

ArtsConnection's Framework for Joyful & Liberatory Arts Education

Elements

Cultural Humility



Anti-racist, accessible, intersectional and inclusive, and culturally sustaining in practices, and pedagogy.

Recognize students are not a monolith.

Engage in a process of life-long learning & critical self-reflection, including unlearning of own biases and assumptions.

Plan and teach with cultural competency & responsiveness.

Identify & challenge power imbalances.

Respect and value everyone's knowledge and experiences.

Approach with vulnerability, humility, awareness & uplift joy.



Agency

Invite students to take ownership of their artistic choices, experiences, and work process.

Hold time & space for student voice, choice & joy.

Student centered & supportive of each individual student's autonomy.

Respect for all & actively acknowledges the many layers of everyone's identities.

Collaborative, & co-generative focus, and goals throughout the art making.

Flexibility in practices and plans to respond to students requests, responses, & feedback.

Belonging



Collaboratively build a classroom community of respect, play, joy, and transparency.

Invite students and teachers to be their whole selves & embraces the intersections of these identities.

Partner with students, & teachers to learn how they work, their perspectives, interests, and identities.

Focus on co-generative, and collaborative environment & curriculum.

Earn student, teacher & broader community partners trust, cultivating an environment that can lead to creativity and community.

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Key Approaches

Follow the Joy

Joy lives beyond having fun - it is a continued dedication to acknowledging and celebrating the beauty of and within ourselves, each other, and the world. Embodied with the resilience of true self, joy emerges through community, where individuals are encouraged to be themselves and connect profoundly with students and educators. Joy is rich, deep, and sustaining. Joy brings light, laughter, and passion - follow it.

Responsive Planning & Teaching

Educators approach planning & teaching with curiosity. In planning the focus is on culturally sustaining, decolonizing, and stigma-free practices & curriculums to interrupt systems of oppression. Intentionally creating accessible & inclusive plans for individual student's needs, while also holding space for class, and broader community's input. When teaching educators are responsive to students' interests, voices, state of being, needs, & joy. Cultivating the process of artmaking, space for creativity & artistic flow. A circular process of planning, preparation, observing, reflecting and listening and then revising the plan to respond to the community.

Multisensory Artistic Expression

Embraces the Universal Design for Learning approach that all students, but especially diverse learners (Multilingual Learners and Student with Disabilities) benefit from; multiple means of content representation, knowledge expression, and learner engagement. Multisensory artistic expression also deepens students' learning and application of skills.

Notice, Describe & Ask

A cultural humility practice that provides opportunities for educators and students to critically examine their assumptions, shift to an asset-based approach, and value student's knowledge and cultural backgrounds. Essential for teaching practices with an equity lens .

Artistic Process

Activate the arts processes for students to explore how they like to work, learn, and express themselves. Development of student's creative, intellectual, and emotional gifts are intertwined. Educators support learning by treating students as artists who are in charge of their own creative process, and observing how they work rather than evaluating the outcome, supporting students to grow and develop expression.

Asset Based

Educators and students are valued for what they are bringing and their strengths, rather than what they need to work on or lack. It views diversity in thought, culture, and traits as positive assets. With an asset-based approach, every community is valuable; every community has strengths and potential.

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GOAL

To develop practices and systems so that all students, & educators feel valued, supported, and are able to learn in tandem with the essential skills needed for the artform.

We are putting this into action through our Framework for Joyful & Liberatory Arts Education.

This framework focuses on how are you teaching the arts so you can:

- Create a learning culture that supports & includes everyone in the room
- Act as an abolitionist teacher
- Follow the joy
- Support working and thinking like artists

WHY

We live within and among intersecting systems of oppression, and as a result any educator, curriculum, teaching practice, and art form that is not intentionally uplifting historically marginalized communities, and dismantling systems and structures of oppression will continue to perpetuate them.

ArtsConnection as an organization is committed to consciously examine and interrupt systems of oppression in education and the arts. This framework is our tool to intentionally move with joy and art towards creating liberatory learning spaces & artistic practices.

HISTORY & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This framework is built upon the work of many others before us – the idea of Liberated Learning comes from Paulo Freire, and we have learned from and been inspired by many others.

This framework has been collaboratively designed and generated by AC staff, artists, and young people both in-school & out of school and will continue to be revised and updated as we learn more.

Working in this way is a continual ongoing process of learning, reflection, and revision, and will require ongoing maintenance & hygiene.