

An Implementation Study of the Art in Action Program

Manuelito Biag, Erin Raab, and Mary Hofstedt

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Founded in 1982, Art in Action is a nonprofit organization that brings visual arts education to classrooms and schools. Through its curriculum model, Art in Action seeks to make the arts an integral part of all students' education. Currently, Art in Action serves approximately 50,000 students across 1,200 classrooms including public, private, and charter schools in rural, suburban, and urban settings.

Targeting students in grades K-8, Art in Action's program consists of 12 age-appropriate lessons per year. After completing a series of trainings and refresher courses (either in person or online), parent and teacher volunteers teach the curriculum. The curriculum is based on historically significant artists and their works of art. Through semi-structured discussions, students examine a variety of masterpieces, learning about the artist as well as particular art styles and techniques. Students then apply the concepts they learned to create original works of art. Art in Action's curriculum is sequential and builds upon previous skills taught, while also introducing new material, artists, vocabulary, and techniques. Most participating schools choose to showcase students' artwork in an end-of-the-year exhibit, drawing in parents and other community members.

As Art in Action enters into a new strategic planning cycle, which includes attention to sustaining and scaling its programs, it needs to better understand how its curriculum is implemented within and across schools, how youth and adults perceive and experience the program, and the conditions that either hinder or support implementation. Thus, in 2014, Art in Action partnered with the John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities (Gardner Center) at Stanford University in a year-long, qualitative, implementation study of its program in Bay Area schools and beyond. Through a multi-method research design—including interviews, focus groups, document reviews, and lesson observations—the study examined five schools in the San Francisco Bay Area, four schools outside this region, and three schools that previously partnered with Art in Action but no longer implement the program. The following questions guided the study:

1. How do schools learn about Art in Action and why do they decide to adopt the program? Why do some schools discontinue their partnership with Art in Action?
2. In what ways do schools implement the Art in Action program? How does program implementation vary across and within sites?
3. What factors and conditions shape the implementation of the Art in Action program?
4. In what ways does the Art in Action program influence students, adults, and school communities? To what extent do program implementation factors shape these perceived influences?

The study was designed to develop a clear picture of Art in Action's program model and how its implementation varies within and across contexts. Further, this study sought to generate rich and nuanced understanding of how students, adults, and school communities experience the

program. Often, program evaluations focus on program outcomes without considering the changes that are most reasonable for a program to achieve, or how the program and its components operate within varied contexts to produce observed results. Art in Action wanted to develop greater clarity about these dimensions to develop a clear program theory of change that can help strengthen the planning, implementation, and evaluation of its organizational efforts and strategies.

Overview of Findings

Overall, Art in Action had a flexible and decentralized program implementation model. There was significant variation in how the program was carried out, both within and across the case study sites. Schools had different goals for adopting Art in Action. While some sites aimed to create a disciplined fine-arts program, others implemented it to ensure that students had basic exposure to the arts. Differences in schools' goals shaped how the curriculum was structured including how much time was devoted to the program, who carried out the instruction, and which aspects of the curriculum were emphasized (art history vs. art-making). While parents in some schools coordinated the entire program with no teacher support, other schools utilized classroom teachers. One site hired a professional studio artist to lead students in the art-making process, while parents taught the art history component. There were also variations in the availability of docents and parent volunteers, a dedicated classroom space, and financial support, among others. Differences in program implementation suggested that while the Art in Action program had an overall 'form,' there was great flexibility within it that allowed schools to tailor the program to fit their needs and circumstances.

Regardless of how the program was structured and implemented on site, we found that participants reported broadly similar perceptions about Art in Action and its influences on students, adults, and school communities. Docents, parent volunteers, administrators, and teachers characterized Art in Action as a high-quality visual arts curriculum. Respondents expressed how the program helped expose children, as well as adults, to the visual arts world and encourage participation in arts spaces outside of school (e.g., museums). Participants reported how Art in Action provided a creative outlet for young people to create, explore, and exercise their imagination. They also expressed how by working together to implement the curriculum, connections among stakeholders at the school (e.g., between parents and teachers) were strengthened.

By exposing participants to the arts, establishing a space for creativity, and increasing connections at school, respondents reported that the Art in Action program provided opportunities for youth and adults to cultivate visual art knowledge and techniques, as well as habits of mind (e.g., persistence). Respondents stated how the program helped build confidence for self-expression, and make more visible the talents and skills of students and adults. Additionally, by displaying Art in Action projects within the school (e.g., hallways, auditoriums) and neighborhood (e.g., libraries, banks), participants expressed how the school became more visible to others in the community. Taken together, respondents described how these settings, conditions, and opportunities to develop in new ways helped instill in students, parents, and school staff a sense of pride and ownership, joy, and engagement with school.

In what follows, we provide further details about the study's findings and key areas for consideration.

Perceived Influence of Art in Action on Schools, Adults, and Students

Despite significant variation in program implementation, participants reported broadly similar perceptions about Art in Action—both as a program and its influence on schools, teachers, parents, and students. While each school varied in its implementation structure and processes, at a 'big picture' level most respondents expressed how the Art in Action program helped:

- *Expose participants to the art world and invite their participation—within the Art in Action classes and beyond.* Through their participation in Art in Action, students, parents, docents, and teachers reported that they were exposed to the world of visual arts. They learned about art history and visual art techniques (e.g., how to draw a face), and became familiar and engaged more with art spaces outside the school such as galleries, museums, and art classes.
- *Connect people to one another.* By creating the opportunity and need for people to work together to carry out the program (e.g., coordinating volunteers, fundraising), we found that Art in Action helped connect stakeholders to one another. Connections included: (1) school to community; (2) teachers to students and parents; (3) parents to schools, teachers, and to one another; and (4) students with their peers, parents, and their schools.
- *Create “spaces” that foster creativity.* We observed how teaching the Art in Action curriculum helped create three types of spaces: (1) a *physical* space - even if a designated art room did not exist, the physical space of the gym, lunchroom, or classroom was transformed to create an environment for art-making; (2) a *temporal* space - a designated time in the schedule had to be carved out for Art in Action lessons; and (3) an *intellectual* space - children and docents reported how a unique intellectual space, which had a spirit of openness and creativity, was created during Art in Action lessons.

By creating the settings and conditions described above, respondents reported how Art in Action helped promote the following:

- *Develop visual art knowledge and skills, and habits of mind.* By participating in Art in Action, students and parents expressed how they were able to hone new skills and knowledge in the visual arts, as well as develop habits of mind (e.g., persistence).
- *Express themselves in different ways.* Through their participation in Art in Action, adults and youth found new ways to express their unique talents, skills, and identities.
- *Be more visible to one another and the larger community.* Participating in Art in Action helped make the school as an institution, and the different people within it, visible in new ways—to one another and to the community at large.

Taken together, the settings, conditions, and perceived influences of Art in Action helped instill in students, parents, and school staff a sense of pride and ownership, joy, and engagement with school.

- *Pride and ownership.* Our interviews and observations suggest that students felt proud of their art-making skills and artwork; parent volunteers felt proud of their children's artwork and for belonging to a school that valued the arts; and teachers and administrators felt proud of their students and school for their art accomplishments.
- *Joy.* Students frequently characterized the Art in Action program and the process of art-making as fun, and one of the few instances during the school day where they could be creative and use their imagination. Parents also expressed enjoyment in volunteering in the classroom and being with their children. Many families were happy to see their children's artwork displayed in the school, visual art shows, as well as in community spaces.
- *Engagement with school.* Adult and youth participants identified Art in Action as a space that encouraged openness and creativity. By organizing together to create this space, teachers and parents reported how children exhibited greater focus and engagement. Parents and principals also expressed how Art in Action helped increase families' engagement in the school and with their children's learning.

It is important to stress that while respondents reported similar broad perceptions about Art in Action, we hypothesize that how the program is implemented at school (e.g., number of lessons students receive, who provides the instruction, how much time and material support is devoted to the program) shapes the kinds of changes and development produced in students, classrooms, and schools. While the present study was not designed to measure these changes directly, results identify potential benefits from participating in the program (e.g., development of art knowledge and skills) that can be more closely assessed in future research.

Factors that Shaped Program Implementation

We found considerable variation in how the Art in Action program was implemented, both within and across the case study schools. Key factors and conditions—many of which are interrelated—that shaped implementation included the schools' goals for adopting the program; the structures and processes operating at each site; the docents and parent volunteers carrying out the program; and the level of material and financial inputs.

School Goals

Each site had differing visions and intentions for the Art in Action program, which, in turn, shaped how the adults in the school organized to implement the curriculum. Variations in school goals, and the extent to which they were explicit and agreed upon by adult participants, drove many of the differences in program structures and processes (see below). Still, despite differences in school goals, we observed a consistent element in the reason for implementing Art in Action: art was perceived as an essential part of children's holistic educational experience.

School Structures and Processes

The goals of the school for adopting the Art in Action program had implications for how the program was structured on site, including the types of processes the school employed to deliver the program. We observed variations in the following:

- *Coordination.* While all schools had some system for coordination, that system (and its formality) varied across sites. How Art in Action was coordinated at the school shaped the delivery of the lessons, such as the extent to which lessons were delivered on a scheduled timeline versus ad hoc. Coordination of the program also shaped how parent volunteers interacted with and supported one another across classrooms and grade levels.
- *Docents.* Who taught the program and how it was taught varied among schools. In many sites, parent volunteers organized the entire program. In one school, a professional artist taught the curriculum with parent support (e.g., parents helped prepare materials and with cleanup), while in other schools classroom teachers carried out the lesson without assistance. Who taught the program influenced the pedagogy used and which aspects of the curriculum were emphasized.
- *Time and lesson structure.* The amount of time allocated for the Art in Action program differed among schools. For instance, the number of lessons adopted by schools varied with some opting not to teach certain lessons because they were not feasible (e.g., the school did not have a kiln for clay projects) or did not align with the school's overall intentions for the program.
- *Physical space.* Many schools implemented Art in Action's curriculum in the traditional classroom space, while some had a designated art room for the whole school, and still others shared spaces such as a lunchroom or gymnasium. Where the lessons were taught shaped classroom transitions, how docents were able to prepare the space prior to the lesson, and the extent to which art-making was perceived as an activity that took place outside the conventional classroom space.

People

- *Individual goals.* Just as schools had different goals for their program, docents brought their own intentions to each lesson. Some docents emphasized the art-making and visual art techniques while others stressed the art history component. Others utilized the Art in Action lessons to have rich discussions with students about a piece of art.
- *Individual skills and teaching experience.* Docents had varied skills and experience in art as well as in teaching. While classroom teachers demonstrated pedagogical knowledge, few of them had direct experience with visual arts prior to the program. Most docents were not familiar with either teaching or art, other than through the Art in Action program.

- *Time available for coordination, preparation, and teaching.* Who was teaching the program also affected the amount of time available for preparation of the lesson, coordination, and teaching. One of the biggest observed differences was that some schools served a majority of families in which two parents worked full-time jobs outside the home. By contrast, other schools had a population of parents who worked full-time at home and had greater flexibility in their schedules.
- *Trainings and support.* Schools and individual docents and coordinators differed in how much they accessed the trainings and supports provided by Art in Action. These variations shaped the confidence level of docents to teach the curriculum, and the school's sense of connection to Art in Action as an organization.

Material Inputs

- *Art Materials.* Many schools took advantage of Art in Action's supply boxes. Other schools purchased their own supplies and put together what was needed for each lesson separately. Still other schools purchased the boxes and then supplemented with additional materials.
- *Financial support.* We observed variations in the financial support for the program, including who was in charge of fundraising and the amount of support received. The level of financial support determined whether the school was able to sustain the program, year after year.

Questions and Considerations

Present findings suggest that Art in Action's program implementation model is highly flexible and decentralized. While this flexibility was perceived as an asset by many in this study, it nevertheless shapes participants' experiences with the program and the extent to which any particular outcome is likely to develop (e.g., art skills, art history knowledge). Given these variations, results point to important questions Art in Action may want to consider as it expands to more schools including how to support schools with different goals for the program; determining standards and expectations for the teaching and delivery of the curriculum; and how to potentially leverage the program as a family engagement strategy. Perhaps the central overarching question for the organization is:

Are there certain outcomes at the student, docent, or school level—beyond arts exposure—that Art in Action cares deeply about? If so, are there ways to shift the program curriculum, structure, or supports to maximize these outcomes?

If the main priorities of Art in Action are to prize flexibility of implementation over consistency, and provide students access to the visual arts, then the program is largely achieving these aims. If, however, Art in Action cares about developing particular types of changes in students, classrooms, and schools—with any consistency across sites—it must decide which outcomes it cares most about. For instance, are there certain habits of mind the program would like to develop in students? If so, there are likely ways to support schools in thinking about these and ways to highlight them in the curriculum. Are the development of visual art skills and techniques particularly important? If so, opportunities to reflect on the art creation process and iterate might

be important. In short, clarity around these organizational goals can promote more intentional and focused efforts that support students' learning and experiences in the arts.

Conclusion

In summary, our study suggests that Art in Action is an extremely flexible program that can be easily adapted to meet the goals, needs, and circumstances of schools. Although program implementation varied significantly, both within and across schools, participants report similar broad perceptions about the program and its influences on students, adults and school communities. Many see Art in Action as a high-quality visual arts curriculum that provides unique and substantive ways for parents to be involved in their child's education. Participants express how Art in Action helps provide a structured and student-centered learning environment that encourages exploration, and where children are allowed to explore. Respondents also report how the program helps create safe and joyful spaces for students—as well as adults—to learn about the visual arts, engage in the creative process, investigate new perspectives and ideas, and express themselves in novel ways. Moreover, because parents, teachers, and administrators work together to implement the program, Art in Action is perceived as providing a way to increase connections and foster a school community.

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Evidence shows that the arts benefit students in a number of ways. Research suggests that the arts allow students to develop self-expression, creativity, and empathy skills (Heilig, Cole, & Aguilar, 2010). Engagement with the arts strengthens cognitive abilities (Eisner, 2002) that promote critical thinking and support academic achievement. By studying and practicing the arts, youth are able to cultivate important habits of mind, such as observing, persisting, and expressing, which aid their learning and success in school (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2013).

The arts have notably been cut from public school budgets and schedules under the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) law and *Race to the Top*'s focus on academic achievement, as measured by standardized tests. A 2008 survey conducted by the National Endowment for the Arts found that “rates of childhood arts education declined significantly from 1982 to 2008...and, its decline has been concentrated among low-income children and among African American and Hispanic children in particular” (Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011). A report on the effects of NCLB on arts education found that 25% of visual arts programs experienced reductions in teaching staff in 2009 alone (Sabol, 2010).

Despite these cuts, many people believe in the intrinsic value of the arts in students' lives. A 2005 Harris Poll found that 93% of Americans agreed that the arts are vital to providing a well-rounded education for children, and 79% agreed that incorporating arts into education is the first step in adding back what is missing in public education today. Seventy-nine percent of those surveyed also believed that arts education was important enough for them to get personally involved in increasing the amount and quality of arts education (Ruppert, 2006).

As schools look for ways to increase students' exposure to the arts, community-based providers play an increasingly important role (Dreeszen, April, & Deasy, 1999). Yet little is known about how community organizations carry out arts programming in schools, or the influence of school-community art partnerships on students, families, and schools.

The present study seeks to fill this gap by reporting findings from a cross-case analysis (Yin, 2003) of a visual arts program provided by Art in Action, an organization based in northern California. This study aims to highlight some of the key factors and conditions that shape arts programming in schools. Increased knowledge of these factors may help schools and community-based organizations work together to achieve shared goals, and design processes and structures that facilitate students' meaningful engagement in the arts.

About Art in Action

Founded in 1982, Art in Action is a nonprofit organization that brings visual arts education to classrooms and schools. Through its curriculum model, Art in Action seeks to make the arts an integral part of all students' education. Currently, Art in Action serves approximately 50,000 students across 1,200 classrooms including public, private, and charter schools in rural, suburban, and urban settings.

Targeting students in grades K-8, Art in Action's program consists of 12 age-appropriate lessons per year. After completing a series of trainings and refresher courses (either in person or online), parent and teacher volunteers teach the curriculum. The curriculum is based on historically significant artists and their works of art. Through semi-structured discussions, students examine a variety of masterpieces, learning about the artist as well as particular art styles and techniques. Students then apply the concepts they learned to create original works of art. Art in Action's curriculum is sequential and builds upon previous skills taught, while also introducing new material, artists, vocabulary, and techniques. Most participating schools choose to showcase students' artwork in an end-of-the-year exhibit, drawing in parents and other community members.

Research Questions

In partnership with Art in Action, the John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities (Gardner Center) at Stanford University conducted an implementation study of Art in Action's program in Bay Area schools and beyond. Nuanced understanding of the implementation process can improve the ability of programs to identify ways to more successfully achieve their intended results (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). Research on social innovation suggests that knowledge about the implementation process is critical in sustaining or moving programs to scale (Phills, Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008).

Art in Action has been providing arts education to children for over 30 years. The organization continues to expand in reach and scope. It seeks to grow to a wider market, with the aim of doubling its student reach to nearly 90,000. The time is ripe for Art in Action to learn how its model is perceived and implemented 'on the ground,' so it can grow more effectively and clearly articulate the benefits of its important work.

Through a multi-method research design, we pursued the following questions:

1. How do schools learn about Art in Action and why do they decide to adopt the program? Why do some schools discontinue their partnership with Art in Action?
2. In what ways do schools implement the Art in Action program? How does program implementation vary across and within sites?
3. What factors and conditions shape the implementation of the Art in Action program?
4. In what ways does Art in Action influence students, adults, and school communities? To what extent do program implementation factors shape these perceived influences?

The study was designed to develop a clear picture of Art in Action's program model and how its implementation varies within and across contexts. Further, this study sought to generate rich and nuanced understanding of how students, adults, and school communities experience the program. Often, program evaluations focus on program outcomes without considering the types of changes most reasonable for a program to achieve, or how the program and its components operate within varied contexts to produce observed results. Art in Action wanted to develop

greater clarity about these dimensions to develop a clear program theory of change that can help strengthen the planning, implementation, and evaluation of its organizational efforts and strategies.

Theory of Change Development

A significant part of this research project was the development of a theory of change. A theory of change is a “roadmap that helps illustrate destinations of progress and the routes to travel on the way to achieving that progress.”¹ A theory of change is useful to organizations because it first helps establish clear goals (i.e., what counts as “success”), and helps convey a clear set of activities to achieve this mission. The theory of change guides decision-making with stakeholders, as well as monitoring and tracking progress towards the goals. Typically, a theory of change is developed by first identifying the desired vision or long-term goals, and then working backwards to identify all the actions that must be in place for these goals to occur.²

Creating a theory of change is an iterative process. It involves first understanding different stakeholders’ perceptions of what the program does, then comparing that with objective observations of the program’s implementation, as well as participants’ experiences with the program. A major aspect of this study was the co-construction of an accurate theory of change for Art in Action’s work. An accurate theory of change allows Art in Action to identify and track its desired impact, and understand the different pathways through which it influences key changes in students and school communities.

Early in the study, we worked collaboratively with Art in Action to develop a preliminary theory of change (Exhibit 1). It was created based on a review of organizational documents (e.g., curriculum, strategic plan, SWOT analyses) and discussions with Art in Action personnel (e.g., head of marketing, executive director, board chair).

¹ <http://www.aecf.org/resources/theory-of-change/>

² <http://www.theoryofchange.org/what-is-theory-of-change/>

Exhibit 1: Preliminary Theory of Change for Art in Action (January 2015)



VISION: Visual arts are an integral part of every student’s education.

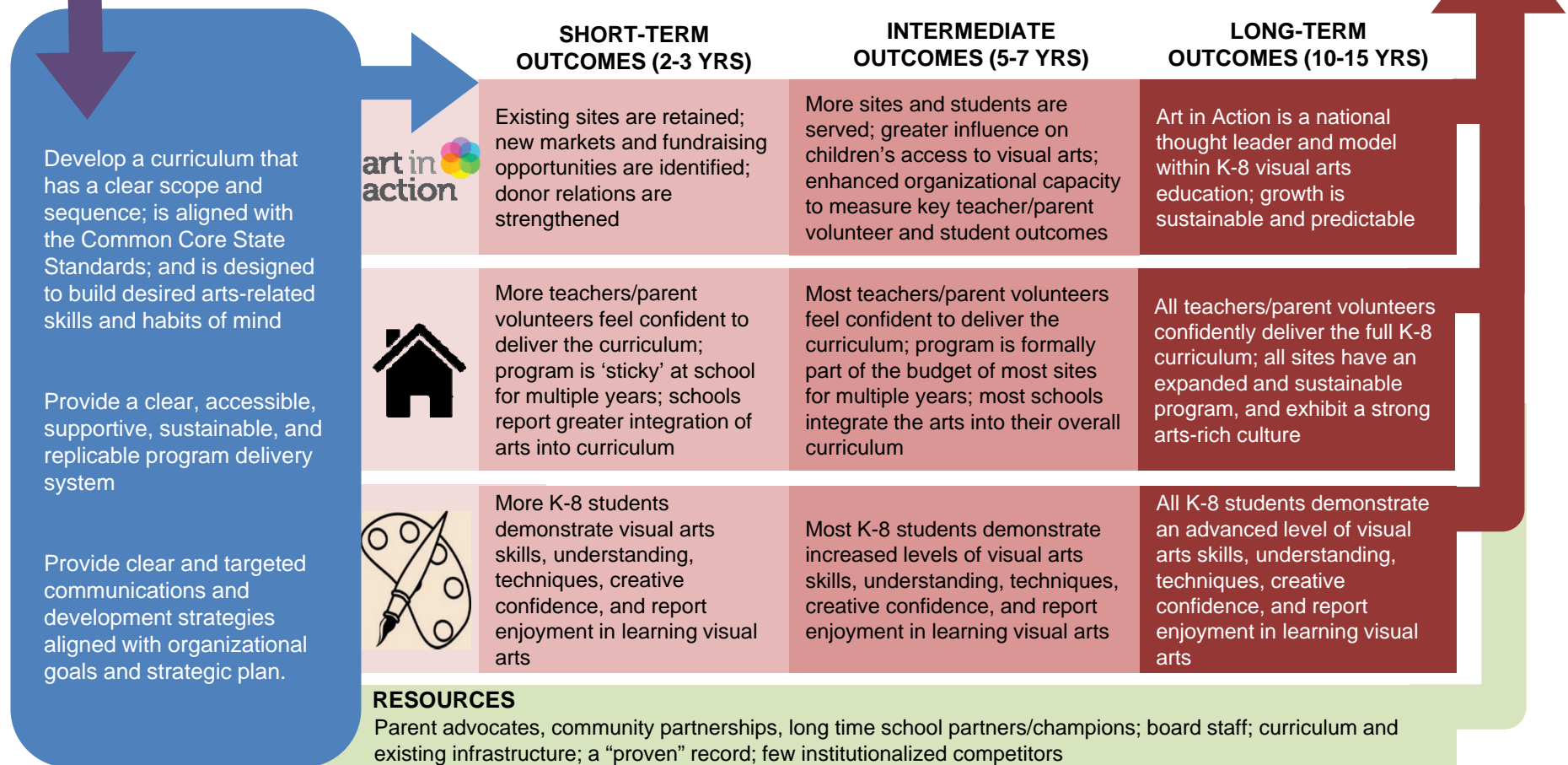
MISSION: To provide classroom teachers and parents with the training, curriculum, and tools they need to promote students’ learning, creativity, and confidence through visual arts.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

There is a significant “arts education gap” where many K-8 students lack high quality visual arts curriculum and instructors to provide their students with vital skills such as creativity, critical thinking, and communication, as well as the opportunities to experience joy in creating art.

GOALS

1. Provide easy-to-teach, affordable, and accessible visual arts curriculum to K-8 schools
2. Increase the number of schools and classrooms implementing and sequencing Arts in Action curriculum in grades K-8
3. Expand teachers’ integration of visual arts into their classroom and whole-school curriculum
4. Expand students’ awareness and appreciation of cultures and traditions (their own and others); art history; and the role of artists in society
5. Improve students’ visual arts skills and confidence



This preliminary theory of change guided our study design, site selection process, and the development of interview and observation protocols. For instance, we were looking for how the program was experienced, not only by students, but also by school sites, docents, teachers, and parents. Additionally, we used it to identify four main aspects of a school's experience that might be important: (1) its decision to participate in the program; (2) how a program spread through the school site (e.g., moving from one classroom to all classrooms in a grade or the whole school); (3) what influenced a school to stick with the program over multiple years, or to leave the program; and, (4) the influence of the program on school communities, parents, docents, and students.

After the data collection and analysis, we revised the theory of change to reflect the research findings and more accurately represent what was happening in schools and for participants (see Chapter 4 for a discussion on the new theory of change).

Data and Methods

We collected data in multiple ways. First, with support from Art in Action, we recruited five Bay Area schools to take part in the study (Exhibit 2). We purposively selected schools to ensure variation on key criteria we hypothesized might affect implementation, such as the length of time involved with the Art in Action program; size of school (number of students); whether the school was public, private, or parochial; school location; grades in school (i.e., K-5, K-8, 6-8); grades served by Art in Action; whether Art in Action was taught by parents or classroom teachers; and the racial diversity of the student population.

Exhibit 2. Descriptive Statistics of Case Study Schools

	Active Bay Area Schools					Active Non-Bay Area Schools				Non-Active Schools		
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
Grade span	K-5	K-5	K-8	PreK-5	K-8	K-5	PreK-12	K-6	K-8	K-5	K-5	K-5
School type	Public	Public	Public	Private	Parochial	Public	Parochial	Public	Parochial	Public	Public	Public
Total student population	415	536	388	350	318	269	96	454	1,065	508	525	482
% African American	2.9	1.7	1.3	3.1	0.0	0.0	1.0	11.9	2.0	1.4	1.5	0.4
% Asian	1.9	41.4	11.6	23.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	39.4	3.1	1.2	4.4	8.7
% White	26.3	31.2	39.4	52.6	92.5	90.0	98.9	18.5	89.5	2.6	14.7	59.3
% Latino	59.8	9.7	28.1	19.3	0.0	4.8	0.0	28.2	3.5	91.9	66.9	23.9
% Free and reduced price lunch	58.1	33.2	21.9	n/a	n/a	43.9	n/a	30.2	n/a	77.6	65.1	17.0
% English learners	40.0	23.9	12.9	--	--	--	--	15.0	--	64.8	56.4	23.4

Note: We excluded the following race/ethnicity categories: Filipino, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, None Reported, Two or More Races. Data were obtained for the 2013-14 school year from the National Center for Education Statistics.

In these five schools, we conducted in-depth case analyses using qualitative methods including one-on-one interviews with school administrators, focus groups with students, and classroom observations of Art in Action lessons (Exhibit 3). At two of the five sites, we also had the opportunity to observe their end-of-year Art in Action exhibit (see Appendix A for a sample of students' artwork). Three of the five Bay Area schools were public schools with an average enrollment of about 446 students. Among these schools, one had a large Latino population with roughly 40% of its students classified as English learners and 58% qualifying for subsidized school meals. By contrast, both the private and parochial school in this Bay Area sample enrolled fewer students, most of whom identified as White.

Exhibit 3. Data Collection in Bay Area Case Study Schools

	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
Interview with principal	•	•	•	•	•
Interview with program coordinator	•				•
Two focus groups with students	•	•	•	•	•
Focus group with program instructors	•	•	•	•	•
Four classroom observations	•	•	•	•	•
Observation of visual art exhibitions	•		•		

Note: Program coordinators for schools B-D participated in the focus group with the other program instructors.

Second, because Art in Action continues to expand its programming and serve children outside of the Bay Area, we interviewed representatives from four non-Bay Area schools. Our aim was to understand how the implementation process in these remote sites may differ from schools that can access Art in Action's on-site or in-person trainings. Non-Bay Area schools varied greatly in the amount of students they served, ranging from a low of 96 to a high of 1,065. Except for one public K-6 school, these remote sites had a majority White student population.

Third, to understand why some schools discontinue the Art in Action program, we interviewed representatives from three schools that no longer implemented the curriculum. Among these non-active schools, two enrolled a large population of Latino students, English learners, and students who were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

Lastly, we reviewed documents made available to us by Art in Action (e.g., online curriculum, strategic plan); interviewed Art in Action staff, including its founder and executive director; and observed two docent trainings conducted by Art in Action personnel.

In total, we interviewed 119 participants including principals (n = 5), teachers (n = 10), school coordinators (n = 2), parents (n = 29), students (n = 70), and Art in Action personnel (n = 3). All interviews and focus groups were audiotaped, conducted by at least two of the three Gardner Center researchers, and lasted approximately one hour (interview protocols can be found in Appendix B). All researchers present in the interview also recorded extensive notes. Additionally, we captured field notes for all observations; we developed and utilized an observation instrument specifically to document Art in Action lessons (Appendix C). In all, there was considerable variation in the lessons we observed (Appendix D). On average, classrooms had 25 students, three adult volunteers, and lessons were 60 minutes in duration, with about 37 minutes devoted to art-making. We systematically examined all data sources for emergent themes and patterns using a manual, iterative, and multi-stage coding process (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Structure of the Final Report

The rest of the report is as follows:

- **CHAPTER TWO** identifies leading factors and conditions that shape how Art in Action’s program is implemented, and how these may be associated with the perceived influences of the program.
- **CHAPTER THREE** discusses what respondents report as the main influences of the Art in Action program on youth, adults, and school communities.
- **CHAPTER FOUR** proposes a new theory of change for Art in Action based on the evidence gathered from this research.
- Finally, **CHAPTER FIVE** offers concluding remarks and draws attention to important considerations, potential tensions, and questions given the revised theory of change and study findings.

CHAPTER 2 – ANALYSIS OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

In this chapter, we identify how program implementation varied across different sites, and how these variations might affect how participants experience and benefit from the program. We first look at how case study schools discovered Art in Action and describe their initial perceptions of the program. Next, we draw attention to chief factors and conditions that shaped how Art in Action was implemented, both within and across schools. Lastly, we discuss obstacles that some sites encountered that forced them to discontinue implementing the curriculum.

How Case Study Schools Discovered Art in Action

Our data suggest that case study schools, both within and outside the San Francisco Bay Area, learned about Art in Action in three ways: (1) someone in the school community had a friend or colleague who recommended the program; (2) someone in the school community had personal experience with the program in another school; or (3) schools knew they wanted a visual arts program and used an online search engine to find it.

Frequently, principals, parents, or teachers found out about Art in Action because they knew someone who had a previous experience with it (either directly or indirectly). For instance, one Bay Area site coordinator learned about Art in Action through her daughter who was working at a local Parks and Recreation department that was implementing the program. Similarly, a remote school decided to implement Art in Action because of a personal connection, “I found it through a parent who used to live in northern California and had it at their prior school.”

Some schools learned about Art in Action through online searches. A representative from a non-Bay Area site said, “I found Art in Action from Google. Now, I’m writing grants to make sure I can continue the program.” Likewise, a local school coordinator stated, “There was extra grant money. They wanted to bring the arts to school. We did some research online and brought in Art in Action.”

Regardless of how case study schools discovered Art in Action, most reported choosing the program because they perceived it to be a high-quality “fine arts” curriculum versus one that was mostly “arts and crafts.” According to respondents, they adopted Art in Action because it provided a meaningful opportunity for parents to get involved in classrooms, and a structured yet flexible curriculum that can be modified to fit local contexts.

Key Factors that Shaped the Implementation Process

Interviews and observations suggest that Art in Action's implementation model is highly flexible and decentralized. We discovered significant variation both within and across the case study sites. Leading factors and conditions, many of which are interrelated, that shaped program implementation included:

1. Schools' goals for adopting the program;
2. The schools' program model (structures and processes; e.g., parent-taught vs. teacher-taught; time spent on lessons);
3. The docents involved in carrying out the program (e.g., docent goals when teaching; docent art knowledge/skill and teaching ability); and
4. The material inputs provided by the schools (e.g., art materials, financial support).

School Goals

Each school had differing visions and intentions for the Art in Action program, which shaped how the adults organized to implement it. These goals, and the extent to which they were explicit and agreed upon by all adult participants, drove many of the differences in the structure of the program within sites. For instance, in one school, Art in Action was the only arts experience children received. The principal remarked, "Art in Action is an integral component in the arts culture of the school. Without it, there would be no art...It rests squarely on Art in Action." The central goal for this school was to provide students with some type of access and exposure to art history and media at least once a month. Given this relatively broad aim, the school did not provide much guidance on how lessons should be structured and taught. As a result, we observed differences in how lessons were taught; for example, while some classes stressed the art history component of the lesson, others dedicated more time to the art-making.

In another school, Art in Action was one of many art programs on campus. The principal described, "Art in Action is a great supplement to everything else that we are doing with our arts education." At this arts-rich site, there was an abundance of parent volunteers and the principal saw Art in Action as a structured way for parents to get involved. He remarked "the parents are really active and they feel empowered by being in charge of the program...It provides a pathway for parents to get involved in their children's education." This administrator stated how the parents brought Art in Action to the school and negotiated with the afterschool program to use their classroom space. At this school, parent volunteers attended annual trainings in how to teach the program, and there was a lesson model that all observed lessons followed. Relative to other sites, this school had much less variation in terms of lesson time and curricular focus.

In another case study school, Art in Action was adopted as a way to have a “serious” art curriculum to develop students’ art techniques (e.g., sketching) and appreciation for masterpieces. This school’s program coordinator explained,

A lot of people think that art should just be fun. Sometimes with parents we kind of struggle, because they just think, ‘Oh, art, it should just be fun, talking and laughing.’ We consider it’s a serious discipline...I spend a lot of time drawing and it’s serious. Art in Action is a serious art program.

Given that the school perceived art as a disciplined subject, it hired a professional artist to teach the art-making part of the curriculum so that students could develop art skills with different media. The program coordinator described the art teacher this way,

She really wants to push kids to think for themselves, so the more crafty Art in Action lessons were eliminated because it was too much follow the directions...She is more focused on them thinking and trying different things...so we don’t do the ones where they just stick on things...

How Art in Action lessons were taught at this school reflected the site’s goal of honing students’ visual art skills and knowledge. Their structure included a separate day, earlier in the week, in which parents would teach the art history component separately; this allowed students more time to absorb the art history content (as it was reviewed with the art teacher), and for students to begin planning and envisioning what they would make in the art-making class with the art teacher. The studio art teacher was also paid by the school to conduct summer courses for students who wanted to continue refining their skills.

Despite nuances in the schools’ intentions for adopting Art in Action, we observed one overarching and consistent element in the reason for implementing the program: art was perceived as an essential part of a holistic educational experience.

School Program Model: Structures and Processes

The schools’ goals and intentions for adopting the Art in Action program had implications for the types of structures and processes used to implement it. We observed variations among the following:

Coordination. While all schools had some system for coordination, that system (and its formality) varied across sites. Some schools had a school-wide coordinator who planned and scheduled lessons and volunteers for every class. Other schools had grade-level coordinators, and some had parent coordinators for each class. One school depended on classroom teachers to coordinate the program for their own classrooms and the only school-wide coordination was for the year-end art show.

How Art in Action was coordinated shaped various aspects of the program, including the delivery of the lessons, how many different parents volunteered in the classroom, and the extent to which lessons were delivered on a scheduled timeline versus ad hoc. Coordination of the

program also shaped how parent volunteers interacted with and supported one another across classrooms and grade levels. For instance, in some schools the same parents frequently saw one another—in the trainings, classrooms, art supplies closet, and at events throughout the year. While in other sites, parents would simply go to their assigned classroom, volunteer, and leave with little interaction with other parent volunteers.

Docents. Who taught the program and how it was taught also varied. In many sites, parent volunteers organized and taught the entire program. In fact, in one school the principal used the Art in Action program as a substantive way to involve parents at school. In another site, a professional studio artist helped implement the program with parent support (e.g., parents helped prepare and clean up materials), while in other schools, classroom teachers taught the lesson without assistance. We also observed a hybrid model where parents taught some aspects of the lessons and classroom teachers taught others. Schools' choices about how the program should be taught, and to whom, often depended on the level of volunteer support. As one principal said, "Parent volunteerism generally drops in the third grade. Many parents go back to work and it's harder to get volunteers at this age. So, because of this, we haven't really tried to get the program to older grades."

Who taught the program also influenced how the lessons were delivered. This included the consistency of structure across lessons, the pedagogy used, the extent to which it was tied closely with other content areas, and which aspects of the curriculum were emphasized. For instance, as mentioned above, one school adopted Art in Action to have a serious arts curriculum and hired a professional working artist to teach the art-making portion of the lessons. Having this studio artist allowed the school to concentrate more deeply on cultivating students' visual art techniques. As this school's principal explained,

We did this split-model because we wanted to make sure that we didn't get feedback from parents about not having an art teacher...Our parents might have thought we were going back in art and might have been a little bit nervous if it was just a parent-run program. We wanted to make sure that we still had an art teacher overseeing the whole thing.

Consistently, we found that parent instructors, unlike classroom teachers, did not schedule time within the lesson for reflection. Parents also rarely linked Art in Action lessons to other learning happening in the school. We hypothesize that these findings reflect parents' limited knowledge and familiarity with what was happening in other classrooms or subject areas.

Time and Lesson Structure. We observed that the amount of time allocated for each classroom lesson varied widely, ranging from 35 to 87 minutes for a single lesson (Appendix D). Within this time frame, the structure of the lesson was also different where lessons focused on distinct aspects of the curriculum. Few observed lessons incorporated time for students to reflect on their work (e.g., discussion about aesthetic choices).

In one of the remote schools, each Art in Action lesson was taught as a unit that lasted several weeks because their aim was to provide a more "well-rounded" curriculum to students, which included art and music. This teacher conveyed, "When I teach music and art and I feel like I am

teaching to their souls. That is what makes people, people. It's the creative process." In other schools, students had art once a month for 45 minutes and the entire lesson—introduction, discussion, and creation—fit within those 45 minutes. One site extended lessons over two days: the art history and practice component was taught on Mondays by parents, while the art studio component was taught on Wednesdays by the art teachers.

Additionally, the number of lessons taught in schools over the school year varied. For instance, if the school only teaches art once per month, not all Art in Action lessons will be taught. In other schools, certain lessons (e.g., lessons that involve clay) were excluded because they were not feasible (i.e., the school did not have a kiln), or were inconsistent with the school's goals (i.e., the lesson was deemed "crafty" versus "fine art").

The amount of time allocated for Art in Action and the structure of lessons affected the exposure of students both to content and art-making. While we did not measure specific skill or knowledge development, it is logical to assume that the amount of time allocated to lessons will influence the degree to which students develop art history knowledge and skills, as well as habits of mind.

Physical Space. Schools differed in the kind of art-making space they utilized. Many schools implemented Art in Action in the traditional classroom space, while some had a designated art room for the whole school, and still others used shared spaces such as a lunchroom or gymnasium. The location of the lessons shaped classroom transitions, how docents were able to prepare the space prior to the lesson, and the extent to which art-making was perceived as a learning activity that took place outside the conventional classroom space. We observed that having a dedicated art room did not solve all logistical problems. As one participant said, "We have just the one art room. Sometimes it can get crowded. Not every teacher is able to get art in when they want, because the only one afternoon slot is taken up."

People

Individual Goals. Just as schools had different goals for the program, docents had their own goals for each lesson. Some docents cared considerably more about the art history component. We observed one lesson in which a mother brought in time-period music and artifacts and went into great depth about the history of the masterpiece students were learning. Other docents saw Art in Action lessons as an opportunity to have conversations with students around a piece of art, and they focused more on facilitating discussion around students' interpretation of the masterpiece.

Individual Skills and Teaching Experience. Docents differed in their level of experience and skills, both in art and in teaching. In pedagogical theory, the content knowledge (domain-specific knowledge), pedagogical knowledge (how to teach), and pedagogical content knowledge (how to teach the specific content) are all considered distinct and essential skills of teachers (Grossman, 1990). We observed that classroom teachers demonstrated considerable pedagogical knowledge, but may not have had the same level of experience with the arts prior to the program. The trained studio artist and docents with backgrounds in art, art history, or other disciplines (e.g., architecture) had considerable content knowledge. However, in general,

most parents were not familiar with either teaching or art, other than through the Art in Action program.

Time Available for Coordination, Preparation, and Teaching. Who was teaching the program also affected the amount of time available for preparation of the lesson, coordination, and teaching. This varied at the individual level, but we also observed trends across schools. One of the biggest differences was that some schools served a majority of families in which two parents worked full-time jobs outside the home, while other schools had a significant population of parents whose full-time job was inside the home. Docents often mentioned how difficult it was to find the time to plan the lessons. One docent, for example, expressed concern about how Art in Action was moving all of its lessons online,

Yeah, I'm a busy mom. I'm driving two kids around. My husband's out of town. I'll be sitting in the car waiting for a doctor's appointment and that's my time to prepare. I can't always have an online connection...I want my physical hard copy.

Trainings and Support. Schools, docents, and coordinators varied in how much they tapped into the trainings and supports provided by Art in Action. Differences included the extent to which all docents received initial and/or ongoing trainings (either online or in-person), as well as how much the school coordinator or lead docent was in contact with Art in Action for support on particular aspects of implementation or pedagogy (e.g. how to teach a specific lesson, conduct a school-wide visual art exhibit, or find grants to sustain the program).

One school, for instance, hired Art in Action to conduct trainings each year at their site for all the parents who were going to be docents; we hypothesize that onsite trainings may contribute to a school's level of consistency in lesson structure and delivery. Other schools offered docents or coordinators the opportunity to participate in the trainings at Art in Action's headquarters at the beginning of the year, while in other schools, docents did not participate in person in any Art in Action trainings—this was particularly true for remote sites but also for some Bay Area schools.

Material Inputs

Art Materials. Art in Action offers art materials for purchase to schools, which come organized by lesson with everything schools need to teach a specific lesson. Many schools took advantage of this, since it was convenient and saved time. Other schools purchased their own supplies and put together what was needed for each lesson separately. Still other schools purchased the supply boxes, and then supplemented with additional materials. A point of pride for many sites was their art supply closet (Exhibit 4). Frequently, these closets were organized, easy to navigate, and cared for meticulously

Exhibit 4. Sample Art in Action Supply Closet



by docents and parent volunteers.

In addition to art supply boxes, schools must provide their own basic materials such as paints, brushes, and other tools. The quality, quantity, and age of these materials varied by school. While some schools had brand new pastels, paints, and other supplies each year, others used the same tools and materials multiple times.

Financial Support. The quantity and quality of materials, as well as other aspects of the program, were determined by the level of financial support schools were able to garner for Art in Action. In many schools, the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) fundraised to support the program, while in some schools, individual teachers were writing grants, and in others Art in Action shared the costs for the program. As might be expected, the financial support shaped key aspects of implementation, including whether the school was able to sustain the same level of programming year after year.

Why Some Sites Discontinued the Art in Action Program

Interviews with non-active schools indicated that sites discontinued implementing the program because of financial obstacles, scheduling difficulties, and changing priorities. For example, according to one docent, the grant that funded Art in Action in her school ran out and was not renewed; thus, they were unable to sustain the curriculum at her site. In another school, the lead docent identified the rapid increases in the cost of Art in Action's licensing fees as one of the main reasons why they left the program. She expressed that her school's PTA was the only source of funding and since many of the school's families were economically disadvantaged, it was unable to keep up with the cost increases. In addition, new PTA members pushed for other types of activities including STEM-related programs and field trips. Changing priorities were also observed in another site where one docent remarked how the district's focus on "computer adaptive learning" and "core academics" made it increasingly difficult to find time during the school day to teach Art in Action. Eventually the school abandoned the curriculum all together. In short, chief factors that lead schools to discontinue the Art in Action program were largely a matter of resource constraints (e.g., time, money) and shifting priorities.

CHAPTER 3 – THE PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OF ART IN ACTION ON STUDENTS, ADULTS, AND SCHOOLS

In this chapter, we report emergent themes from our interviews and observations regarding the types of settings and conditions Art in Action helped create. Then, we describe respondents' perspectives on the types of changes and development these settings and conditions helped promote in students, adults, and school communities.³ In all, we found that variations in program implementation had little bearing on respondents' overall perceptions of Art in Action—both as a program and its influence on students, adults, and school communities.

Still, it is important to note that while respondents identified similar benefits for participating in the program, the nature of these benefits and what they looked like in practice varied based on how the program was implemented at school (e.g., how much time was devoted to Art in Action, which aspects of the curriculum were emphasized). For instance, if one school emphasized the teaching of visual art techniques more than another school, students' skill level at this school will be higher; yet both schools can report that their students are learning visual art skills.

Art in Action's Program Structure

According to respondents, implementation of Art in Action's program helped to:

1. Expose participants to the art world and invite their participation—within the Art in Action classes and beyond;
2. Connect people to one another; and
3. Create “spaces” (physical, temporal, intellectual) that foster creativity.

Exposes Participants to the Art World and Invites their Participation

Participants described that through Art in Action, students, parents, docents, and teachers were exposed to the world of visual arts and invited to participate in novel ways. This included: (1) exposure to art history and genres; (2) experience with different visual arts concepts and media (e.g., chalk pastels, clay, charcoal, watercolor); and (3) increased comfort in visual art spaces outside of the classroom/school such as museums and galleries.

First, through their direct engagement with the program, students and docents reported learning about art history and masterpieces, as well as the different art genres, eras, and associated historical periods.

³ It was beyond the scope of the study to measure change directly. Rather, we used participants' reports about their experiences with Art in Action, in conjunction with observations of the program being implemented, to determine the types of changes possible by participating in the program. Results from this study can help identify which program results warrant further measurement and study.

For instance, one docent expressed how she learned a lot about the arts by participating in Art in Action,

Being able to go to a museum with my son and we'll both see a name that we recognize...We'll stand there and have a discussion about the piece of art that we studied last year...I now know artists I didn't know before and just learning the history behind it...I've learned lots.

Second, both docents and students learned a variety of art media and techniques. For example, we observed how students learned about primary and secondary colors, foreground and background, and how to draw a horizon line and face. Past research has found that the more art forms and techniques students study, the more likely they will participate in the arts in adulthood (Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011). Docents acknowledged that development of these art skills are only possible if students were exposed to them. As one said,

Most kids have access to pencils and markers, but not chalk pastels, oil pastels, starch, clay, different kinds of paint. There are a lot of kids where this is the only time they get to touch and play with these types of things and know what they do.

Field observations suggest that adults not directly involved with Art in Action also increased their engagement with the arts. They accomplished this in a few ways such as visiting the Art in Action visual art shows; seeing students' artwork displayed in the school or community (e.g., libraries, cafés); and receiving students' artwork and hearing their stories about art creation. At one school's exhibition, we observed how families praised their children for their efforts in art and engaged them in discussion about their projects and the art-making process more generally.

Finally, respondents described how they became more engaged with art-making as well as art spaces that previously were perceived as intimidating or uninteresting. As one docent conveyed, "Before, when people would drag me to museums, I would have no idea what I was looking at and actually thought people were making stuff up!" Another docent framed it this way,

I think it (Art in Action) gives them (students) confidence too when they're a little older and go out into the world. They have the right to go to a museum. It's something that they know about, and it's not something for other people. It's something for them too.

In addition to visiting art spaces, participants mentioned that they began to engage in more art activities outside of school (with or without their children). For instance, one mother remarked how Art in Action improved her ability to conduct art activities at home,

It actually helps me at home because a lot of times I want to do art projects with (name of respondent's daughter) and I'm like, 'Oh, what do I need? What's appropriate for this age?'...So, we've been doing a lot more fun art projects at home this year.

Connects People to One Another

By creating the opportunity and need for people to work together to implement Art in Action—including coordinating volunteers and delivering the curriculum—the program helped connect people in multiple ways. Past research has shown that social bonds at school promote positive development. For example, relative to peers who feel disconnected from school, students who report strong connections to adults and peers exhibit lower rates of health-risk behaviors such as substance use, early sexual debut, and weapon-use violence (Catalano, Oesterle, Fleming, & Hawkins, 2004; Thompson, Iachan, Overpeck, Ross, & Gross, 2006). Highly connected students also demonstrate, on average, better school performance including increased attendance, test scores, and grades (Blum, 2005; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Klem & Connell, 2004).

Students. Evidence suggests that Art in Action strengthened students' connections to their peers, parents, and school. When we asked students how they felt about having parents in their classroom, one third grader replied, "You can spend more time to learn about them, to know them than just being around your own parents, and learning not to be shy around other people." School personnel expressed how parents' presence in the classroom had positive benefits for students. One principal said, "When you have parent participation, kids feel special and valued. When parents are coming and taking out extra time, it's extra special." A growing body of research has demonstrated positive links between family engagement and their children's social and emotional development and academic achievement (Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Harvard Family Research Project, 2010; Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Parents. Parents reported increased connection to other parents, teachers, their own child, as well as other children in the classroom. For example, one parent stated,

...I as a parent enjoying seeing that stuff, especially for a kid you know, a kid you've known since they were born. You know? And you're like, 'Oh my god, they did that.' And you can say something, 'I saw this thing you did,' and they get like (gasps) all excited. I also think it just builds community with parents.

Another parent reported how their school's parent club was started because of the program, "The whole parents club started because of it (Art in Action). It's a big part of it...We have the fundraiser once a year. It's a big social event. Every year, I meet people I didn't know." One art teacher recognized the importance of parent support in carrying out the curriculum, "It takes a village to do this program. No one person could do this. It is a village and all of you guys (points to parents) make it happen."

Teachers. Evidence suggests that Art in Action helped connect teachers to students and parents. For instance, one teacher at a remote site commented how every year parents would share stories regarding their child's engagement with the program. She described,

They said that that they were sitting around the kitchen table and their first grader started talking about the masterpiece he's learned about, and was able to communicate, you know different things about that. She was like, 'I was just in shock.' You know? That their child, their first grader was learning this and that they were able to articulate it and discuss it around the dinner table.

School. Data indicate that connection also increased at the school level. One parent remarked how students' Art in Action projects helped build a sense of community at the school,

All the artwork is displayed so the kids see each other's work and their own work and the pride that goes with that...because it's not random individuals doing projects, there's a community aspect to it especially when the art is displayed. It's sparking conversations.

We also observed how the program bolstered the school's connection to its surrounding community. As one parent noted, "It's really cool if you go to the library or wherever and you see the Art in Action kind of like spreading through." One local principal stated how Art in Action was well-known in her school's neighborhood, "The realtors talk about how it's an Art in Action school!" She also said that her students' art projects have been displayed "at city hall, the library, all sorts of places in the community."

Creates Spaces that Foster Creativity

Evidence suggests that Art in Action promoted three types of spaces within the school setting. First, implementing the program required some type of *physical space*. While this looked different for each school, every school had to create a space for the art-making to happen. One principal described how, with support from a Title I grant, she was able to create an art room,

We were able to get the art room and redo that room to be for art, and the sinks have clay traps so we could do clay work in there. And then we have the kiln, art tables, etc. We can really make it an art room.

Even if an assigned art room did not exist at the school, the gym, lunchroom, or multi-purpose space was transformed to create an environment for art-making and exhibition. For instance, Exhibit 5 shows how one school used their indoor gym to showcase students' artwork.

Exhibit 5. Art in Action Visual Art Exhibit



Second, Art in Action helped create a *temporal space*, since time had to be allocated in the school's schedule. While some sites taught an entire lesson within a one-hour period, others extended single lessons into thematic units that lasted several days or weeks. One remote site teacher described how she expanded the lesson on Van Gogh into four lessons, "I stretched it out four weeks...I would make it into different lessons. If we had extra time, I would read them a book...I would show them videos with the song Vincent that shows all of his paintings."

Lastly, participants reported how Art in Action provided conditions for an *intellectual space* that fostered creativity. Youth and adults characterized this space as safe, open, fun, and creative. Past studies have shown that students with arts education training perform better on assessments of creativity, when compared to those who received little arts education (Luftig, 2000). Creativity was a common theme in our interviews—critical to both youth and adult respondents. One fifth grader claimed how "Art class is the only time you can be creative and use your brain to imagine things."

Perceived Benefits for Art in Action Participants

Respondents perceived that by increasing exposure to the arts, encouraging participation in arts spaces, strengthening social bonds, and providing structure for young people to use their imagination and create their own art, Art in Action helped provide schools, adults, and students the opportunity to:

1. Develop visual art knowledge and skills, and habits of mind;
2. Express themselves in different ways; and
3. Be more visible to one another and the larger community

Develop Visual Art Knowledge and Skills, and Habits of Mind

Participants reported that engagement with Art in Action gave them the chance to hone new knowledge and skills in the visual arts, as well as mindsets—dispositions central to learning not only in the arts but in other subjects. Earlier research has shown that by studying and practicing the arts, students enhance their ability to turn perceived barriers into opportunities, and are better able to sustain their attention and complete complex tasks (DeMoss & Morris, 2002; Scott, 1992). Moreover, Eisner (2002) notes that arts education teaches unique lessons such as

a willingness to imagine possibilities that are not yet observable; that problems have more than one solution; and that there are a diversity of perspectives. One eighth grade student described how proud she felt after completing an art project,

I feel extremely proud of myself after finishing an art piece, because you never thought of doing that before, and they give you this assignment, but it is not an assignment, it's more a creative pathway. It's really fun. When you finish an art piece, you are like, 'Whoa, I actually did that.' Or when you finish something that you're like 'Meh, I could have done better,' you know that next time if you want to do something like that you can go, 'Ok I know that I need to fix that.'

Students also shared how the arts improved their capacity to envision. One fifth grader stated, "Art helps me with reading because you can picture it in your mind. We were reading ___ *and the Mighty*. He's real strong with cut-off sleeves but he's a nice kid. You can picture him." Additionally, students' spoke about their ability to attend more closely to visual elements. One student remarked,

You never notice how a vase has different angles. You just look at it, and it just looks like a shape; it is nothing special. But then when you draw it, you can make anything that is inside of it.

One parent also described how through the arts, her daughter was able to learn the skill of perspective taking, "Different ways of looking at art, different ways of looking at things is an incredibly useful life skill. It's not about art." Teachers recognized that perspective taking was an important skill for young people to learn. One teacher said,

You can have the same picture, a still life picture, and then another one be exactly the same picture but it's an abstract picture. And it means two different things to them even though it's the same object. So it gives them perspective, and an ability to change perspective depending on what information they're given. And I think that's a great learning tool that expands their ability to think through situations.

Previous research shows that the ability to explore multiple and alternative viewpoints helps bolster students' critical thinking skills (e.g., hypothesizing, comparing) that support learning in a variety of subjects (Heath, Soep, & Roach, 1998; Montgomerie & Ferguson, 1999).

Express Themselves in Different Ways

Students and adults reported that through their engagement with Art in Action, they learned ways to express their "whole selves" (i.e., other aspects of their personality). One third grade student stressed the importance of the arts because, "Kids should be able to express themselves without saying anything." The opportunity to express oneself, according to one docent, "levels the playing field for all kids. Everyone can look at art and express what they see in a picture."

Adults also conveyed how they learned new skills in self-expression. One parent reported, “Parents enjoy the program a lot and have learned about their own ways of expressing in art. It’s a good experience. Parents’ affinity for art is growing with exposure.” A remote site teacher described how she enrolled in an art course, “I’ve definitely become more interested in art. In fact, I’m going to be taking a drawing class this summer with my father.”

Finally, through visual art shows and displays (within and outside the school) students’ Art in Action projects became an expression of the school’s unique identity. This was especially true in school sites where Art in Action was the only arts program available to students.

Be Visible to One Another and the Larger Community in New Ways

By connecting people to one another and providing opportunities for self-expression, respondents stated how Art in Action helped the school, and the people within it, become more visible—not only to one another but to the larger community. By displaying students’ art in the school and neighborhood, and because teachers and families worked together to implement the program, students and adults were able to ‘see’ each other in different ways.

Students. Teachers and administrators explained how Art in Action’s curriculum allowed students’ other (perhaps previously untapped) talents to emerge. As one docent explained,

I feel like I’ve seen certain kids who maybe they’re not the star athlete or even the star student, and they come into the room and they just, you see that they’re in their element. They’re so fascinated with it and successful with it, and committed to it. I’ve seen some kids do some work that just, I could never think about doing, just so beautiful, and so much individualism.

When we asked students how they would feel if the arts were no longer available in their school, many comments reflected this concept of visibility. For instance, one student stated, “I would feel sad. Others may feel invisible because art is one way for people to become visible.”

Adults. Teachers, and the work they do, were better seen by parents who volunteered in their classrooms. One teacher commented how parents’ engagement with Art in Action helped increase parents’ empathy for teachers’ work,

When I talk to parents who have been involved with Art in Action, [they] are usually amazed at...they get a new perspective for how teachers work during the day. Most of them say, ‘I don’t know how you do this.’ They have a better appreciation for what teachers are doing...more sympathetic to what is going on in the classroom.

At the same time, parents were seen by teachers and administrators in new ways. Parents were given the opportunity to be ‘seen’ in the classroom in a way that other volunteering opportunities rarely allowed. As one docent commented, “I think they (teachers) like to know that we’re participating. For them, it must be validating that when we have a good turnout for Art in Action, when we have parents willing to get involved and help out.”

Perceived Sense of Pride and Ownership, Joy, and Engagement with School

Respondents reported that by facilitating the types of settings and conditions that afford schools, adults, and youth opportunities and experiences to develop in new ways, Art in Action helped instill in students, parents, and school staff personal and communal feelings of pride and ownership, joy, and engagement with school. These themes are consistent with past research that demonstrates how the arts can help foster a positive culture and climate in schools (Deasy & Stevenson, 2005).

Pride and Ownership

We observed how students felt proud of their art-making skills and artwork; parent volunteers felt proud of their children's artwork and for belonging to a school that valued the arts; and teachers and administrators felt proud of their students and school as a whole. As one third grader expressed, "Well sometimes I'm kind of happy about my painting because it's unique and it's special from all the others...mine is just special and it's not the same as anybody else's." One parent noted how Art in Action and the arts more broadly was a point of pride, "a huge selling point...when new parents are coming to tour the school one of the things we say is that we have Art in Action here. It draws in good families."

Joy

Students often characterized Art in Action and the process of art-making as fun and joyful. When asked to describe how they felt when they were making art, one student said, "I feel like a baby tree, sprouting from the earth, excited just pushing up!" Parents also expressed enjoyment in volunteering in the classroom and being with their children. Moreover, many families were happy to see their children's artwork displayed in the classroom, school, and visual art exhibitions. One parent described,

Last year was my first introduction to Art in Action. I volunteered almost every time. I had accidentally volunteered towards the end to lead the class and was not happy about that. But, you know what, after I did it once, I was hooked. I loved it.

Engagement with School

There were a number of indications that the Art in Action program helped promote a sense of engagement with the school for both parents and students. First, parents frequently mentioned that the Art in Action program was not only, "the most fun you'll have volunteering," but often also the only opportunity parents have to volunteer in the classroom with their children. Other volunteer opportunities tended to be around assisting in the office, chaperoning field trips, or fundraising, which did not afford meaningful interaction with their children, their children's classmates, or even their child's teacher. As mentioned earlier, parents and principals also reported that the program boosted family engagement at the school.

Art class was frequently identified as a space where youth felt free and creative in ways that rarely happened in other classes. By creating this space, and organizing time for children to express their “whole selves,” teachers, parents, and students all related stories of how children appeared more engaged with school than they may have otherwise. For instance, one teacher remarked how there were few behavior incidents during art class. Further, by creating a space in which students were not under pressure to get a good grade or have the correct answer, students reported feeling more motivated and focused. As one third grade student said,

I think art really helps me in my other subjects mainly because it motivates me. Let’s say Art in Action is put right after math class, then in math I say ‘I better do this because I have Art in Action next!

Engagement is essential since students who report feeling disengaged from school are less likely to attend school and take part in learning activities (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004).

CHAPTER 4 – A REVISED THEORY OF CHANGE

In this chapter, we propose a revised theory of change for Art in Action. After the data collection and analysis, we revisited the initial theory of change and found that revisions were necessary. In particular, the old theory of change combined organizational strategic goals and programmatic influence goals. Since a theory of change is focused primarily on program influence—or the organization’s view of success—we refined Art in Action’s theory of change to emphasize the influences we uncovered through participants’ report of their experiences and our observations of the program. This updated theory of change (Exhibit 5) draws on what is actually happening in schools and aligns them with Art in Action’s vision: that every child has access to high quality visual arts, and that the arts play a valued and integral role in the lives of all people. This revised theory of change is a primary finding of this study; we provide below an overview of each of its components.

Vision

Every child has access to high-quality visual arts education and opportunities so that the arts may play a valued and integral role in the lives of all people.

Problem Statement

An increasing number of students lack access to high-quality visual arts education and opportunities, and this limits their ability to connect with the arts and cultivate skills and habits of mind that experience with the arts can help develop.

Inputs and Strategies

To help address this problem, Art in Action has devised two main strategies. They:

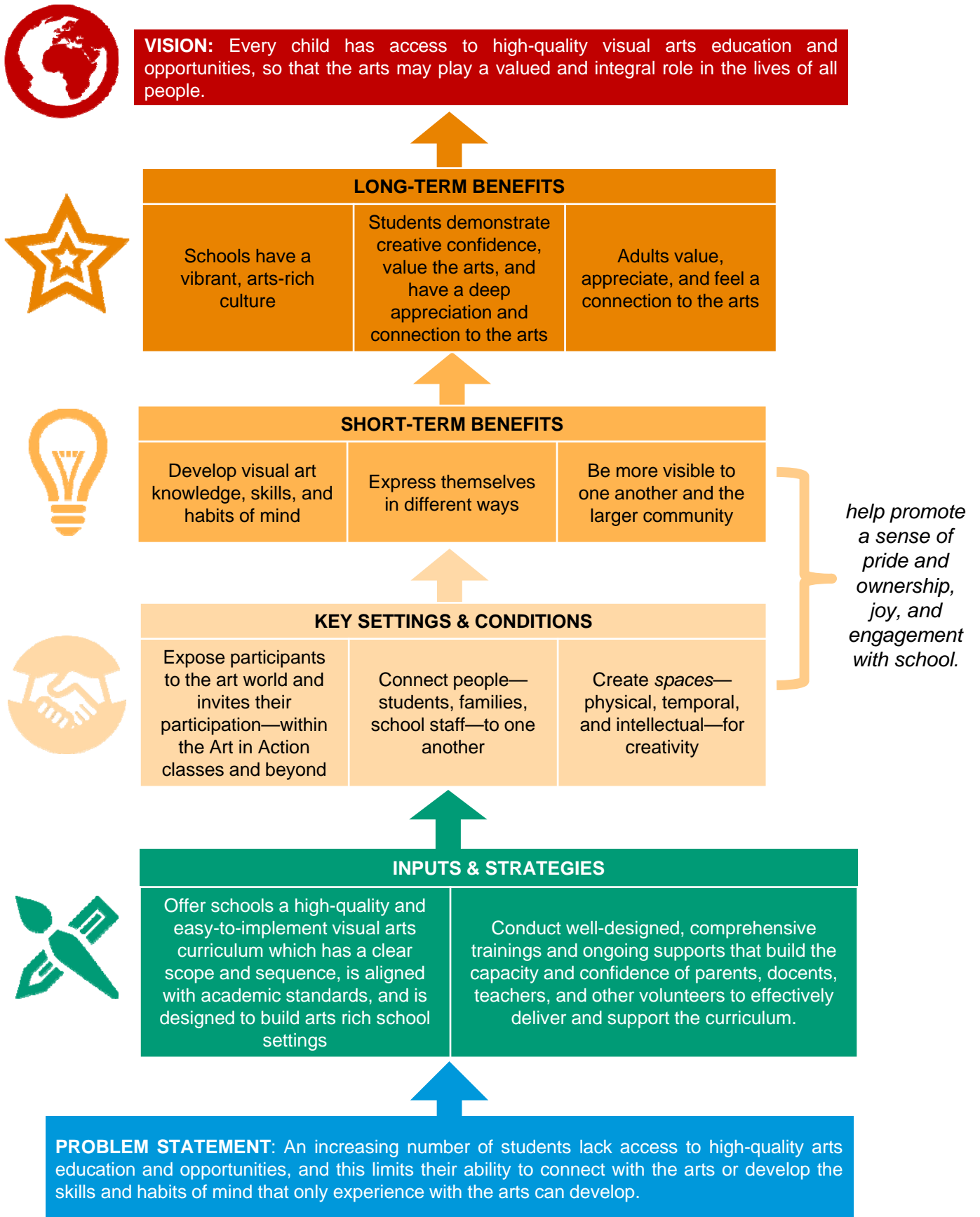
1. Offer schools a flexible and easy-to-implement visual arts curriculum, which has a scope and sequence and is designed to build arts-rich school settings; and
2. Conduct trainings and ongoing supports that build the capacity and confidence of parents, docents, and teachers, to deliver and support their curriculum.

Key Settings and Conditions

Successful implementation of the Art in Action program facilitate settings and conditions that:

1. Expose participants to the art world and invites their participation—within the Art in Action classes and beyond;
2. Connect people (students, families, school staff) with one another; and
3. Create “spaces” (physical, temporal, intellectual) for creativity.

Exhibit 5. A Revised Theory of Change for Art in Action (November 2015)



Short-Term Benefits (1-3 years)

By creating the settings and conditions above, Art in Action provides opportunities for participants (students, parents, docents, and school communities) to:

1. Develop new knowledge, skills, and habits of mind;
2. Express themselves in different ways; and
3. Be more visible to one another and the larger community.

Together, these settings, conditions, and opportunities to develop in new ways help promote a sense of pride and ownership, joy, and engagement with school among participants.

Long-Term Benefits (over 5 years)⁴

Long-term changes in students, adults, and schools hinge upon successful program implementation, which set up the necessary conditions and settings that allow participants to attain short-term benefits of the program. We hypothesize that long-term benefits from participating in Art in Action have been achieved if there is strong evidence to suggest that:

1. Schools have a vibrant arts-rich culture;
2. Students demonstrate creative confidence, value the arts, and have a deep appreciation and connection to the arts; and,
3. Adults value, appreciate, and feel a deep connection to the arts.

⁴ Because the present study was approximately one year, we were unable to observe or measure the potential long-term benefits of participating in the Art in Action program. We speculate that these benefits are plausible based on participants' reported experiences and our observations of the program.

CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

In all, findings suggest that Art in Action had a flexible and decentralized program implementation model. We observed significant variation in how the program was carried out, both within and across the case study sites. Yet despite these differences, respondents shared similar broad perceptions about the program and its influence on students, adults, and school communities. In general, Art in Action was perceived by participants as a high-quality visual arts curriculum that allowed for adaptation. Respondents described how the implementation of Art in Action helped expose children and adults to the arts and encouraged their participation in arts spaces both within school and outside of school; strengthened social bonds; and provided an outlet for young people to use their imagination and create.

In creating these types of settings and conditions, respondents stated how the Art in Action program helped provide opportunities for adult and youth participants to cultivate visual art knowledge and techniques, and habits of mind (e.g., persistence), as well as develop confidence for self-expression. Respondents also described how the program helped make the unique talents and skills of children and parents more visible within the school and broader community. Evidence indicates that these settings, conditions, and opportunities nurtured a sense of pride and ownership, joy, and engagement with school among students, parents, teachers, and staff.

While Art in Action's flexible and decentralized program model was seen as an asset by many in our study, this flexibility results in diverse experiences with the program. We discuss below some ways the key implementation factors can shape participants' experiences with Art in Action:

- 1. Schools' goals for adopting the program.** Whether a school is focused on providing students with access to the visual arts or committed to teaching them specific art skills or habits of mind, these goals influence the types of changes seen in students. For example, if a school heavily stresses the teaching of visual art techniques (e.g., painting, sculpting) over the art-history component of Art in Action lessons, the caliber of artistic craft among these students will be higher than the average school.
- 2. The schools' program model (structures and processes; e.g., parent-taught vs. teacher-taught; time spent on lessons; space used for art-making; how the program was coordinated).** How a program is structured is likely to affect changes in students, classrooms, and school communities. For instance, if a program is teacher-taught, it is not likely to create the same number or depth of connections between parents at that school. Or, if a school has one hour allocated to art each month, the results of that level of exposure may be different than a school that allocates time for art each week and extends each lesson across an entire month.
- 3. The docents involved in carrying out the program (e.g. docent goals when teaching; docent art knowledge/skill and teaching ability; availability of volunteers; extent to which they accessed training and support from the Art in Action website or team).** Each docent has their own unique perspective on the program, and brings to the lesson

their own unique set of experiences and talents. This means, with a highly flexible program, each docents' lessons are likely to have different kinds of impact on students. For example, if a docent is the classroom teacher, s/he may connect the material with other learning happening in the classroom of which parent docents may not be aware.

- 4. The material inputs provided by the schools (e.g., arts materials, financial support).** The extent to which a school is able to purchase the art boxes supplied by Art in Action, or can afford new materials or additional field trips and activities to support the school's goals for the program is likely to affect the changes at each level of the program—school community, docents/classroom, and students.

Key Questions for Consideration

Findings point to a number of questions for Art in Action to consider as it works to expand its programming to more schools. Given that changes brought about by participating in the program are likely to differ based on how the program is implemented, perhaps the main overarching question is:

Are there certain outcomes at the student, docent, or school level—beyond arts exposure—that Art in Action cares deeply about? If so, are there ways to shift the program curriculum, structure, or supports to maximize these outcomes?

If the main priorities of Art in Action are to prize flexibility of implementation over consistency, and provide students access to the visual arts, then the program is largely achieving these aims. If, however, Art in Action cares about developing particular types of changes in students, classrooms, and schools—with any consistency across sites—it must decide which outcomes it cares most about. For instance, are there certain habits of mind the program would like to develop in students? If so, there are likely ways to support schools in thinking about these and ways to highlight them in the curriculum. Are the development of visual art skills and techniques particularly important? If so, opportunities to reflect on the art creation process and iterate might be important. In short, clarity around these organizational goals can promote more intentional and focused efforts that support students' learning and experiences in the arts.

Other related questions and tensions uncovered in the study include the following: (1) Supporting schools with different goals; (2) Expectations for teaching and the curriculum; and (3) Engaging families in school through the arts.

1. Supporting Schools with Different Goals

Schools had a wide variety of needs that Art in Action was able to cater to because of its 'flexibility within form' model that could be adapted to varied contexts. Differences in program implementation largely depended on the schools' goals, as well as the availability of resources (e.g., physical space, volunteer support). Some schools were searching for a program for one grade or classroom, while others wanted a full program for the whole school. Some schools wanted to develop students' art-making skills, while others simply wanted to ensure students

had basic exposure to the arts. Still other schools were searching for a meaningful way for parents to get involved. Frequently, the school's intention for adopting the program shaped the structures and processes used to organize its implementation. Given these variations,

How might Art in Action better learn about the reasons why schools adopt their program? How can they leverage this knowledge to inform their outreach, curriculum, and supports?

How might Art in Action design trainings and provide guidance that help schools achieve their intended aims for the program?

If Art in Action has particular outcomes it wants to focus on, how might Art in Action work with schools to consider and incorporate the practices and structures that are likely to achieve these goals, even if the school's own priorities differ?

2. Expectations for Teaching and Curriculum

Data indicate that the ways in which lessons were taught and structured differed considerably. Some lessons were adapted to last several weeks, while others had less than an hour to introduce concepts, discuss the masterpiece, demonstrate the art-making, and create original works. Additionally, in some schools, art was only taught once a month, while others delivered the curriculum more frequently. Moreover, how the content was taught and which parts of the lessons were emphasized depended largely on the experience and skills of the docent, both in art and in teaching. In addition, the amount of time allocated for Art in Action and the structure of lessons affected students' exposure both to content and art-making. Thus, if a 'flexibility in form model' is Art in Action's main program model, then variable experiences, and results from those experiences, are to be expected. Given these differences, several questions emerge including the following:

From Art in Action's perspective, what would characterize a successful lesson and school program (beyond program sustainability)? How would success be defined and measured? Should individual schools address these questions for themselves?

Should docents complete a minimum number of trainings, refresher courses, and other professional development? Should Art in Action develop and enforce a set of minimum standards and expectations for how lessons should be taught?

Related to this, we found that few schools encouraged students to reflect on their aesthetic choices, the creative process, or the work of others. Is reflection critical to the types of changes and development Art in Action seeks to cultivate in students? If so, how might the organization support docents accordingly?

3. Engaging Families through the Arts

Participants reported that Art in Action helped increase school social bonds, particularly with families, and there is evidence to suggest it also increases engagement of parents and students with the school. For instance, Art in Action was often the only opportunity that allowed parents to be with their child in the classroom, and we observed how parents actively volunteered, coordinated, and took ownership of the program. Parents also worked with teachers and administrators to ensure that the curriculum continued to be delivered year after year. Evidence suggests that Art in Action presented a unique and collaborative opportunity for families and schools to engage in meaningful ways. Moreover, the program also provided a structure for families to engage their children's learning in the arts at home. These findings are important for Art in Action to consider, particularly as research continues to demonstrate positive links between family engagement and children's social and emotional development and achievement (e.g., Harvard Family Research Project, 2010). Thus,

Is family engagement an outcome Art in Action cares to actively support? If so, what are the implications for supporting schools that choose to implement Art in Action as a classroom teacher-led program with minimal parent support?

How might Art in Action supplement their curriculum with home-based activities that reinforce concepts and learning in the arts? How might these activities take into account cultural, socioeconomic, and linguistic diversity?

What types of supports are necessary to help families feel confident and empowered to support their children's learning in the arts, both at school and at home?

Conclusion

In summary, our study suggests that Art in Action is an extremely flexible program that can be easily adapted to meet the goals, needs, and circumstances of schools. Although program implementation varied significantly, both within and across schools, participants report similar broad perceptions about the program and its influences on students, adults and school communities. Many see Art in Action as a high-quality visual arts curriculum that provides unique and substantive ways for parents to be involved in their child's education. Participants express how Art in Action helps provide a structured and student-centered learning environment that encourages exploration, and where children are allowed to explore. Respondents also report how the program helps create safe and joyful spaces for students—as well as adults—to learn about the visual arts, engage in the creative process, investigate new perspectives and ideas, and express themselves in novel ways. Moreover, because parents, teachers, and administrators work together to implement the program, Art in Action is perceived as providing a way to increase connections and foster a school community.

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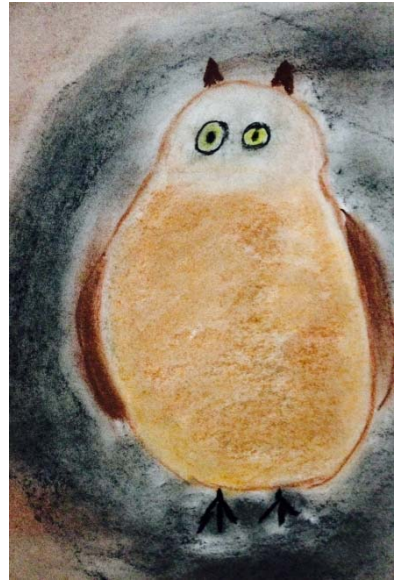
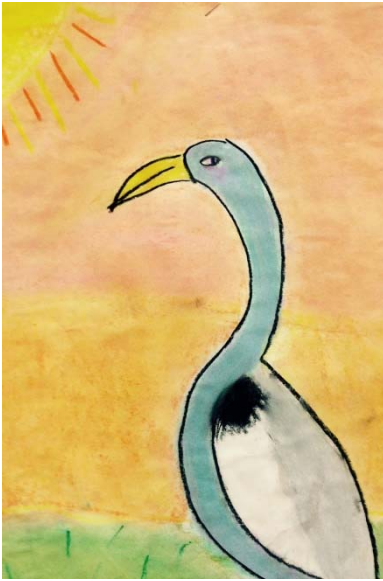
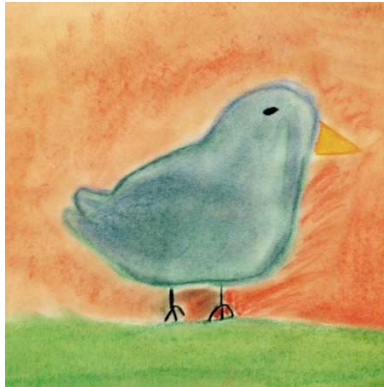
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APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Sample of Student Artwork
- Appendix B: Interview Protocols
- Appendix C: Classroom Observations Instrument
- Appendix D: Lesson Observations in Bay Area Schools

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE OF STUDENT ART WORK



APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

General Interview Protocol (Adults)

Thank you again for agreeing to conduct this interview. We are excited to be working with Art in Action on this project. In this study, we're interested in understanding

- *how and why schools take part in the Art in Action school program;*
- *why they stay with the program and for how long;*
- *why they leave and for what reasons;*
- *how many students participate in the program and what they think about it; and*
- *how the program influence (if at all) students, teachers, school administrators, parents, other community members, as well as the school as a whole*

There are no correct answers to any of the questions, and you are free to skip any question you choose. To accurately capture your perspectives, we ask for your permission to audio record this interview. The recording and any transcript from it will be kept confidential and secure. Your identity will not be linked to your responses. Please know that you are free to stop the interview at any time. Our goal today is to listen and learn from you, so we encourage you to be as forthcoming and to provide as much information as possible. This interview will last approximately one hour. Do you have any questions before we begin? [wait for response]

Great. I'll turn on the recorder now and begin the interview.

Background Information

1. Tell us about your current role at this school.
2. How were you engaged with the Art in Action School Program? For how long were you engaged in this capacity?
3. Why are you involved in Art in Action? Why did you start and why do you stay?

About Art in Action

4. Tell us about Art in Action in your words.
5. What is your perspective on art in school? Why should schools have art?
6. Did you have any particular connection to or passion for the arts before becoming involved with Art in Action?
7. Has participation in Art in Action changed your relationship with visual arts at all?

About the school culture

8. Could you describe the school's culture or relationship with the arts?
 - a. Are the arts highly integrated? Is there very little art?
 - b. Has it always been like this?
9. Are there other arts programs in the school?

Participation

10. Could you tell us the story of how Art in Action came to be adopted in your school? How did the school find out about the program?
11. Could you describe the decision-making process? Were there any challenges you remember?
12. Why did the school decide on Art in Action and not on another program? What was the reason for this particular program?
13. Were people hoping for a particular impact of the program? What was it?
14. Was anyone particularly passionate about Art in Action or about a different option? Why?
15. Were there any issues with finding the funding?

Saturation & 'Stickiness'

16. What were the mechanics/ details of how Art in Action is implemented in your school?
 - a. Who are the main instructors?
 - b. Who schedules/organizes/oversees the program?
 - c. When and how often taught?
 - d. How often / how much of the curriculum is covered? In what ways does this work or not work?
17. What are the biggest challenges you face in implementing?
18. Are there any "sweet spots" - things working super well?
19. Did the way the school implements the program change over time? Why/how?
20. (For site coordinator) We were told Art in Action was in X/X% of your classrooms. Is that right?
 - a. Why did the school do it this way?
 - b. (if in all classrooms) Was it challenging in any way to expand to all classrooms?
 - c. (if not in all classrooms) Why has the school decided to not expand to all classrooms?
 - i. Would you like to see an increase? If no – why not? If yes – to whom, and describe any challenges in getting the program to more students at this school (or in the district/area they identify)
21. Do you draw on the central Art in Action office for support or training?
 - a. Do your instructors do any training from Art in Action?
 - b. What's your sense of what is most useful about the training?
22. How often is the school team in touch with the Art in Action staff? For what kinds of reasons?
23. Describe how Art in Action is perceived at this school
 - a. by students
 - b. by teachers/administrators/staff
 - c. by families and other community stakeholders
24. What would you say are the strengths are shortcomings of the way the school implements Art in Action?
25. If you could change two things about how it's working right now, what would they be?
26. How would you describe the curriculum? What do you like? What would you change?

Influence

Students: We're interested in understanding whether or how Art in action might have had an influence on students, either through their relationship with art, or by involvement with the arts affecting other aspects of the student's experience at school

27. Did you see any effects on the students because of Art in Action in the school?
28. Learning and school performance?
29. Connection to the classroom or to the school?
30. Excitement about learning / new approaches to thinking about problems?

School: We're interested in understanding whether and how Art in Action might influence the larger culture of art at the school.

31. In what ways, if any, has the Art in Action program or staff played a role in shifting the culture of art at the school?
32. In what ways, if any, has the Art in Action program affected the relationship between parents/families and the school?
33. What does your school get out of Art in Action – what are the benefits? In what ways, if any, does Art in Action
 - a. influence students' learning and school performance?
 - b. influence the teachers and school staff?
 - c. influence the culture and climate of the school?
 - d. influence families?
34. How do you think the program can be better/or be improved? Describe what it would take to make these improvements?
35. What would be different at your school if Art and Action went away? For students? Teachers? The school as a whole?

Closing questions

36. Are there any topics we didn't discuss that you think would be important to mention to better understand how Art in Action is implemented at your school?
37. Do you have any questions for us?

General Interview Protocol (Students)

Thank you again for meeting with us today. We're researchers and are interested in learning more about your experiences in art class. We'd like to learn about the different types of art you've made; what you like or don't like about art class; how art class makes you feel; and what can make art class even better. Do you think you can help us?

[Wait for and acknowledge response]

Super. So that we don't miss anything you say, we'd like to tape record our conversation today. Is that okay with you?

[Wait for and acknowledge response]

Great. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers, and no one else will hear this tape except for us. So feel free to say whatever you're thinking. Try to say all of your thoughts as they come to you and try to say not just what you think but also why you think that. Do you have any questions before we begin?

[Wait for and acknowledge response].

OK. I'll turn on the recorder now and begin.

Warm up question:

1. Complete this sentence: My favorite thing about art is...
 - a. Give students post-it notes to write or draw their short answer first, to get a full variety of answers
2. Let's go around the room and share some of our favorite things about art class
 - a. Place post-it notes somewhere visible
3. Do you ever remember a time when you didn't have art class? What was that like?

Influence of making art/Art in Action

4. We'd like to ask you about this art project you made recently. *(Using an Art in Action poster of a project they've completed, or their own work of art as an example)*
 - a. What was it like making this project?
 - b. How did you feel?
 - c. What did you like about it?
 - d. Was there anything you didn't like about it?
 - e. What did you learn? (e.g., vocabulary, name of artist)?
 - f. If you could go back in time and redo this project, what would you do differently? Why?
 - g. What do your teachers, parents, friends, and classmates think about art?
 - h. If your school didn't offer art class anymore, how would that make you feel?
5. If you could spend more time doing art or playing sports or doing science experiments, which would you do and why?
 - a. When you make art, does it feel the same as when you do other types of school activities (e.g., reading, doing math, science experiments, sports)? Why or why not?

6. Do you do a lot of art outside of school?
7. Do you think making art influences your brain or personality? If so, how?
8. Does learning about art and making art help you do better in school? If so, how?

Ending questions

9. Is there anything else you'd like for us to know about what it's like to make art? About your art class at school?
10. Do you have any questions for us?

APPENDIX C: CLASSROOM OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT

Lesson Observation Instrument

Section I: Descriptive details about the school, classroom, instructor, and students

Overview / “Memory Jogging” (simple descriptions that will help us remember the classroom)			
Observer(s)			
Date and Time			
School Name			
Grade/Classroom Observed			
Instructor Name, Gender, Race/ethnicity			
Instructor Gender/ (Ethnicity?)			
Teacher or Parent?			
Other adult support? (#, parent(s) or teacher)			
Class Size (# students)	Boys	Girls	Total
Race/ethnicity of students? (best guess)			
Lesson Name & Art Medium			
Art Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artwork displayed? (General vs. Art in Action art?) • Arts equipment, tools, and materials are in good condition, organized, and available to students • Room is clean, well-maintained, and arranged to facilitate learning 			

Section II: Descriptive details about each stage of the lesson

TIME	Planning & Setup
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the instructor have everything needed for the lesson? • Does setup allow students to quickly begin making art? (is the set up organized?) • Are children involved with the set-up or is it done prior to the lesson?
	Lesson Overview
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the instructor introduce the lesson? Materials used?
	Introduction of Artist & Discussion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the instructor introduce the artist? (are form, theme, and context all addressed?) • How do children participate in a discussion of the artist or the era? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Closed/open-ended questions? ○ Are non-standard answers and questions allowed/encouraged? • How is the historical/geographic/cultural context of the art introduced and discussed?
	Discussion of Terms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are/how are key terms introduced? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do students practice the terms in discussion? Use them another way? Are they present in the classroom (i.e. on the walls, etc.)? ○ Which concepts/terms are addressed and which are not addressed?
	Directions to Students
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the lesson described to the students? (e.g. step-by-step, overview then let them go?) • How much extra individualized support do students require/receive while creating art?

TIME	Creation of Art by Students
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the instructor's role once students begin creating art? • How are students encouraged / what are they told is important about how they make the art (e.g. about mistakes, choice in colors, choice in assignment, etc.)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ What are key messages they are hearing? • How do students speak with one another about the art while they're working on it?
	Assessment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are knowledge/skills taught during the lesson assessed?
	Lesson Closing / Wrap up
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the lesson brought to a close? • Is there a definitive timed-ending, or do students naturally move on to another activity as they finish? • Do all students have time to finish the artwork they're working?

Any memorable quotes, vignettes, or anecdotes?

APPENDIX D – LESSON OBSERVATIONS IN BAY AREA SCHOOLS

School	Lesson	Lead Instructor	Grade Level	Other Volunteers	Total Lesson (minutes)	Lecture/ Demonstration (minutes)	Art Creation (minutes)	Reflection (minutes)
A	Miro	Parent	1	2	35	20	15	0
	El Greco	Parent	2	4	70	30	40	0
	Theibaud	Parent	4	4	84	18	66	0
	Rousseau	Parent	K	4	50	10	40	0
B	Currier & Ives	Parent	2	2	82	50	25	7
	Van Gogh	Teacher	2	4	60	31	18	11
	Warhol	Teacher	5	1	87	27	60	0
	Persian Tap	Parent	K	0	49	10	39	0
C	Tlingit	2 Parents	1	4	45	25	20	0
	Degas	2 Parents	3	5	75	33	42	0
	Kandinsky	2 Parents	3	4	65	25	40	0
	French Tapestry	Parent	K	4	55	20	35	0
D	Currier/Ives	Parent	2/3	2	40	15	25	0
	Vasserey	Parent	4/5	2	60	10	50	0
	Lorenzetti*	Teacher	7	0	35	35	n/a	0
	Seurat	Parent	K/1	--	45	15	30	0
E	Homer	Parent & Art Teacher	5	--	73	25	48	0
	Fayum	Parent & Art Teacher	6	3	50	10	40	0
	Book of Kells	Parent & Art Teacher	7	3	65	15	50	0
	Renoir	Parent & Art Teacher	K	3	61	35	25	1
Mean				2.8	59.3	23.0	37.3	1.0

*Note: Researchers were unable to observe the art-making portion of this lesson, which was done on a separate day, due to scheduling.