IMPLEMENTING THE ART EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY OF VICTOR D'AMICO IN A
CONTEMPORARY ART CLASSROOM

By

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A CAPSTONE PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS OF THE
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Summary of Capstone Project
Presented to the College of the Arts of the University of Florida
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IMPLEMENTING THE ART EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY OF VICTOR D'AMICO IN A
MODERN DAY ART CLASSROOM

By

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Major: Art Education

Abstract

The focus of this capstone project was to investigate what would happen when I created and

implemented an elementary art education curriculum that incorporated the art education

philosophy of Victor D'Amico, who believed in the importance of fostering student creativity.

To conduct my study I used an action research methodology. Using a *backward design* approach,

I developed a fourth grade art curriculum from D'Amico's writings that encouraged creativity. I

examined my classroom design, my instructional methods, and my fourth grade students'

responses. I found D'Amico's philosophy of art education to be effective, applicable, and

relevant for contemporary times. My Capstone paper describes my research process, my findings

and recommendations. First I discuss Victor D'Amico and his philosophy of art education. Then

I describe my application of his philosophy in developing a fourth grade art curriculum, based on

the backward design approach to curriculum development. Next I describe how I used action

research methodology to implement my project and how I collected data to inform my interpretation of the results. Finally, I share three findings that emerged from my research: students explored and experimented with trying art techniques new to them; students came to class and eagerly engaged in the content and activities before them; and students grew in their self-confidence resulting in personal pride in their work. I recommend any art educator interested in implementing a philosophy that encourages creativity and incorporates a student-directed curriculum to investigate the work of Victor D'Amico. I conclude this Capstone paper with information on future plans for my curriculum and teaching methods, as well as information on the website I created. The website, http://www.art2020.weebly.com, includes a blog documenting my work, information on Victor D'Amico, the curriculum I developed from D'Amico's writings, an article for publication, and my Capstone paper.

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During my first class at University of Florida, I had the good fortune to come across an article by Efland (1976) in which he describes the term *school art* as artwork created within the classroom and free of cognitive strain. The completed products have a range of identifiable differences that can be detected but stylistic influences and art styles are kept to a minimum. Efland's definition of *school art* described my classroom and I knew my method of teaching needed a change. I was motivated to research and investigate different curriculums, methods, theories, textbooks, crafts, and other ideas in order to find the best method for my students. It was during this time that I became familiar with the art education philosophy of Victor D'Amico (1960). I was intrigued with his teaching ideas to promote creativity within students and became interested in implementing some of them in my classroom. During my Capstone Project I examined how my students responded to the integration of art lessons and activities inspired from D'Amico's writings. I created a website to document the process and house the curriculum. I believe this study will encourage other art educators interested in promoting creativity or looking to move from a teacher-directed curriculum to a student-directed one to make changes in their lessons and methodology. I also hope it encourages others to explore the art education philosophy of Victor D'Amico and integrate some of his ideas for creative teaching in their classrooms.

Statement of the Problem

Many teachers and parents are not convinced that creativity can be taught. I do not agree. I believe that people are born with the desire and the ability to make things, in other words, to create. According to D'Amico (1953) up to six years of age children are typically instinctive creators requiring little encouragement and almost no instruction. Unfortunately, this changes as children grow. During the later elementary school years, "after third or fourth grade, children

often times lose interest in art because he cannot make his materials yield to his expression"

(D'Amico, 1953, p. 23). They tend to loose the ease and spontaneity they once had. During

middle school, it is not uncommon for an art teacher to hear students say, "I can't do it. Can you

do it for me?" or "Mine doesn't look like hers." Statements like these come from a lack of self-

confidence in the student's ability to create. Students are very self-critical and become concerned

with what their peers are doing and what they think. Through this study I investigated how art

educators can nurture and promote the desire and the ability to create during the fourth grade,

when students tend to lose the self-confidence they once had in their art making.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to create an atmosphere and a curriculum that nurtures and

promotes creativity in a group of fourth grade students, through implementing the art education

philosophy of Victor D'Amico. My goals included: a) using D'Amico's techniques to motivate

and encourage creativity in students; b) incorporating D'Amico's methods into present day

curriculum; c) organizing and creatively displaying supplies; and d) transforming the art

classroom into a studio with centers for art activities such as painting, building, and collage.

Research Questions

The following research question guided my inquiry:

1. What will happen when I incorporate the art education philosophy of Victor

D'Amico into the fourth grade class of my present day art program?

Rationale and Significance of the Study

There are many experts that believe our education system lacks what it takes to foster

creativity. For instance, Sir Kenneth Robinson (2015) believes that todays' methods of teaching

discourage creativity. We are educating students to become good workers, rather than creative

thinkers. As a result, we need to rethink how we cultivate creativity in our school systems. According to Gray (2012), children today are subjected to an educational system that "assumes one right answer to every question and one correct solution to every problem, a system that punishes children for daring to try different routes," a system that stifles creativity (para 11). Working in the field of art education since the late 1990s, I have noticed a lack of creative confidence in students today; consequently I am always seeking ways to encourage creativity in my classroom. D'Amico (1960) felt that children are by nature creative beings, and with the proper learning environment and the guidance of an experienced teacher, creativity would flourish. He did extensive research and experimentation with his methods through the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. I believed implementing D'Amico's philosophy of art education would foster and promote creativity within the art classroom today. Children would feel free to express themselves and would grow in their creativity.

Assumptions

I assumed while some of my students would embrace different procedures and routines in the art classroom others would be apprehensive and anxious toward change. I anticipated seeing some students exhibit signs of growth in creativity, with others hesitating at first not knowing how to work without specific steps to follow. I also assumed that classroom organization, preparation, setup, and cleanup would be essential elements of the effectiveness of this method of teaching. I further assumed that providing a studio atmosphere, with a choice-based art education philosophy that allowed students to explore and experiment, would foster creativity over time.

Definition of Terms

According to McTighe (2011), *backward design* is a method of creating curriculum that

helps "students understand the content being taught" and directs teaching around "the most important things that need understanding." It can be divided into three stages. First, the desired results are identified and clarified. Next, acceptable evidence of student understanding and proficiency is determined. Finally, learning experiences and instruction, best suited to accomplish the desired results, are designed.

Creative teaching is a term used by D'Amico. He believed the art educator should not only know the subject of art, but should also have an understanding of the concepts of both creative and general psychological growth. This knowledge would enable teachers to provide students with proper motivation and a general progressive program that allows for a variety of choice. It would promote active learning, enable children to create meaning, and could help to keep alive the child's imagination and also the will to express it (D'Amico, 1953; D'Amico, 1960).

According to PBS (2016) the *general psychological growth* for children eight to eleven years of age includes the following things. They are interested in things and people outside of their home. They like their days planned out and they are full of energy. While these children may need help with organizational skills, they can think for themselves and are able to accomplish a lot. They enjoy current events, building, experimenting, looking at maps, and solving problems. They like stories about famous people, adventures and mysteries. Being fair and telling the truth is very important, they are better at talking than at writing, and if something interests them, they like to explore it as much as they can.

McCleod (2013) adds that between the ages of five to twelve, "the child's peer group will gain greater significance and will become a major source of the child's self esteem" (para 35). Faulkner (2009) believes children this age "may shy away from taking risks or exhibiting

individualized or unique behavior for fear of being teased. They may shun the adult notion of 'just being yourself' in favor of conforming to their peers as much as possible" (para 1). Demonstrating specific abilities and capabilities are valued and a sense of pride in accomplishments is developing. If a child does not believe they are accomplishing specific skills considered important, a sense of inferiority may develop. To feel productive and confident in their abilities, children this age need to be encouraged and reinforced for their initiative. If not, they will begin to feel inferior and doubt their abilities, therefore not reaching their full potential (Faulkner, 2009).

The *creative psychological growth* for children this age is directly affected by their general psychological growth**.** Just as they are becoming aware of things and people outside their home, their artwork begins to show more details and proportion. Roland (1990) states,

> This new concern for making their pictures look 'right' in terms of detail and proportion leads to a crisis for many older children. In trying to draw realistically children's efforts often fall short of their expectations and they quickly become disappointed. (p. 11).

They can be critical and sometimes reluctant for fear of failure. Frequently their peers' reactions can determine their success or failure. D'Amico (1953) believes this is the age when children need "encouragement and help from their teacher…and the teacher must be aware of their students needs" (p. 23). If the art educator is not sensitive to both creative and general psychological growth, children this age can lose interest in art.

Limitations of the Study

I did foresee certain limitations within my study. First, I could describe the creative behaviors that I saw students demonstrating in the classroom as a result of implementing D'Amico's methods. However, my research was limited by time constraints. In other words, I

was not able to observe the students in my research field long enough to accurately access whether their creative growth will be enduring. Second, my research pool was limited. While my study included a diverse group of students coming from different economic and ethnic backgrounds, it was still limited to students from one private Christian school, in one region of the country. Finally, D'Amico developed his philosophy of art education while working at MoMA in New York City. I thought being located in a small town without the resources of a large city like New York so readily available might hinder applying some of his ideas. However, I did not find this to be true.

Literature Review

In the 1960s and 1970s, Victor D'Amico was known for his innovative and inventive teaching methods within art education. D'Amico (1904-1987) was an artist, teacher, visionary, and pioneer. He was founder and director of the art education department at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). While there, he developed numerous programs including The Children's Art Carnival, the People's Art Center, and the Art Barge. In addition to teaching art classes to students of all ages, he offered free workshops for teachers to explain and demonstrate his philosophy. His love and dedication to the field "had a lot to do with the existence of art education" (Bowman, 1969). It is evident that D'Amico was a master at his craft.

Teaching within the contemporary art classroom has evolved and changed since D'Amico and today his "influence is little known and seldom discussed" (Rasmussen, 2010, p. 451). Today, the art educator is presented with the challenge to engage learners and enable them to meaningfully create and respond. Curriculum must be "balanced, interdisciplinary, and grounded in meaning and inspiration" (Beudert, Burton, & Sandell, 2012, para. 1). Art educators must consider how, and in whose interest, knowledge is

produced and passed on. They must decide what instructional methods best serve both the educator's teaching philosophy and the needs of diverse student populations. I intend to address the following question through this review: What will happen when I incorporate the art education philosophy of Victor D'Amico into the fourth grade class of my present day art program?

This review will reflect upon D'Amico's writings as well as those from authors such as Rasmussen (2010), Bowman (1969), Douglas (2009), and Jaquith (2009). In it, I will discuss D'Amico's philosophy, the role of the teacher, the learning environment, the curriculum, current philosophies that resemble D'Amico's, and conclusions and possible directions to pursue in the future. Through my research, I hope to reveal that D'Amico's philosophy of art education is still relevant and how it can be applied in my fourth grade art classroom in the 21st Century.

Victor D'Amico's Teaching Philosophy

According to Rasmussen (2010), D'Amico "felt the role of the museum was that of a laboratory for the development of creative teaching practices. And thus, his programs became his experiments" (para. 8). He used his thirty years with MoMA to cultivate his philosophy of art education, which was "based on a fundamental faith in the creative potential in every man, woman, and child" (Art Barge, 2015, Barge, para 1). D'Amico believed every individual to be endowed with "a unique creative personality as distinctive as one's fingerprints, voice print, or personal characteristics" (Raunft, 2001, p. 6). In an interview by Bowman (1969) on WNYC (a division of New York Public Radio) D'Amico stated,

Talented is probably the most misused word in our profession. When one says talented, he means there are those children who have a gift and those children who do not. I disagree. I know there is a great deal of research on this particular problem and no real

research has come out that says that this child is talented and that one is not. I've taught

them long enough to know that all children have a measure of talent. (Bowman, 1969)

It was D'Amico's idea that talent could be brought out in all individuals through proper

instruction and motivation.

D'Amico believed art education should be based on making art and the "cultivation of

creative artistic vitality" (Rasmussen, 2010b, p. 461). He understood that children have no

inhibitions when it comes to artmaking. With encouragement and time to explore, they would

freely express their ideas. They naturally use art as a personal language and by nature are free

and spontaneous in their expression.

D'Amico (1960) considered the "fundamentals to be the development of individuality and

the awareness and sensitivity to aesthetic values in works of art, in human relations, and in one's

environment" (p. 14). Children should see themselves as artists and work as artists. Their art

should be about their lives, their families, and their experiences (D'Amico, 1953). They should

spend time exploring museums and their environment, looking for things to paint and things to

create.

The Role of the Teacher

In an interview with Bowman (1969) on WNYC, D'Amico shared that children, as well

as adults, "need the guidance of experienced and sensitive teachers." In his thinking, exceptional

art educators understand the concepts of psychological growth, both creative and general. Most

important, they are able "to stimulate and develop the creative interests of others and to

communicate the aesthetic values that underlie all creative achievement" (D'Amico, 1960, p. 9).

They have a positive attitude, respect for individuality, and are devoted to excellence and design

and craftsmanship.

D'Amico thought an art teacher's magic lies in the way s/he motivates students. Stimulating the students' interests and probing for individual thinking and solutions are key components. The teacher should adjust activities to the students' ability and experience and lead children to rise above their last attempt, thus assuring growth and progress.

D'Amico believed creative teaching gives children the opportunity and time to explore their world of experience. It accepts and respects children's creations, recognizing that emphasis is not on the churning out of art products that are uniform and aesthetically pleasing. It is on the growth of the creative spirit (Sahasrabudhe, 1994). It encourages students to give expression to the experiences and to find form for their discoveries. It encourages free and uncluttered (from adult demand and social pressures) expression.

The Learning Environment

D'Amico (1960) held firm to the belief that creative teaching involves setting up the proper learning environment, one that evokes interest and stimulates individual expression. This is seen in D'Amico's most widely acclaimed and influential program, the *Children's Art Carnival*. The program was an elaborate environment of toys, workstations and art materials where children could make paintings, sculptures and collages.

Children began their adventure at the *Children's Art Carnival* in a specified space, called the *Inspiration Area.* In this area children were "stimulated to think creatively" while being "oriented to the fundamentals of design without words or dogma of any kind" (D'Amico, 1960, p. 35). According to D'Amico (1960), the space was devised to motivate creative thinking with the use of unique toys that involved "the child in aesthetic concepts of color, texture, and rhythm" (p. 35). D'Amico and other artists and designers specifically designed the toys for the space. The walls of the *Inspiration Area* were painted in blues and greens and the room was

dimly light to create a world of magic and fantasy. Toys had lights focused on them from above or they were lit from within. Music played in the background.

After visiting the *Inspiration Area*, children entered the *Studio Workshop* where three centers were available for creating art. The space was brightly lit and the walls were painted in bright, warm colors. Tables, easels, and work areas were painted in contrasting colors. An abundance of supplies were available for students to explore and experiment with: paint, brushes, tape, glue, scissors, feathers, pipe cleaners, sequins, colored and patterned papers, cloth, etc. Special care was given to the arrangement of furniture, supplies, and decorations. Texture, glitz, and color were used to inspire creativity.

According to Rasmussen (2010b) the *Children's Art Carnival* tested D'Amico's ideas about the development of creative environments and the selection and presentation of materials. These areas inspired children of various development levels and learning styles while addressing combinations of visual, tactile, and kinesthetic experiences. They engaged children individually or cooperatively in small groups of two to three.

The Curriculum

D'Amico's (1953) curriculum had two aspects to it. Initially, he sought for children to recognize and reflect on their own experiences for inspiration. Then, technique and instruction were introduced based upon the children's development and maturity according to their needs and interests. Lessons were prepared and organized in a coherent and logical fashion.

According to D'Amico (1960) a responsive curriculum needed to include: a) both two- and three-dimensional expression-painting, clay work, collage, and construction; b) tempera, watercolor, colored chalks, inks, non-firing moist clay, various materials for building and collages such as cardboard, construction paper, tissue paper, material swatches, popsicle sticks,

swab sticks, buttons, yarn, bottle caps, and so on; c) individual as well as collaborative projects; d) examples of various styles and artists to motivate creative activity; and e) trips to local museums.

D'Amico also encouraged the exploration of the student's environment. He believed an awareness of local materials gave the children the opportunity to create something of their own while making them conscious of their individual environment (Bowman, 1969). According to Daichendt (2010), D'Amico's curriculum clearly demonstrated that he placed importance on the individual child.

Educating Parents

Another interesting aspect of D'Amico's philosophy was his means of educating the parents. He held parent-children classes where fathers and mothers could paint, model clay, or create collages with their children (D'Amico, 1960). This provided D'Amico an opportunity to give advice to parents on how to develop their children's creative interests at home and also offered a time where parents could actually see their children's creative minds at work. The class sizes were limited and the children in each class were close in age. Parents were advised not to do the work for the children or to make suggestions that might hinder the children's own ideas and efforts (D'Amico, 1960). The parents and children would work on different projects but side by side or directly across from each other.

Current Philosophies that Resemble D'Amico's

Choice-based art education was first introduced during the early 1970s and provides an authentic art experience that offers real choices to students in a carefully organized classroom/studio (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009). The choice-based art studio is divided into centers that included drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, etc. The teacher guides the student, providing

instruction on techniques rather than dictating the outcome of a project (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009). Teaching for Artistic Behavior (TAB) is an organization that was also developed in the 1970s and follows the choice-based art education model closely. A TAB classroom is set up much the same and is referred to as the studio. It is designed with materials, equipment, and resources divided into multiple studio centers, each with a particular focus. Choice-based art education and TAB are current methods that resemble some of the aspects of D'Amico's philosophy of art education.

In the choice-based art and TAB classroom today, the students are viewed as artists. They are provided creative freedom and encouraged to choose their own methods of artmaking. According to Douglas and Jaquith (2009), the students must "find an idea, select materials to express the idea, arrange those materials plus tools in a workspace, pace themselves, create the image or structure, overcome obstacles, return materials and tools to their proper location, discuss artwork, and reflect on the progress" (p. 33). As a result, students learn to "collaborate with other artists, explore, try, fail, practice, dream, and reflect" (Hathaway, 2013, p. 12). The classroom becomes their studio.

The choice-based art and TAB educator facilitates learning, encourages, and supports artistic behavior rather than directing and demanding a predetermined outcome. They spend time demonstrating, modeling, facilitating, and coaching. They must develop how to examine and present "only the essence of what is significant in order to pique curiosities and cultivate a climate of inquiry" (Hathaway & Jaquith, 2014, p. 27). In addition, time is needed to prepare curriculum content and alter that content as a result of observations made in class. Finally, the teacher must assess each student's progress. The role of the art educator includes many aspects.

The studio area must be carefully planned and arranged due to the abundance of references and supplies, and the space that is needed must be large enough to facilitate both group and independent work. Douglas and Jaquith (2009) believe that centers should "contain directions, materials, tools, and resources, allowing learners to pursue work while their teacher interacts with other students" (p. 17). While the teacher sets the centers up, it is the responsibility of the students to keep them clean and organized.

On a typical day in a choice-based art and TAB classroom the teacher will begin each class with a short demonstration on the specifics of the centers and materials. She or he may introduce a new technique, art concept, art period, or artists. It is then up to the students to decide which center they will work at and what they will do. As students work the teacher affirms each student's efforts, provides individual or small group instruction, observes and notes student's work habits, and so on. At the end of class students are required to clean up their area and gather to share and reflect on their experiences (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009). The classroom is busy and active on any given day. As with D'Amico's belief, an educator that knows how to motivate is essential.

Conclusion and Direction

Creative educators are always looking toward new themes and emerging concepts to incorporate into their curriculum. However, sometimes the new idea is not really new at all. The literature informed me that D'Amico's philosophy is still influencing the field of art education today through choice-based art education. He also incorporated the importance of creativity, community, and identity throughout his lessons; all of which are relevant today. This understanding shaped and encouraged my research. I learned that the goal of a successful art program is not always about moving toward new ideas. Sometimes it is also about incorporating

old ones. In addition, I learned that art education is not to just develop artists but also to engage learners and enable them to meaningfully create and respond. Finally, the literature introduced me to new ways to facilitate learning in my art classroom: through redesigning my classroom and curriculum, developing new classroom procedures, and implementing student-directed learning.

Research Method

For my Capstone Project, I employed an action research methodology. According to May (1993), "action research is the study and enhancement of one's own practice" (p. 114). It is a tool used by the educators to improve and/or refine their methods (Sagor, 2004). Building upon this, Mertler (2014) states, "Action research allows teachers to study their own classrooms—for example, their own instructional methods, their own students, and their own assessments—in order to better understand them and to be able to improve their quality or effectiveness" (p. 4). Thus, the purpose of my research was to investigate and understand if an art education philosophy of the past, one designed to foster creativity, could be integrated within my contemporary classroom and promote creativity in my students. Using a *backward design* approach, I developed a curriculum inspired by D'Amico's writings that focused on the enduring idea of creativity. I examined my classroom design, my instructional methods, and my fourth grade students' responses and growth. The study took place in a small private Christian school located in South Florida that serves students from VPK-12. I conducted the research over a three-month period during the spring of 2016.

Subjects

The study involved students with various cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. The students were part of a fourth grade class consisting of twenty-one students, twelve boys and

nine girls. In order to conduct this study, I applied and followed the guidelines for an IRB through the University of Florida and I received approval from my school administration (see Appendix A). I sent home a request for permission (see Appendix A). Out of the twenty-one students, seven girls and nine boys agreed to be part of the study. Five of the students attended every class. The remaining students missed anywhere from one to four classes with the exception of one who suffered a broken leg and missed the last six classes.

Research Site

The majority of the study took place in the art classroom during the students' weekly scheduled forty-minute class. The first class of the study was held outside on the school playground. The students participated in a recreation of D'Amico's *Children's Art Carnival* the last two weeks, which was held in the library and in the art room. I conducted personal interviews with students during their scheduled lunchtime.

Data Collection Procedures and Instrumentation

Data sources for action research may differ. Most include existing documents or records, surveys and/or questionnaires, interviews, observation, field notes, teacher and/or student journals, student work, audio, video, and/or photography documenting the process (May, 1993; Mertler, 2014; Sagor, 2004). Before classes began I extensively researched D'Amico's writings to create a *backward design* curriculum that focused on encouraging creativity. The lessons were designed around three enduring ideas: (1) everyone has creative potential; (2) artists can develop their creative abilities; and (3) creativity is an essential life skill. From this I developed my objectives, assessments, and lessons. I made adjustments in the arrangement and organization of my classroom by creating three work areas and organizing supplies on rolling carts so work areas could easily be replenished or changed. I sent a letter to parents explaining the study and asking

permission for their student to participate. The letter contained a copy to sign and return (See Appendix A). Students were also asked to sign a letter of assent (See Appendix A). Participation or non-participation in the study did not have an effect on student's classroom activity or grades. Sagor (2004) recommended making checklists of observed student activities. I used Roland's (1991) list of creative abilities, attitudes, beliefs and tactics to create my checklist (para 6). I used the checklist at the beginning of the study, during the study, and at the end of the study to evaluate participating students creativity and activities. I found making checklists and having them readily available during and immediately after class to be an asset. They could easily be marked, compared, and contrasted (See Appendix B). I took notes, audio recorded, or videotaped during class time, during informal interviews, and during conversations at lunch (See Appendix C). In some instances I had students take videos or photographs. I used observations, assigned writings, and photographs of in-process and completed work to assess student progress. I reviewed the gathered information weekly to evaluate successes and weaknesses in the curriculum and teaching methods.

Data Analysis Procedures

I had a work break immediately following the fourth grade class. This provided an opportunity for me to review and add additional input to checklists and to document data in my journal. After school I organized and evaluated my data. As a result, I was able to identify questions I needed to ask students during our weekly lunch conversations and was also able to focus on any modifications or actions that I needed to implement for the next week's class.

Mertler (2014) explained that the most important thing we needed to do while analyzing data was to keep our research questions in mind. To help with this, I looked for similar groupings that matched my research topic. I applied a triangulation process that involved using multiple

independent sources of data to establish truth, validity, and accuracy (Mertler, 2014; Sagor,

2004). The triangulation was divided into three different groupings: conversations (informal

interviews, student reflections); observations (class time, peer interaction, checklist); and

projects (personal work) (see Figure 1). Sagor (2004) suggested enlisting a fellow educator to

engage in reflective dialogue with. I met with a fellow teacher to discuss topics or concerns that

arose.

Figure 1. Triangulation data analysis
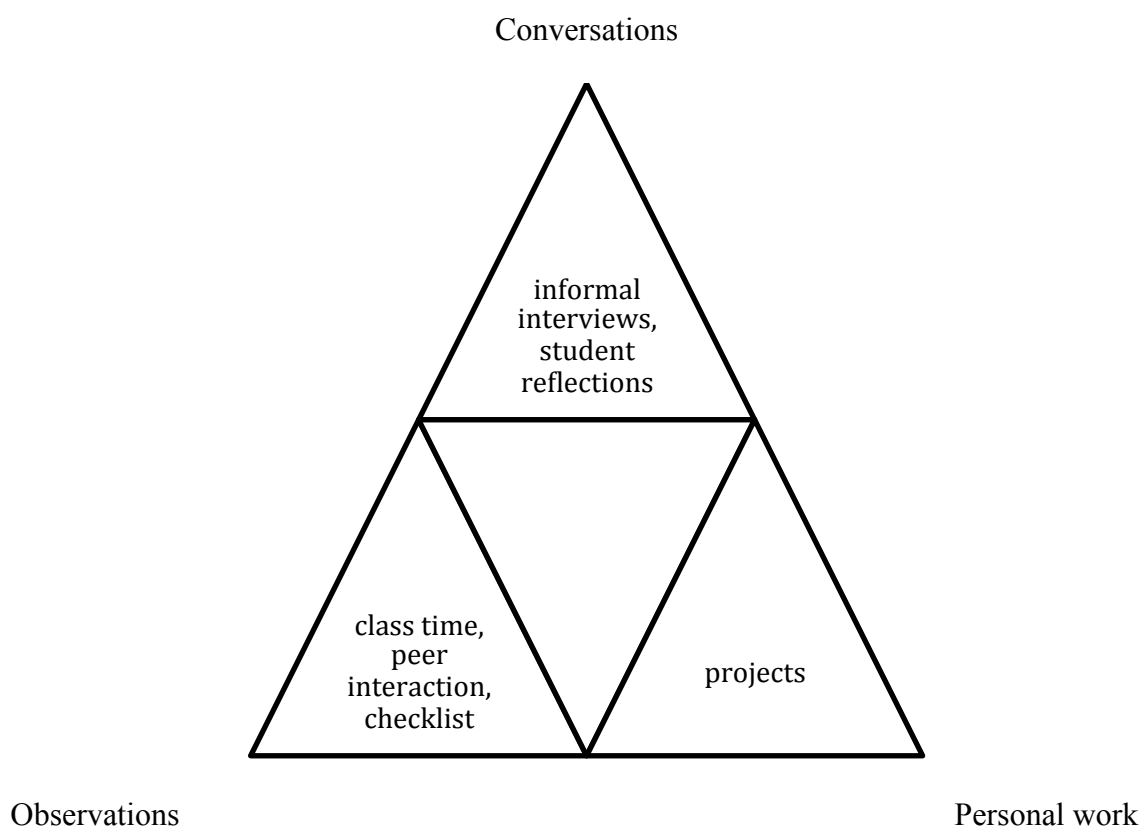
Results and Findings

The purpose of my research was to investigate what would happen when I created and

implemented a curriculum that incorporated the art education philosophy and instructional

strategies of Victor D'Amico, one that fostered creativity. Over a three-month period students

were given the opportunity to engage in the curriculum. Discussions and projects centered on

promoting creativity through painting, assemblage, and clay. The unit concluded with an Art Carnival that provided three choice based centers.

Curriculum

D'Amico (1953) believed painting to be "one of the best media for stimulating creative response" and one that "encourages spontaneity and originality" (p. 27). With this in mind, the first two lessons were designed for students to explore, experiment, and experience painting spontaneously. The first lesson was held on the school playground and students used watercolor to paint. After a short introduction and discussion, students dispersed throughout the area and painted. During the second lesson students used tempera to paint about their feelings. After a quick discussion, students were instructed to think about how they felt at that moment or to recall a strong feeling they have had in the past and paint about it.

D'Amico (1972) considered assemblage to be one of the "means for structuring a basic program of creative expression" (p. 4). Thus the third and fourth lessons involved assemblage. During the third lesson, students created hanging wire constructions using wire clothes hangers (cheap bendable ones from the cleaners), tissue paper (a variety of colors, cut into 6" squares), yarn, sequins, small buttons or beads for decoration, glue, and scissors. For the fourth lesson students created a collage using a larger-size construction paper for the background and two smaller-size construction papers for the design. Students had to cut or tear the smaller sheets into interesting shapes and use all the pieces in their collage. Once this was done they could add other materials such as yarn, colored tissue paper, felt, or sequins to their project.

During the fifth lesson, students created figures out of air-dry clay. D'Amico (1953) believed clay to be "one of the most adaptable and fertile media for satisfying a child's creative

yearnings" (p. 117). Students could choose to make a person or an animal. Once the figures were dry students painted them.

The last two weeks, students participated in the Art Carnival, named after D'Amico's most widely acclaimed and influential program (Rasmussen, 2010). Students began the Art Carnival in the library where they played games designed to stimulate the creative process. After ten minutes of playing games, students entered the Art Studio where three art centers were available for them to create art, one for each method we had previously covered. At the assemblage center I had glue, staplers, tape, scissors, white paper, colored and patterned paper, feathers, tissue paper, sequins, foam shapes, and small pieces of felt. I had clay and tools for carving and stamping at one center and brightly colored tempera paint at the other.

Following D'Amico's instructions for the art educator, I allowed students to work freely and independently. I assisted if a child wasn't sure what to do or how to get started with their artwork. I used prompts and questions to encourage and guide students. Have you thought of what kind of background you might add to your painting? What type of lines could you use to represent how you feel? I also began referring to the art classroom as the Art Studio and to the students as artists. I discovered this helped students identify themselves as artists.

I found that three common themes emerged from the research data (see Appendix D). Students: (1) explored and experimented with techniques that were new to them; (2) engaged in the process of art making and were eager to participate; and (3) grew in their self-confidence resulting in personal pride in their work. In the following sections, I will describe these findings in more detail.

Exploring and Experimenting

My first finding is that students were willing and eager to explore and experiment with new techniques. During my research I found the way D'Amico presented lessons gave students permission to explore and experiment. Throughout his writings, D'Amico (1954) made statements to students such as, "If you don't like the way it looks, try something different…See if you can turn your mistake into another kind of idea" (p. 26). I was careful to incorporate this type of prompting when presenting my curriculum to students. I encouraged students repeatedly that they had my approval to explore and experiment. I made statements such as: do not worry what other people might think about your work; do not be afraid of doing things different; examine new ways of doing things; explore different possibilities; consider what you might use if you don't have what you need; and see if you can turn that mistake into an opportunity.

At first students would ask permission to try things. "Is it okay for me to try painting with grass or sticks rather than a paintbrush?" (see Figure 2). As time went on, I found more students experimenting on their own and encouraging each other to try new things. Student 5 shared, "I learned how to make pompoms and added them to my hanging wire thing. I like how they hang down. They make it look fun" (see Figure 3).

Figure 2. Student 12 exploring painting with sticks, grass, and leaves

Figure 3. Students 1 and 14 experimenting with making pompoms

I relied on informal interviews and student reflections to determine this finding. Here are some statements from students that allowed me to verify this finding:

I got the idea for my painting from the sunset I saw [Van Gogh's Starry Night].

I liked the swirly way he painted the sky so I tried to make mine look like his (see Figure

4).

It didn't quite work but I think it looks okay. I like it. (Student 3, personal

communication, March 9, 2016).

Figure 4. Student 3 experimenting with painting like Van Gogh

Another student shared,

Mrs. McCullers showed us a picture of her Frenchie [French bulldog] so I decided to

make my clay into a Frenchie (see Figure 5). I hadn't made anything like it before and I

had to keep looking at the picture to check to see how it looked. It was hard and I had to

work on the ears a long time. I think it turned out okay (Student 14, personal

communication, May 2, 2016).

Figure 5. Student 14 exploring techniques new to her to create a clay French bulldog

During my final interviews with students, most of them indicated they were exploring new techniques or experimenting with new ideas. Student 6 explained it like this, "Creativity is thinking about different possibilities and trying new things. I am making my problems into new creations now. It takes practice. I stopped thinking about how something might turn out and just try doing different things now" (personal communication, May 18, 2016).

Individual Expression, Engaged, and Eager

D'Amico (1953) believed that art lessons should encourage individuality and as a result students would be engaged and eager to participate. For the most part, students exhibited concentrated effort and attention throughout the lessons. Checklists, observations, and completed artwork confirmed this. Informal interviews and reflections revealed that students were engaged in individual expression throughout the lessons.

Checklists for each participant were kept throughout the lessons (see Appendix D). At the end of the study the checklists revealed that 88% of the time students exhibited concentrated effort and attention for long periods of time. In other words, students spent class time making art. Comparing the checklists with student reflections and informal interviews indicated that students creating artwork about personal interests were engaged and eager to work. An example of this can be seen in Student 1. The checklist reveals that she was engaged with projects and worked for the length of class every week. Informal interviews and student reflections revealed she was able to connect meaning to her art by incorporating her interests in animals. The following student reflections reveal that she was interested in the projects, and suggest that she felt good about the artwork she created.

> I painted about animals because I love animals and they make me feel happy so my picture makes me feel happy. My favorite thing was making my animal out of clay. I made a lamb because I like animals. I painted a picture of a frog sitting on a lily pad [Art Carnival]. He is happy because he is catching a fly to eat (see Figure 6). (Student 1, personal communication, May 9, 2016).

Figure 6. Student 1 connecting her art with her passion for animals

Checklists and observations revealed Student 7 as another artist that was engaged throughout the study. Her student reflections, informal interviews, and completed artwork revealed the same thing. An example can be seen in the artwork she created during the outside painting lesson. She carefully examined the chains on the swings and investigated how to represent them in her painting (see Figure 7). During the Art Carnival she spent the class making a mother sea turtle with babies. She carefully used tools to make the lines in the shell and to create their faces (see Figure 8). Her excitement and enthusiasm encouraged other students to also engage in the activity. As they worked the discussion centered on who had been on sea turtle walks, who had seen sea turtles build nests and lay eggs, and who had seen baby sea turtles hatch.
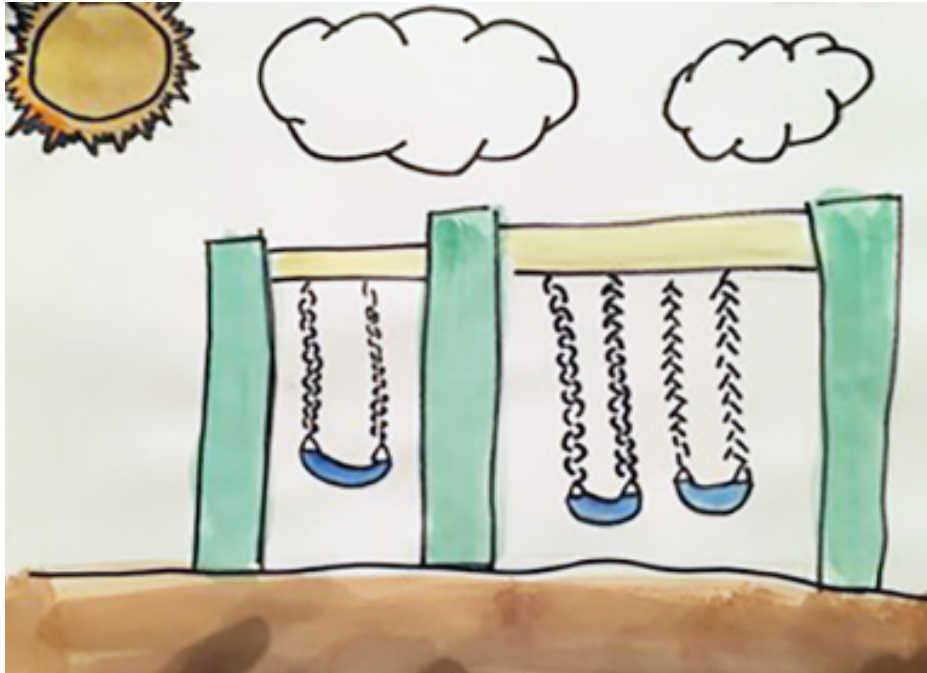
Figure 7. Student 7 investigated how to represent chains on the swings in her painting
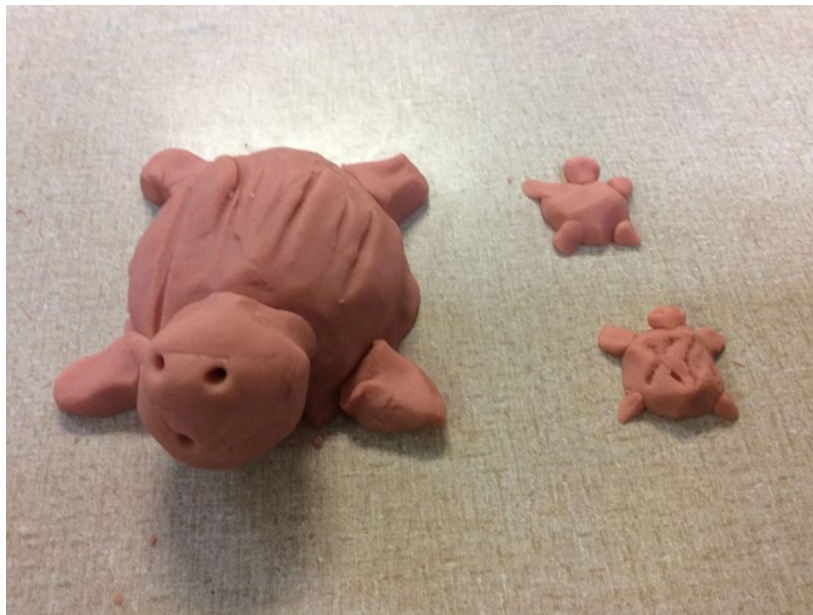
Figure 8. The excitement and enthusiasm of Student 7 encouraged other students to create sea turtles

Self-confidence and Pride in Work

Another common theme I found was that D'Amico's methods for motivating and encouraging students helped them develop self-confidence and take pride in their work. This can be seen best when evaluating the data from Student 4 and Student 11.

While creating his hanging wire assemblage, Student 4 faced was confronted with difficulties. Everything he tried seemed to fall apart. Following D'Amico's suggestions, I used questions to guide him through the process. Can you tell me how you want your project to look when you are finished? Is there a different way you can connect these pieces to make your idea work? Which do you think would work better, string or paper? Through the process, his self-confidence grew resulting in persistence, concentrated effort, and hard work. His response in this informal interview reveals how he felt when he finished.

When I started the thing [hanging wire assemblage] I was having a hard time and I couldn't do it. I tried different things but none of them worked. During the week I thought about different things I could try. This is what I came up with. It's a square shape with a "J" on it. I am happy with how it looks (see Figure 9). (Student 4, personal communication, 2016).

Figure 9. The self-confidence of Student 4 grew resulting in persistence and concentrated effort

Student 11 is another student that had difficulties from the start. After numerous attempts on every project he was discouraged and ready to quit. I continued to apply D'Amico's suggestions for asking questions that required him to think through the process. When he completed the assignment I received this student reflection,

> I started over a bunch of times and threw it away. You made me get it out of the trash and we talked about different ideas. I made it into a spider web and it turned out pretty good (see Figure 10)." (Student 11, personal communication, April 11, 2016).
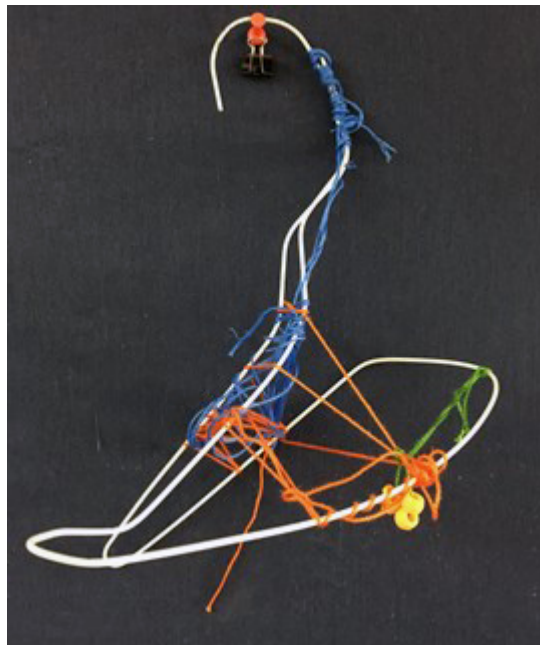
Figure 10. Time spent with Student 11 helped build his self-confidence and determination

The time spent with Student 11 helped build his self-confidence and determination. This boost in self-assurance resulted in him working without needing motivation or encouragement during the lesson on clay. He created what he referred to as a coach potato (see Figure 11). He had this to say on his student reflection, "I made a couch potato and I LIKE IT. I wouldn't change anything."

Figure 11. Self-confidence helped Student 11 create an artwork he was proud of

Throughout the study I received student reflections and heard statements during informal interviews that suggested the students took pride in the artwork they created. "I liked how it turned out. I wouldn't change anything about it" (Student 1, personal communication, April 18, 2016). "When I cut the paper the triangle reminded me of a crown so I made it a king. I wouldn't change anything about my picture" (Student 4, personal communication, April 11, 2016). "My clay cat was difficult to make but I really like how it turned out" (Student 5, personal communication, May 2, 2016). "I made a bunny out of clay. I worked hard on it and I like it" (Student 6, personal communication, May 2, 2016). "I like turtles so I made a turtle out of the clay. I like how it turned out. It was my favorite thing we did" (Student communication, May 2, 2016).

Summary Across all Findings

In summary, when I incorporated the art education philosophy of Victor D'Amico into the fourth grade class of my present day art program, three common themes emerged. I

found students were willing to explore and experiment with techniques new to them. In some cases this meant painting with sticks and old markers dipped in paint rather than paintbrushes. In other cases it meant learning how to make pompoms with yarn. I found students were able to express personal interest in their art. This resulted in students engaged with making art and eager to participate in the projects. Finally, I watched students grow in their self-confidence and take personal pride in their work.

Discussion and Conclusion

The goal of the research project was to examine what would happen when I created and implemented a curriculum that was inspired by the art education philosophy of Victor D'Amico, one designed to foster creativity. The literature informed me that D'Amico's method of teaching art engaged learners and enabled them to meaningfully create and respond. This understanding shaped and encouraged my research toward redesigning my classroom and curriculum, developing new classroom procedures, and implementing student-directed learning. In the remainder of this section I will share my interpretations and insights gained from this research.

Discussion and Interpretation of Findings

I have been an art educator since the late 1990s. I have experimented, tested, and tried many methods along the way, but for the most part I was the teacher that stood in the front of the class providing step-by-step instructions. I was the teacher walking around the room checking papers to make sure everyone was following directions and making their marks exactly right. I was the teacher that produced cookie cutter projects that looked good in the hall and made parents happy. With that said, my research on D'Amico's philosophy of art education confirmed in my mind the importance of redirecting my methods, changing my classroom, and modifying

my curriculum. Tables were regrouped into three centers rather than in lines facing the board. Rolling carts were set up with supplies, one for painting, one for assemblage, and one for clay. They could easily be moved in and out as needed. Class instruction and discussion time was quick and to the point.

While the length of this study hindered knowing the full impact of fostering my students' creativity, my findings revealed that applying D'Amico's methods resulted in students willing to step out of their comfort zone and try new ways of doing things. I also found students encouraging each other to do so. It was not unusual to hear comments like, "Look what happened when I painted like this" or "Maybe you could use feathers to create palm fronds for trees." In a final interview Student 6 told me, "I stopped thinking about how something might turn out and just tried doing different things" (personal communication, May 16). On the last day of school I had the opportunity to talk with the parent of a fourth grade student that was new to our school this year. She thanked me for encouraging her daughter in art. She continued to share how her child was now experimenting with creating art projects while she was with her dad at work. As I asked questions I found out her child was learning to weld and to create structures out of the scrap metal in her dad's sheet metal fabrication shop. She shared a photo of a picture frame her child had just finished and given to her as a present. This is a student that had told me at the end of our study, "I'm working on creativity by trying to do new things. I look around me for ideas."

D'Amico believed when the art educator imposed ideas, the students would lose the opportunity to conceive and assimilate their own ideas and methods, leaving no room for choice or decisions, preventing individual initiative, thought, technique, or style (Pearman, 1957). Throughout the study I allowed students to work freely and independently after our initial discussion and instruction. I assisted children if needed. While I found most students did not ask

for assistance, there were ones that needed encouragement and motivation, and direction each week. There were a few who just needed a push to get started, but others lacked confidence and were afraid of failure. Implementing D'Amico's method of posing questions and prompts to stimulate students required effort on my part. It involved revisiting D'Amico's writings and preparing reminders to keep me on track. Some weeks I wrote questions I might ask students on post-it notes and stuck them on my lesson plans. Other weeks I wrote a word or two on the board to keep me on track. By the end of the study I felt I had made great strides in this area. I believe the effort was worth it as I witnessed several students build confidence and overcome their feelings of self-doubt. A student that needed motivation and direction on numerous occasions throughout the study shared in his final interview,

> I'm learning creativity is something we have that helps us make things and build things. It takes a lot of work and a lot of time. I am working on my creativity by taking more time and thinking more about my projects. When I come to a problem I try to think of something different I can do. (Student 12, personal communication, May 16, 2016).

I also found D'Amico's method allowed students to connect personal meaning to their art. "I painted about animals because I love animals" (Student 1, personal communication, March 7, 2016). "I made a bowling ball because I like to bowl" (Student 8, personal communication, May 2, 2016). "I made a waffle with clay because I was hungry" (Student 2, personal communication, May 9, 2016). Students began to understand that art could be used as a method of communicating how they felt. A perfect example occurred on the day we were painting about feelings. A student informed me she did not feel good. When asked if she could make it until the end of class she said, "Yes, I think so." Her painting reflected that she made a connection between her art and how she felt (see Figure 12).

Figure 12. This student was able to connect how she felt with her artwork

Informal interviews at the end of the study revealed that students understood the connection between art and personal expression. Student 7 shared, "Creativity is how you show yourself in your work…it helps you express yourself" (personal communication, May 16, 2016). Another student commented, "It [creativity] shows who you are inside" (Student 10, personal communication, May 16, 2016). As a result, I found most students were interested in the projects and wanted to participate. I had very few disciplinary problems.

Significance, Implications, and Recommendations

By applying D'Amico's philosophy of art education, I hoped to inspire the creative spirit within my students in preparation for the middle school years when they tend to loose their self-confidence in art making. I believe the findings indicate that students responded positively and this will benefit the art educator looking to promote creativity. In addition, I believe it is relevant

for the teacher looking to move from a step-by-step teacher directed curriculum to a student-directed choice based curriculum. The significance of this type of curriculum is that students learn how to develop ideas, make decisions, and work through problems and obstacles, thus encouraging students to grow in their creative thinking skills and self-confidence. Victor D'Amico's philosophy promotes relevant areas of study such as creativity, community, and identity.

Conclusion

Through this project I have learned how to implement the art education philosophy of Victor D'Amico. I learned techniques and strategies to foster creativity and provide students with a choice based curriculum. I used his methods to redesign my classroom and organize my supplies to create a studio with centers and an atmosphere that encourages creativity. Victor D'Amico felt that every child had the potential to be a creator. His methods revealed his desire for children to experience and love art, something that every art educator desires. I plan to continue to incorporate his ideas for creative art teaching. I am currently developing a curriculum for each nine weeks of the upcoming school year that includes six weeks of student directed lessons and three weeks of open centers. I plan to include enduring ideas of identity, place, and recycling. I have learned that the goal of a successful art program is not always about moving toward new ideas. Sometimes it is also about incorporating old ones.

The research I did resulted in this study, a revised curriculum, an article for publication, and a supporting capstone paper. I kept a blog throughout the study that includes notes, videos, and photographs of the process. Blog articles were shared with parents in an effort to provide insight into encouraging creativity within their children. It can be found along with the curriculum, completed artwork, and resources at http://www.art2020.weebly.com. The website

can serve as a resource for art educators looking for curriculum that fosters creativity or for those

who may be interested in moving toward a choice based curriculum.

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Appendix A
Research Permission Forms
IRB Protocol Submission Form

UFIRB 02 – Social & Behavioral Research

Protocol Submission Form

THIS FORM MUST BE TYPED. *DO NOT STAPLE*. *Send this form and the supporting documents to IRB02, PO Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611. Should you have questions about completing this form, call 352-392-0433.*

Title of Protocol:	Implementing the art education philosophy of Victor D'Amico in a modern day art classroom		
Principal Investigator:	**McCullers** (Last Name)	**Brenda** (First Name)	**UFID #:**
Degree / Title:	**Master of Arts** **in Art Education**	**Mailing Address:**	**Email:** **bmccullers@ufl.edu**
Department:	**School of Art and Art History**		**Telephone #:**
Co-Investigator(s): **Coordinator:** **Research Asst.:**	 (Last Name)	 (First Name)	**UFID#:**
Degree/Title		**Mailing Address:** (If on campus provide PO Box address):	**Email:**
Department:			**Telephone #:**
Supervisor (If PI is student)**:**	**Roland** (Last Name)	**Craig** (First Name)	**UFID#**

Degree / Title:	EdD	**Mailing Address:** **College of Fine Arts 101 FAA PO Box 115800 Gainesville FL 32611-5800**	**Email :**
Department:	**School of Art and Art History**		**Telephone #:**

Dates of Proposed Research:	**March-May 2015**

Source of Funding *(A copy of the grant proposal must be submitted with this protocol if funding is involved): NOTE: If your study has current or pending funding, AND your research involves comparison of different kinds of treatment or interventions for behavior, cognition or mental health, you must submit the **Clinical Trial Assessment Form**.*	

Describe the Scientific Purpose of the Study:

To develop and explore pedagogy that nurtures and promotes creativity. This will be done through implementing the art education philosophy of Victor D'Amico.

Describe the Research Methodology in Non-Technical Language:

I will be developing curriculum aimed at fostering and promoting creativity. I will be implementing this curriculum in my 3rd & 4th grade classroom at First Baptist Christian School-Stuart, FL. I will ask for parents' consent, student consent, and school staff consent. The research will happen during class and all students will participate in the lessons and assignments, regardless of whether they volunteer to participate in the study or not. Research information will only be gathered from students, parents, and staff members that volunteer.

Describe the Data You Will Collect:	**Please List all Locations Where the Research Will Take Place:**
I will collect student reflections. Using photography and video recording, I will document artwork-during creation and after completion, and converse with students and parents who volunteer to participate in my research. I will have informal conversations with the students, parents, and other staff members as the study takes place. I will keep journal notes about these conversations and other relevant information.	First Baptist Christian School 201 W. Ocean Blvd. Stuart, FL 34994

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Describe Potential Benefits:

The benefit of this research to art education is to demonstrate how creativity can be fostered within students. I hope to provide insights and examples of how classroom design and creative teacher methods promoted by Victor D'Amico will foster and promote creativity within the art classroom today. As a result, children will feel free to express themselves and grow in their creativity.

Describe Potential Risks:

Students who volunteer to participate will remain anonymous in any data that I collect. There are no risks associated in participating in this research.

Describe How Participant(s) Will Be Recruited: Participants are parents, students and staff associated with the 3rd & 4th grade classes at First Baptist Christian School-Stuart. I will ask them if they are interested in volunteering to participate in the research and they will be required to fill out a consent form.

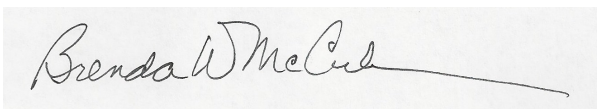| Maximum Number of Participants (to be approached with consent)	129	Age Range of Participants:	8-10	Amount of Compensation/ course credit:	No compensation

Describe the Informed Consent Process. Students from the First Baptist Christian School 3rd & 4th grade, parents of students, and staff associated with class will be asked if they would like to volunteer to participate in this study. Participants who volunteer will then be asked to sign the consent/assent forms.

(SIGNATURE SECTION)

Principal Investigator(s) Signature:	*Brenda W McCu* **Brenda McCullers**	Date:1/30/16
Co-Investigator(s) Signature(s):		Date:
Supervisor's Signature:		Date:
Department Chair Signature:		Date:

Administrative Approval Form

First Baptist Christian School
201 W. Ocean Blvd.
Stuart, FL 34994
Phone: (772)287-5161 Fax: (772)287-7735

December 2, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Brenda McCullers has permission to conduct research with students at First Baptist Christian School. I understand this research is being collected as part of a graduate student project and thesis.

Mrs. McCullers' research emphasis is to investigate and understand how the art educator can nurture and promote creativity during the 3rd and 4th grade, a time when students tend to lose the self-confidence in their art making. I understand Mrs. McCullers will facilitate art projects with a variety of art materials during weekly art classes and parent-child art nights. She will collect student/parent reflections from volunteers agreeing to participate. Mrs. McCullers will ask volunteers to sign the consent/assent forms detailing the research emphasis and expectations.

There are no potential physical risks or physical discomfort that will take place during this research. The written information provided by student/parent reflections will remain with the principle researcher, but findings will be available to the public through the University of Florida. Students/parents who volunteer to participate will remain anonymous in any data that is collected.

Students/parents can choose whether or not to be in this study. If they choose to volunteer to be in the study, they may withdraw at any point without consequence of any kind. Students who choose not to participate in the research study will not be affected in any way.

Regards,
Stuart Shumway
Headmaster
First Baptist Christian School

Parent Consent Form

University of Florida * Department of Art Education

Parent Consent Form
Dear Parent/Guardian,
         I am a graduate student with the Department of Fine Arts at the University of Florida. As part of my coursework I am

conducting research on fostering and promoting creativity by integrating the art education philosophy of Victor D'Amico, a pioneer in art

education. The research will be done under the supervision of Dr. Craig Roland. The purpose of this study is to investigate and understand how the art educator can nurture and promote creativity during the 3rd and 4th grade when students tend to lose the self-confidence they once had in their art making. The results of the study may prove beneficial for art educators interested in building confidence, creativity, and thinking skills within their students. These results may benefit your child today and future students. With your permission, I would like to ask you and your child to volunteer for this research.

Students will research, discover, collaborate and create art projects with a variety of art materials during their weekly art class in the art room at First Baptist Christian School. The study will begin in March and continue through May. The FBCS Art Carnival will be held the last day of the study. During the study, parents will be invited to participate in a parent-child night to create art with their student. Throughout the process, students will be given opportunities to provide voluntary feedback about the projects and write reflections about their artwork. Parents will be given opportunities to provide voluntary feedback during our parent-child art night. The identity of students and parents will be protected through the use of pseudonyms in all reports and identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. Participation in this study is voluntary and will not impact classwork or grade.

This research is for educational purposes only and will be shared through professional presentations and publication. There are no risks expected with this study, nor is any compensation being offered. However, I hope to see your child benefit from this study with a renewed self-confidence in their creativity. You and your child have the right to withdraw consent, without consequence at any time. Group results of this study will be available in July upon request. If you have any questions about this research protocol, please contact me at (772) 201-2587 or my faculty supervisor, Dr. Roland at (352) 392-9165. Questions or concerns about your child's right as a research participant may be directed to the IRB02 Office, Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250; phone (352) 392-0433.

Thank you for your consideration,

Brenda McCullers

Please complete one form and return to me at your earliest convenience. The second form is your copy.

I have read the procedure described above, I voluntarily give my consent and consent for my child,

_____ (print name), to participate in the Fostering Creativity study in art class. I have received a copy of this description.

_____   _____
Parent/Guardian signature   Date

Assent for Students

University of Florida * Department of Art Education

Student Assent

Fostering Creativity: Implementing The Art Education Philosophy Of Victor D'amico In A Present Day Art Classroom

Hi _____,

I am a graduate student at the University of Florida. I am trying to learn about how my art students think, learn, and create in my art class. I will be observing several students during art class for the next six weeks at First Baptist Christian School. If you decide to participate, I will observe the ways you make art and how you feel about your art. I will take photographs and videos. During the six weeks, you will be asked to do different creative art activities and to write about your art. I will also be talking with you about your art. There are no known risks to participation. You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to and you can quit the study at any time. I will respect your decision; this will not affect your grades in class. Your [parent/guardian] said it would be OK for you to participate. Would you be willing to participate in the study?

Thank you for your consideration,

Mrs. McCullers

_____Yes _____No

I have received a copy of this description

Participant_____Date_____

Principal Investigator_____Date_____

Appendix B
Checklist

The following is a checklist I may use at the beginning of the study, during the study, and at the end to record notes on participating students.

Name:	Grade:
Project:	
Worked hard & at edge of one's abilities & knowledge	
Willing to drop/set aside unproductive ideas/stubborn problems	
Persisted in face of complexity, difficulty, or criticism	
Desired to pursue, interested & challenged	
Used various tactics to reframe ideas/problems to generate new perspectives	
Found relationships between different ideas or events	
Concentrated effort/attention for long periods of time	
Did well for the sake of personal pride & integrity	
Additional input:	

Appendix C
Questions for Students

The following list is composed of open-ended questions I asked students during informal interviews:

1. What can you tell me about your picture?

2. What materials did you use?

3. Where did you get your idea?

4. What is your favorite part of the picture?

5. What title would you give this picture?

6. If you were doing this picture again what would you change or do differently?

7. Why did you use the color… (insert color)?

8. What if…. (you had used the color red instead of blue or paint instead of pencil)?

9. How did you….(make these lines, decide on these colors, or create that shape)?

10. If you had more time what would you add to your artwork?

Appendix D
Student Evaluations

Overall Student Evaluation Checklist (Calculations factored in absences)										
Overall Results	**Week**									
Observations	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**Total Percentage**
Worked hard & at edge of one's abilities & knowledge	13	11	5	8	7	11	10	12	10	84%
Willing to drop/set aside unproductive ideas/stubborn problems	5	5	4	1	1	6	2	2		25%
Persisted in face of complexity, difficulty, or criticism	7	6	6	5	4	10	6	2	1	35%
Desired to pursue, interested & challenged	13	11	11	6	7	10	11	14	12	88%
Used various tactics to reframe ideas/problems to generate new perspectives	9	8	7	7	5	5	3	3	0	43%
Found relationships between different ideas or events	5	11	3	4	6	1	4	0	4	36%
Concentrated effort/attention for long periods of time	12	8	8	8	7	11	9	11	9	77%
Did well for the sake of personal pride & integrity	13	12	9	8	7	11	11	13	12	89%

Additional input from observations:

13 students expressed that they explored and experimented with trying new techniques

Students were engaged with making art and eager to participate in the projects. 10 students shared how their artwork was connected to personal interests

Throughout lessons students shared that they liked what they created, wouldn't change it, etc.

Students grew in their self-confidence and took personal pride in their work

Final Interviews:

10 out of 16 students shared in some way that being creative involves trying new techniques or trying

things you haven't done before

9 out of 16 students shared in some way that being creative includes observing things around you

Artwork:

Demonstrates students exploring and experimenting with new techniques; students able to work at their own level; students able to connect personal meaning to their work

Example of Student Evaluation

100% attendance	Week								
Observations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Worked hard & at edge of one's abilities & knowledge	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Willing to drop/set aside unproductive ideas/stubborn problems					x			x	
Persisted in face of complexity, difficulty, or criticism					x	x	x	x	
Desired to pursue, interested & challenged	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Used various tactics to reframe ideas/problems to generate new perspectives				x			x	x	
Found relationships between different ideas or events		x							x
Concentrated effort/attention for long periods of time	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Did well for the sake of personal pride & integrity	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Additional Input:

Student was persistent, explored new techniques, personally connected with work.

Student was able to identify their own passions and interests, and was able to connect them to their artwork—incorporated love for animals in paintings.

Student was engaged with project—stuck to tasks and concentrated for the length of class, and showed responsibility for taking care of studio.

During collage this student envisioned possibilities by arranging pieces in different compositions before gluing them down.

The student was able to effectively explain & evaluate their own artwork as well as others.

Conversations (informal interviews, student reflections)

(Feeling painting) I painted about animals because I love animals and they make me feel

happy so my picture makes me feel happy.

(Hanging wire) When I made the hanging collage I tried making the tissue paper look different ways and I tried making pompoms.

(Collage) Instead of trying to make a picture of something I knew, I tried making different designs as I went. I liked how it turned out. I wouldn't change anything about it.

(Clay) My favorite thing was making my animal out of clay. I made a lamb because I like animals. I painted my clay lamb white so it doesn't really look different. I tried painting eyes but it didn't look right so I painted over them with white. I want to use a sharpie to make the eyes when the paint dries.

(Art Carnival) I painted a picture of a frog sitting on a lily pad. He is happy because he is catching a fly to eat.

(Final Interview) When someone is creative they try new things. I'm working on creativity by trying to do new things. I look around me for ideas.

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Work
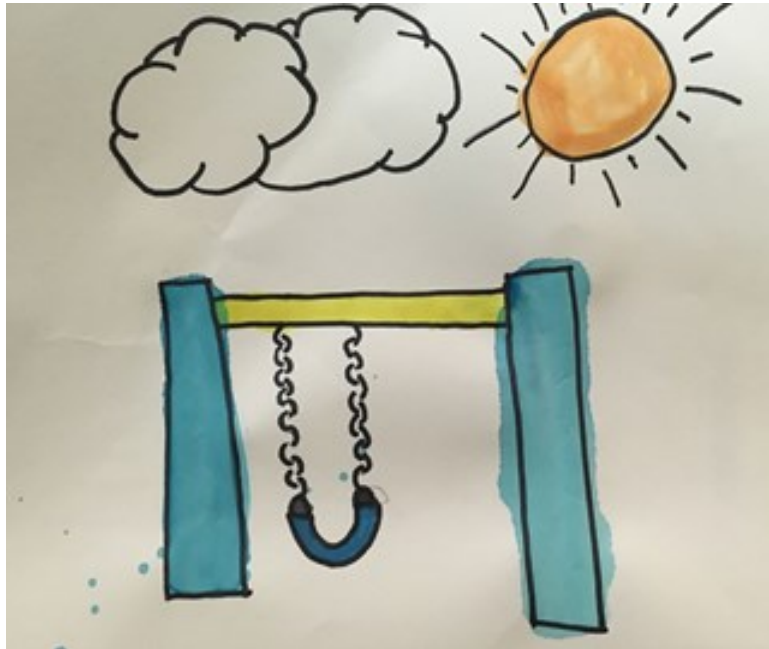
Outside painting

Feeling painting

Hanging wire

Collage

Clay

Art Carnival

List of Figures and Figures Captions

Figure 1. Triangulation data analysis

Figure 2. Student 12, exploring painting with sticks, grass, and leaves

Figure 3. Students 1 and 14 experimenting with making pompoms

Figure 4. Student 3 experimenting with painting like Van Gogh

Figure 5. Student 14 exploring techniques new to her to create a clay French bulldog

Figure 6. Student 1 connecting her art with her passion for animals

Figure 7. Student 7 investigated how to represent the chains on the swings in her painting

Figure 8. The excitement and enthusiasm of Student 7 encouraged others to create sea turtles,

Figure 9. The self-confidence of Student 4 resulted in persistence and concentrated effort

Figure 10. Time spent with Student 11 helped build his self-confidence and determination

Figure 11. Self-confidence helped Student 11 create an artwork he was proud of

Figure 12. This student was able to connect how she felt with her artwork

Author Biography

Brenda McCullers is a graduate student at the University of Florida and an art educator for preschool students through twelfth grade at a private Christian school located in the southeastern part of the United States. She has been an art educator since 1996 and has her certificate to teach art education and Bible through the Association for Christian Schools International. She received her AS in Interior Design from Indian River State College and her BS in Biblical Studies from Moody Bible College. She is a member of National Art Educators Association, the Florida Art Education Association, and the Arts Council of Martin County. In addition, she is a sponsor for the National Junior Art Honor Society and the school Art Club. Her current research involves the study of integrating an art education philosophy of the past, one designed to foster and promote creativity, into a present day art classroom. For more information about Mrs. McCullers visit http://www.bmccullers.weebly.com.