Assessing Understanding in Visual Arts and Design: Intention, Experience, and Judgment
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Education and assessment in visual arts and design have been controversial issues. When the national test was introduced in Holland in the 1980s, at the upper secondary school level, some art teachers feared that “the introduction of objectives, norms, and criteria will kill creativity, enthusiasm, and motivation; it will reduce our art to just another academic exercise" (Schonau, 1996, p. 157). Similar protests had been raised among teachers in England some ten years earlier (Steers, 1996).

However, new modes of assessment, including processfolios (Gardner, 1989), have made tracking learning in these domains more valid and useful. Our team represents three bodies of research related to assessing thinking in visual art and in design. Lars Lindström, from the Stockholm Institute of Education in Sweden, has focused on both the Sloyd subject and Visual Arts. He has made a study of young people's creativity in the visual arts from preschool to upper secondary school considering both product and process criteria in relation to portfolios of students' work (Lindström, 2006, 2007). Kay Stables and Richard Kimbell from Goldsmith College, University of London, England, have developed approaches to assessing capability through short time-frame, focused design challenges that capture multiple forms of evidence of design thinking (Kimbell and Stables, in press). Lois Hetland and colleagues from Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and the Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, MA, USA have defined eight dispositional categories of artistic mind, levels of which can be assessed in students' work, talk, and actions (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, and Sheridan, in press).

Our session explores the ways these three perspectives are enriching our research and pedagogical repertoires. We are exploring how our models are similar and different by describing them in relationship to a pedagogical framework created through research (Blythe, 1998, Wiske, 1998, Hetland, 2002). Our intention is to better understand the role of assessment in learning and teaching in order to find approaches more powerful than any of our current approaches on their own.

Lois Hetland: Artistic Thinking: Aiming to Develop Studio Habits of Mind
The research on assessment of learning in the visual arts lacks coherence in three broad areas of interest: description of program purpose, content, and quality; description and assessment of student learning; and description of mechanisms, both theoretical and empirical, to explain and predict how hypothesized benefits of arts education occur (Hetland & Winner, 2004; Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, in press; McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras, & Brooks, 2004). This paper describes the Studio Habits of Mind as categories for assessment, part of a model developed through analysis of data collected through sustained observations of visual artist-teachers and students in high schools where the arts are taken seriously.

Richard Kimbell and Kay Stables: Evidence through the Looking Glass: Developing Performance and Assessing Capability
Research in England on the assessment of performance in Design and Technology has provided new approaches to structuring assessment tasks and identifying qualities of capability (Kimbell et al., 1991, 2004: Stables and Kimbell, 2000). Drawing on this research, this paper presents a conceptual argument about how task-focused, creative thinking occurs and can be heightened through strategic use of evidence prompts when the task occurs within the context of authentic assessment. In particular, it focuses on questions of evidence. By exploring the twin faces of evidence, we consider who it is for, how it can be provoked, what can be seen from it, what
learned from it, and, ultimately, how it can support the development of thinking skills of both learners and teachers.

**Lars Lindström:** *Understanding the Creative Mind: Portfolio Assessment in the Visual Arts*

Lindström (2006, 2007) made a study of young people's creativity in the visual arts from preschool to upper secondary school. The assessment was based on both product criteria and process criteria (investigative work, inventiveness, ability to use models, capacity for self-assessment). A high inter-rater reliability was found. In approximately 3,100 comparisons between the young person's own teacher and a co-assessor, there was a 78 percent agreement (≤ 2 steps on a twelve-grade scale).

**References**


