why did you make that.

KB: What is your favorite feature on Artsonia? Why?

RA: Comments. Kids love the fact that they get instant feedback on their work. Second favorite would be that we can get something made with the artwork. We plan on getting something made for each of them for Christmas as we know they will be excited to have it.

KB: Are there any comments or concerns you would like to share in regards to how connecting to Artsonia enhances your engagement in perceiving and responding to student artwork?

RA: Without the program there would be little interaction with friends and family as they may not ever see the work.

Appendix A.5 Interview with Gary Mazzie

Kristen Bryce: In what ways, if any, did your family discuss student artwork before Artsonia?

Gary Mazzie: We often received artwork for our refrigerator from Braden & Cooper. At their house we frequently saw and commented on their school artwork.

KB: What are your thoughts around using Artsonia as a tool in the art classroom?

GM: From my standpoint it is too commercial but I like the concept and can understand why it would be useful to an Art teacher.

KB: To what extent do the project descriptions further guide your responses to the artwork?

GM: They help a lot since grade school Art is often difficult to understand.

KB: Are there any ways in which the suggested discussion topics, in the project descriptions, influence conversations regarding student artwork?

GM: Yes, the topics help to give context to the Artwork and allow us to interact with our grandchildren in a specific way that is relevant to them.

KB: How has the online format of Artsonia impacted your ability to share artwork within the family network?

GM: It brings an entire family together in a positive way.

KB: Do the project descriptions, discussion topics, and rubric sent home with the physical artwork, influence your response and/or perceptions to the student artwork?

GM: Yes, they give a context to the Artwork and make it easier for us to understand and appreciate.

KB: What is your favorite feature on Artsonia? Why?

GM: I like the ability to register comments. This creates an opportunity to discuss the Artwork with our grandchildren.

KB: Are there any comments or concerns you would like to share in regards to how connecting to Artsonia enhances your engagement in perceiving and responding to student artwork?

GM: Just the above

Appendix A.6 Artsonia Survey Questions

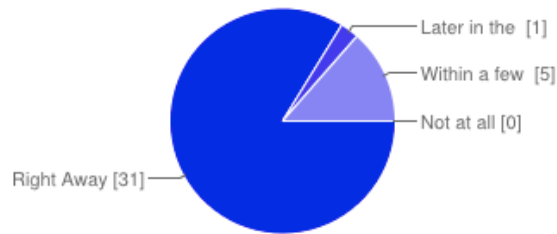
Survey Questions
<p>When your child has a new artwork posted, do you usually view the artwork:</p> <p>right away later in the day within a few days never</p>
<p>On average, how many times do you view a single artwork?</p> <p>Once I usually view the artwork a few times I frequently view the same artwork</p>
<p>In addition to viewing my own child's artwork, I usually view other students' artwork of the same project:</p> <p>Never Sometimes Always</p>
<p>How frequently do you read the project descriptions posted with the artwork?</p> <p>Never Sometimes Always</p>
<p>How frequently do you use the "questions to ask your artist," within the project descriptions, to discuss artwork with your child?</p> <p>Never Sometimes Always</p>
<p>How frequently do you post a comment to Artsonia about your child's artwork?</p> <p>Never Occasionally Always</p>
<p>When approving Artsonia comments on your child's artwork, do you share the comments with your child?</p> <p>Never Sometimes Always</p>

Survey Questions
<p>Before Artsonia, my family discussed student artwork:</p> <p>Never Sometimes Regularly</p>
<p>In regards to frequency and quality, I feel Artsonia has _____ student art discussions within my family.</p> <p>strengthened weakened not affected</p>
<p>In regards to your child's fan club, have you:</p> <p>not yet set up a fan club invited a few family/friends to join invited all appropriate people to join</p>
<p>How has Artsonia enhanced your understanding of the learning process in the art classroom?</p> <p>Not at all Somewhat Significantly</p>
<p>If provided instructions, would you be willing to assist your child in point artist statements to Artsonia at home?</p> <p>No Sometimes Yes</p>
<p>Please share any comments you have in regards to Artsonia.</p>

Appendix B Artsonia Survey Results

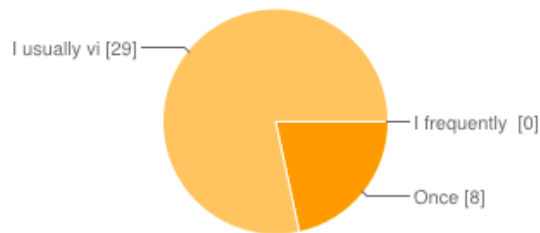
Summary

When your child has a new artwork posted, do you usually view the artwork:



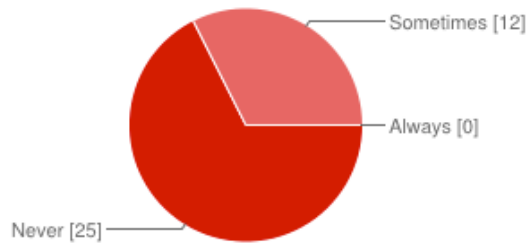
Right Away	31	82%
Later in the day	1	3%
Within a few days	5	13%
Not at all	0	0%

On average, how many times do you view a single artwork?



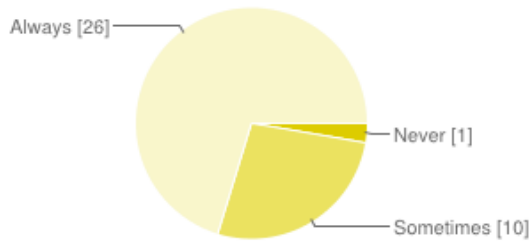
Once	8	21%
I usually view the artwork a few times	29	76%
I frequently view the same artwork	0	0%

In addition to viewing my own child's artwork, I usually view other students' artwork of the same project:



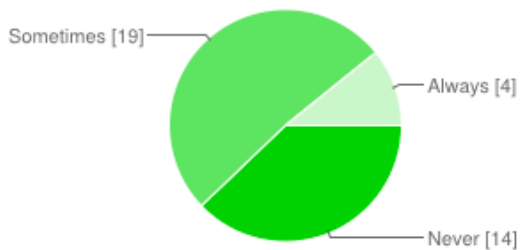
Never	25	66%
Sometimes	12	32%
Always	0	0%

How frequently do you read the project descriptions posted with the artwork?



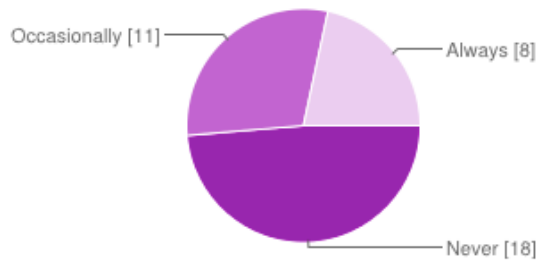
Never	1	3%
Sometimes	10	26%
Always	26	68%

How frequently do you use the "questions to ask your artist," within the project descriptions, to discuss the artwork with your child?



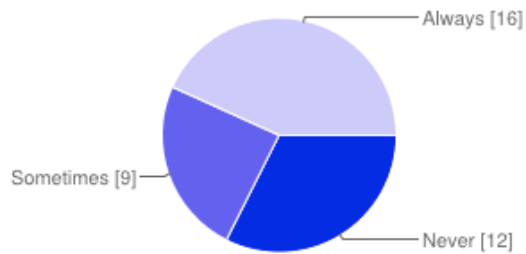
Never	14	37%
Sometimes	19	50%
Always	4	11%

How frequently do you post a comment to Artsonia about your child's artwork?



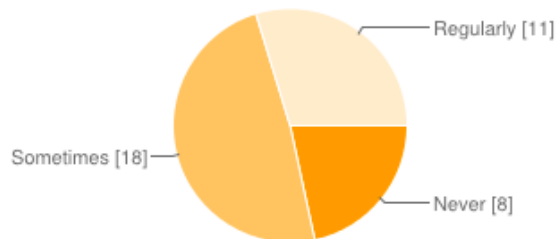
Never	18	47%
Occasionally	11	29%
Always	8	21%

When approving Artsonia comments on your child's artwork, do you share the comments with your child?



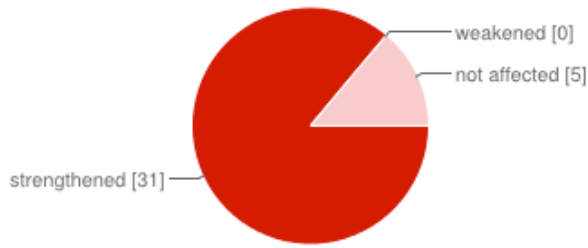
Never	12	32%
Sometimes	9	24%
Always	16	42%

Before Artsonia, my family discussed student artwork:



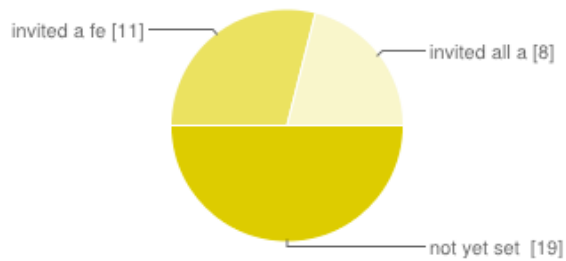
Never	8	21%
Sometimes	18	47%
Regularly	11	29%

In regards to frequency and quality, I feel Artsonia has _____ student art discussions within my family.



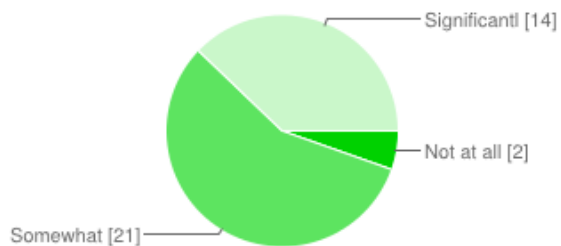
strengthened	31	82%
weakened	0	0%
not affected	5	13%

In regards to your child's fan club, have you:



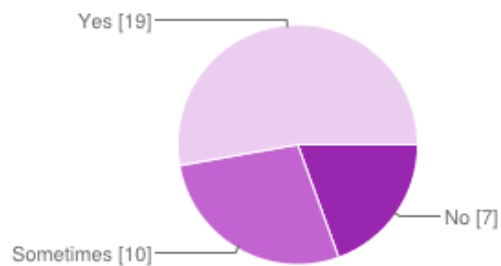
not yet set up a fan club	19	50%
invited a few family/friends to join	11	29%
invited all appropriate people to join	8	21%

How has Artsonia enhanced your understanding of the learning process in the art classroom?



Not at all	2	5%
Somewhat	21	55%
Significantly	14	37%

If provided instructions, would you be willing to assist your child in posting artist statements to Artsonia at home?



No	7	18%
Sometimes	10	26%
Yes	19	50%

Please share any comments you have in regards to Artsonia.

- It's a great way to share my kids artwork with grandparents, etc and I love that you can have work turned into gifts for the holiday. My kids aren't that interested in it though. They prefer to show me the actual finished art when they bring it home.
- So glad we have this to share artwork with out of state family and friends! Thank you!
-
- We love the weekly a artwork, and appreciate all of the time and energy the art teacher devotes to her students at NES
-
- I finally signed up on October 22nd and none of my child's work is posted yet :(
- I love this! What's even better is that our out of state family can view Sean's work and leave comments for him. Great job!
-
- Is there anyway to choose staying logged in?
-
- due to lack of time; don't spend a lot of time on artsonia. However, it is nice to see the artwork and would consider using it to purchase gifts (e.g. for Christmas.)
-
- I love this because I am usually the only one who gets to view his art as he brings it home but now Daddy and Grandma and Grandpa can view it as well in case I forget to share with them.
-
- I love it completely and think it is absolutely fabulous!!! Thank you so much for taking the time to do this. I truly had no idea what my girls did in art class prior to you starting with them. I now have a greater appreciation and understanding of the importance of my children receiving art instruction.
- Just getting used to the site . as I use it more I'm sure it will be easier & smoother.

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