

A Master's Research Project Presented to
The Faculty of the College of Education
Ohio University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

Inclusion Strategies in the Visual Arts Classroom

by

Erin Elizabeth Parker, M. Ed.

June, 2009

This Master's Research Project has been approved
for the Department of Teacher Education

Dianne M. Gut, Ph.D. Associate Professor, Special Education

Ginger Weade, Ph.D.
Professor and Interim Chair of the Department of Teacher Education

Abstract

The purpose of this research was to examine teaching strategies and methods art teachers' use in their classroom to include students with special education needs. Including students with special needs into general classes has been occurring in schools in the United States since the 1970's. Since then, there have been many laws passed to protect the rights of students with special needs so they may receive the best possible education.

Teachers need to be prepared to teach all students, including students with disabilities. Although the arts is an area in education where students with disabilities are often included, art teachers need to be aware of their student's needs, and how they can make sure they are fully included.

The five participants in the study were art teachers in a rural county in Southeastern Ohio. They were asked a series of questions about their experience in special education, and the different ways they accommodate and adapt instruction in their art classes. Although many participants had limited background in special education, they did their best to make sure all their students were included in art classes.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	5
Review of Literature	
Introduction to Inclusion.....	7
General Inclusion Strategies.....	8
Inclusion Strategies for Art Educators.....	11
Accommodations and Methods.....	14
Environment.....	15
Why Art?	16
Methods.....	17
Procedure.....	17
Participants.....	17
Interview.....	18
Data Analysis.....	18
Results.....	19
Experience.....	19
Training/Professional Development.....	20
Strategy Use.....	22
Resources.....	22
Adaptations.....	23
Project Modifications.....	23
Alternative Materials.....	24
Assessment.....	24
Collaboration.....	24

Perceptions of Inclusion of Students with Disabilities..... 25

Conclusion..... 25

Recommendations..... 27

Summary..... 27

References..... 29

Appendix

Inclusion Strategies in the Visual Arts Classroom

This study examined teaching strategies and methods art teachers' use in their classroom to include students with special education needs. The inclusion with students with disabilities in the general education classroom is becoming more and more popular in schools, and one of the first subject students with disabilities are included in is art.

There have been many terms created over the years, describing the inclusion of students with disabilities into general classes. Some of these terms include mainstreaming, inclusion, full inclusion, and least restrictive environment (LRE). Several of the terms sound similar in meaning, but they mean different things.

Mainstreaming is when students with special needs are included into general education classes. Full inclusion (the recent term used for mainstreaming) allows all students, no matter their disability, in general education classes (Lewis, 2006). Inclusion is when students with disabilities have meaningful involvement in general education classes (Lewis, 2006). The least restrictive environment (LRE) is the closest to the general education class that is appropriate for the individual (Lewis, 2006).

Although an inclusive art class is becoming the norm, it is difficult to find current information about the topic. Funding for the arts has been cut drastically over the past few years, and it is hard to find current studies relative to the topic. Much of the information about inclusion in the art room is still valid, despite being written ten or more years ago.

The purpose of this study was to examine methods currently used in the visual arts classroom, and to see how art teachers are accommodating students with disabilities into their teaching.

Review of Literature

Introduction to Inclusion

Before legislation was passed in the United States, individuals with disabilities were often placed in segregated classrooms, not being included in general education classes with their typically developing peers. This all changed when Public Law 94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, was introduced (Guay, 1995).

PL 94-142 introduced mainstreaming into public schools across the United States. Under this new law, all children, no matter their disability, were to be given an education (Henley, 1992, p. 13). Students with special learning needs were to be mainstreamed into classes with typically developing students. Mainstreaming can best be characterized by students with disabilities 'visiting' the mainstream classroom for short periods of time. At first, the classes the students were placed in mostly consisted of non-academic subject areas, such as art (Guay, 1995).

As a result of PL 94-142, teachers were required to accommodate students with disabilities in their classrooms, and with this came the need to change materials, teaching methods, and strategies (Henley, 1992).

At the end of the 1980's, students were beginning to be included into all subject areas, not just non-academic classes (Guay, 1995). This was called mainstreaming. In the 1990's, the term mainstreaming was replaced with the terms inclusion and full inclusion (Lewis, 2006, p. 4). Educating students with special

needs in has been supported by many laws, including PL 94-142, PL 101-476 (The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1990 (Guay, 1995).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was revised in 1997 (Lewis, 2006), and again in 2004, this time under the new name of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) (Turnbull, 2007). The revision of IDEIA in 2004 introduced an integration with the No Child Let Behind (NCLB) Act (Lewis, 2006). Under IDEA, inclusion is not required for students. The law states that the students only need to be placed in the least restrictive environment, which is usually in the general education classroom (Council for Exceptional Children, 2006).

The passing of the NCLB Act required changes to be made in special education. These changes required all special education teachers to be highly qualified, students with disabilities have to participate in district and statewide testing, relaxed requirements for Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, changed the way students are identified with a disability, and incorporated annual goals to be met (Lewis, 2006, p. 9).

Currently in the United States, there are over 6.5 million students who are served in special education programs (www.nces.ed.gov). These students can receive services in the classroom, at home, in institutions, at the hospital, and in any other setting (Turnbull, 2007).

General Inclusion Strategies

There are benefits associated with the practice of inclusion. Inclusion can benefit both students with special needs and typically developing students. When

students with special needs are included in general education classes, they are less likely to miss out on events and activities that are going on at school. Typically developing students benefit through inclusion because it allows them to learn about individuals who are different, accept these differences, and that it does not matter if someone is different (Lewis, 2006).

All educators need to be aware of different strategies that can be used to meet the needs of all students. Depending on the disability, teachers can apply these strategies in their classrooms and instruction, no matter the subject area (Marshak, 2007).

Auditory processing disorders. For individuals who experience problems with auditory processing, teachers need to remember to speak clearly so students can understand what they are saying. Watching movies, listening to lectures, and following along during class can be difficult for students with auditory processing disorders, so the teacher needs to be prepared, providing notes and worksheets they can fill in during discussions. Directions should be spoken, and recited back by the student, but the teacher should also provide written directions (Marshak, 2007).

Visual processing disorders. Students who experience visual processing disorders have a hard time processing information, understanding what they read, and taking notes. These students can benefit with the use of visual aids, extra time on tests, assistance while note-taking during class, and encouraging the use of reading strategies to help with reading comprehension (Marshak, 2007).

Organization skills. Many students with disabilities can experience problems with organizational skills. Many students come to class without their supplies or

bring their supplies for another class instead. They forget or lose their work, and put off working on long-term assignments. Some helpful hints for all teachers includes: writing down all of the class assignments in the same place in the classroom, and having their students write down the daily assignments in their agendas, when assigning long-term projects, assign due dates throughout the duration of the project so that the student does not put off the assignment to the last minute, and color coding materials and supplies for each class (the students should have a color code list in their locker to remind them what class color they need) (Marshak, 2007), come up with a schedule to divide class time up so work can be finished in time, make a list of materials the student will need to finish a project, and working with the parents to help the student at home (Lewis, 2006).

Social and behavior skills. Developing social skills are important for all students, and for some individuals with disabilities, they have trouble developing these skills. It is harder for these students to start conversations with others and make friends. When individuals have problems communicating, they are less confident in themselves, leading them to inhibit themselves in class. In order for the student to feel comfortable in a classroom, the teacher needs to make sure they feel safe and that no one will judge them (Marshak, 2007).

If a student experiences behavior problems, the teacher can show the student non-aggressive behaviors they can use, appropriate language to use, and strategies to decrease bullying (Lewis, 2006).

Inclusion Strategies for Art Educators

After PL 94-142, teachers needed to adapt and modify their curriculum to meet the needs of all students, including students with disabilities. Many art

teachers felt they were not prepared to have students with special needs in their classrooms, and at first, they opposed changing the curriculum and modifying their teaching (Carrigan, 1994).

Training. Art teachers need to be provided with additional training in special education so they can be prepared to help all their students. Many studies have been conducted on the topic, and the results have shown that through course work and field experience, teachers are more open to the idea of inclusion (Carrigan, 1994).

Organization. Once inclusion has taken place, the teacher needs to be prepared to meet their student's needs while giving instruction. They need to be prepared for whatever type of disability a student may have, and how they are going to help that student (Earle, 2005, p. 7). Staying organized helps all students, but it can also help prevent problems, particularly when there are behavior problems (Nyman, 1999, p. 3).

Collaboration. Many times, art teachers are unaware of any disabilities students many have when coming to art for the first time, or when a situation happens in the classroom. Working with the special educators allows for inclusion to be more successful (Schiller, n.d., p. 10).

Paraprofessionals. Working with other paraprofessionals is another great way of being prepared to meet the needs of all your students. Having extra assistance can be beneficial for the art teacher, but the teacher needs to outline their expectations of the paraprofessionals ahead of time. The students are expected to work on the project for themselves, not having the aide do it for them. If the student is unable to use the given materials, adjustments and accommodations

need to be made so that the student can work on the assignment to the best of their abilities (Schiller, n.d., p. 14)

Classroom management. Classroom management and organizational skills are also important for successful inclusion. A helpful strategy for all art teachers would be to maintain strict routines for entering and exiting class, setting up materials for class, classroom movement and flow, appropriate behavior during class, clean up, and how to ask for help when they need it (Guay, n.d., p. 19).

Reminding students about the rules and procedures is also another good classroom management skill to use in the classroom. Some students need to be reminded frequently about how to use the materials and tools in the art room correctly and safely. Pairing up a student with special needs and a typically developing peer can also be a beneficial practice in the art room. If a student needs help with materials or staying on task, his/her peer is there to help (Mastropieri, 2000, p. 552-553).

Behavior. If the student is experiencing behavior problems, there are many different strategies a teacher may try in the classroom. Some of these strategies include behavior management: keeping the students on-task by explaining what is expected of them in the class, appropriate behavior in the classroom, and setting up a behavior system with rewards, if necessary (Earle, 2005, p. 8).

Communication and language. Certain disabilities require many different possible accommodations. Students who need help with communication, language, and reading, some of the appropriate accommodations teachers can use include reading materials the students can read and comprehend, reading materials in

using larger print, picture text, and Braille, materials on tape, translators, and using alternative and augmentative communication (Earle, 2005, p. 7-8).

When a student is experiencing emotional problems, the teacher needs to stay positive, and encourage the student while they are working. The teacher needs to allow the student enough time to complete the assigned task, create a safe working environment, and try to reduce any unnecessary stress (Earle, 2005, p. 8-9).

Depending on the severity of the disability, (Anderson, 1994) explains many different suggestions in *Art-Centered Education and Therapy for Children with Disabilities*. Students who have been identified with mild cognitive disabilities, the art teacher should choose art projects that the student can easily succeed with, often give feedback to the student, repeat and build methods and vocabulary in future lessons, gradually have the art projects and skills progress in difficulty, and help and encourage the student while they are working (p. 7-8).

If the student has been identified with a moderate cognitive disability, teachers can limit color choices to eliminate confusion, have the students focus on the most basic art skills (painting, gluing, and cutting), use art vocabulary often so that it helps build the student's vocabulary skills, and work on sensory awareness and how to use the materials (Anderson, 1994, p.8).

For students who have been identified with severe mental retardation, the teacher needs to focus on several areas such as developing the student's gross motor skills before working on developing fine motor skills, working on developing social skills, showing the student how to hold materials (pencil, scissors), behavior system and motivation strategies, have a strict routine in place in the classroom,

work on identifying shapes and colors, and using multisensory learning in class (Anderson, 1994, p.9).

Accommodations and Methods

In the art classroom, accommodations are needed depending on the individual's disability. Through the use of different accommodations and methods, everyone can participate in art (Copeland, 1984).

Scissors. Some of these accommodations and methods include scissor manipulation. Some of the ways using scissors can be accommodating includes tearing paper instead of using scissors to cut, scissors that have four holes instead of two, allowing the teacher to assist the student while cutting. The teacher holds the paper while the student cuts, and thicker and darker lines are used for outlines so the student knows what to cut (Copeland, 1984).

Gluing. Certain accommodations for using glue can include using other containers if the students cannot squeeze the bottle, and applying glue in other ways other than using a glue bottle (brushes, Q-tips, and sponges) (Copeland, 1984).

Painting and drawing. Painting in the art room is very flexible, allowing for easy accommodations and methods to meet the needs of all students. One way a teacher can introduce painting to students for the first time is to limit how many colors the student may paint with, focusing instead on the process of painting. The students work on learning how to dip their brush into the water and the paint, then apply the paint to the paper. Using drying extenders to the paint gives the students more time to work at their own pace without the worry of the paint drying too fast (Copeland, 1984).

Alternative equipment. When painting is the selected medium for a project, many different tools can be used to apply the paint, making it easy to accommodate for the unique needs of the student. Instead of using a typical paintbrush, a student may choose to use a palette knife, or a paintbrush that is longer or thicker. Grips can easily be added to a paintbrush (and pencils) so the student can hold onto it better, and a larger painting surface can also be used (Copeland, 1984). Hand straps may also be used to secure the drawing tool in the student's hand (Loesl, n.d.).

If the student cannot hold a material, such as a pencil or a paintbrush, alternative equipment must be used. The art teacher can seek assistance from physical and occupational therapists for ideas and how to obtain the equipment the student will need in the class (Henley, 1992).

Environment

One aspect of successful inclusion is to have an environment that is accessible for all students. For students with physical disabilities, adaptations in the classroom are necessary. In order to create a least restrictive environment, equipment such as sinks, tables, materials, and storage must be designed and set up to accommodate their needs (Henley, 1992). The use of lapboards may also be included as possible accommodations (Zederayko, 1999).

In addition to the furniture and storage, the room layout needs to be spaced wide enough so that students who use wheelchairs can maneuver around the classroom. The floor needs to be clear of personal items and equipment, so students do not have a problem getting around the room. Storage materials need to

be labeled in large font so that students who have vision problems are able to read it (Earle, 2005).

Why Art?

Many ask why art is important, and how the arts can benefit the students who participate in them. The arts can spark interest in learning, help an individual develop motor skills, reduce physical and emotional stress, and encourage respect for different cultures and diversity (Nyman, 1999). The arts are able to include and interest everyone, no matter the ability level (Zederayko, 1999).

Art is a great area for students who have difficulties in other subject areas to experience success (Schiller, n.d.). It is a way for individuals to figure out who they are and boost self-esteem (Henley, 1992).

In addition to building self-esteem, developing motor skills, lowering stress, and learning respect, art can also be beneficial to the development of visual and verbal language (Eubanks, n.d.). Art lessons that include both written and oral discussions help students understand the different art concepts. Students are more willing to talk about art because they are interested in the visual appeal of the work (Schiller, 1994).

Since inclusion is common in schools, it is important for all teachers to be prepared to meet the needs of all their students. Art teachers need to be aware of different strategies, methods, and accommodations they can incorporate into their teaching to make sure their students are working to the best of their potential. By keeping in touch with special education teachers and other professionals, teachers can use suggestions, ideas, and equipment in their classrooms.

Method

This project focuses on the teaching methods of visual arts teachers in a rural county in Southeastern Ohio. The purpose of this study was to gain a perspective of art teachers' current views of including students with special needs in their general education art classes, and the methods and accommodations that are made to help meet the needs of these students.

Procedure

After gaining IRB approval from the university, the researcher began recruitment of study participants. The researcher hoped to recruit six participants for the study. Before the participants were contacted for the study, permission was needed from the district's superintendents. Three superintendents in the area were asked permission to interview the art teachers in the district. Two of the county's superintendents responded. The first superintendent gave his permission to interview in the district, and contact was made through email to see if the three art teachers would be willing to participate. Two of the three art teachers were interested, so arrangements were made to set up interview times.

The second district superintendent gave permission, and contacted the four art teachers to see who was interested. Three art teachers responded back to the superintendent, who then forwarded their contact information to the researcher. Emails were sent to the three interested art teachers, and appointments for interviews were made.

Participants

The participants in this study consisted of five art teachers who teach in a rural county in Southeastern Ohio. Two of the participants were elementary art

teachers, one was a middle school art teacher, and two were high school art teachers. All five of the art teachers had several years of experience teaching art in the county.

Interview

For each interview, the interviewer met with each participant either at the school where he/she worked or at their residence. The interviewer explained the purpose of the project, had each participant sign the consent form, and explained that the interview would be audio taped. Once the participant agreed to the terms of the interview, the actual interview began.

During each interview, the participants were asked a series of questions by the interviewer. The interviewer would ask the question, and the participant would answer to the best of his/her ability. The questions asked by the interviewer ranged from how many years of teaching experience each of the participants had, grade levels taught, to experience in special education, and strategies used in their classes. See the appendix for a copy of the interview protocol.

In order to ensure confidentiality, the names of the participants were not identified in this project, and they were assigned a code in the order they were interviewed. The first participant was identified as Teacher A, the second participant was Teacher B, and so on.

Each interview lasted approximately between 20 -30 minutes. For the interviews, the researcher used a tape recorder to accurately document the responses of the participants.

Data Analysis

In order to accurately analyze the interviews, the researcher listened to the tapes of the five interviews. Because each interview was taped, the researcher was able to go back and write down the responses of the participants for each question from the questionnaire used during the interviews.

Results

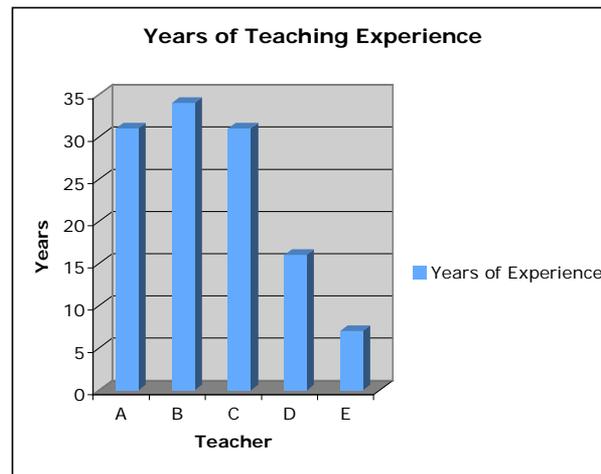
This purpose of this research project was to examine inclusion strategies and methods used by current art teachers in their classes. Since inclusion is a normal occurrence in today's schools, it is important to be prepared to accommodate all students in the classroom, no matter the disability. After completing the interviews for this study, the responses from the five participants are reported in the following section.

Experience

The first question asked participants how long they had been an art teacher. Teacher A taught art for 31 years, Teacher B taught for 34 years, Teacher C taught art for 31 years, Teacher D taught art for 16 years, and Teacher E had been teaching for 7 years. See Figure 1 for the years of teaching experience by the participants in the study.

The average years of teaching experience by the participants in the study is 23.8 years.

Figure 1



The second question asked participants, “What grades have you taught?” during their years as an art teacher. Teacher A taught art to pre-school through 12th grade, Teacher B taught grades 7, 9, 10, 11, and 12, Teachers C and E taught Kindergarten through 8th grade, Teacher D taught grades Kindergarten through 12th grade.

Training/Professional Development

For the third question, “What training and professional development have you had in special education?” three participants said they had some experience in the area of special education. Teacher A researched inclusion and self-contained classrooms for her master’s degree several years ago, but other than that research, she had not had any formal training. Teacher B did not have any formal training in special education; while Teacher C explained the only training she had came from in-service training from the school district. Teachers D and E took classes in

special education as a requirement for their master's degrees. See Figure 2 for training or professional development in Special Education.

Figure 2



The fourth question asked what experiences participants had working with students with disabilities. All participants reported having experiences in one way or another working with students with disabilities. Teacher B explained that in the years she has been teaching, she has had a number of students with disabilities in her class. She has had students who are deaf, have multi-handicaps, and many with IEPs. Teacher C has had experiences teaching special education art classes, teaching students who have Down syndrome and other disabilities. Teacher D said that he has had a lot of experience working with individuals with disabilities, including Asperger's and one who has limited communication. Teacher A reported that she has had experiences with behavior problems, and Teacher E has worked

with MH students who are only included only in the general art classes, students with autism, and students who have behavior or emotional disabilities.

Strategy Use

The fifth and sixth questions asked what strategies participants use in their classroom, and what strategies they found to be successful. Some of the strategies used by the participants include adapting materials for the students, having aides in the classroom to help out, repeating directions, pairing the special needs student with a typical student, modifying a project and reusing parts for other projects, dumbing down instruction, making the students feel comfortable asking questions, making sure they understand what they are doing and the technique and reading the questions aloud for open note tests, giving the option of taking the test with an aide outside of the class room. Two of the participants reported talking with teachers and other specialists help, and asking the classroom teacher for a list of students who have IEPs, helps in their classrooms.

Resources

Question 7 asked, “What training and materials have you used to help you be prepared to work with students with disabilities?” Participants reported using magazines, information from their master’s degrees, on the job training, and information they have in their files or whatever the special education teacher brings them. The participants also explained that they use hand straps for students who can’t hold materials, special foam to make grips for tools, and special scissors to help the student cut paper.

Adaptations

The next question asked participants, “Do you adapt your curriculum and instruction for students with disabilities?”

Adapted instruction. Some of the adaptations the participants reported using are changing instruction if the students do not understand so that they can get their work finished, adapting instruction and curriculum in classes when taking notes, taking tests (used to have an aide pull students out to take tests), ‘dumbing down instruction so students comprehend the material,’ sitting down with the students, making sure they understand the assignment, read for them, and modeling techniques, giving students papers with ideas, mild modifications, and when writing (if it is mentioned in their IEP), he considering limitations when grading.

Project modifications. When asked if their students all work on the same project, or if they modify projects, most of the participants replied that all of their students work on the same project, with a few exceptions. Teacher A said that she is able to work on more complicated projects when she teaches in a self-contained classroom. Teacher E said that all of his students work on the same project, addressing any modification in the rubric, and pairing up students to help each other. Teachers B, C, and D, depending on the class, have students working on the same projects and if needed, they add modifications to these projects. Their more advanced classes have more independent work, so it is up to them what they work on.

Alternative Materials

When asked about what types of alternative materials were used, Teachers B, C, and D do not use any, but Teacher C said that if she ever needed to, she would go to the special education department and have them order anything that is needed. Teacher C said that she has had students use listening devices in her classes, a keyboard to type notes, and uses guided notes for the students to fill in as they go. Teacher E said he has had some of his students use foam grips for materials and special scissors to make cutting easier. Teacher A has said she has used texture as a way to guide students through class.

Assessment

For the most part, most of the teachers did not use rubrics when grading, except Teacher D and E. Teacher A said she is more relaxed about grading, as long as they are trying hard. Teacher C said that most of the time she looks at the effort and craftsmanship of the work, uses a shorter test with the same grade scale, and probably does not grade as hard. Teacher B looks at what the students have done previously, and if they are doing what they are supposed to. She doesn't believe in giving the highest grade in the class, unless it is superior work.

Collaboration

When asked what ways do you work with special education teachers and other professional to assist with the needs of your students with disabilities, all participants said they either meet with the special education teachers at the beginning of the year, or they go and talk to them when they have questions or need help. Teacher C added that she attends some IEP meetings, and in-services.

Teacher E asks the special education teacher what the realistic expectations of understanding the students may have, and strategies to help them understand.

Perceptions of Inclusion of Students with Disabilities

The last question asked the participants about any pros and cons they may see with inclusion. Most of the teachers felt that inclusion helped the students with disabilities because they could see how the other students work, but there were also other pros and cons. See Figure 3 for the pros and cons of inclusion.

Figure 3

Pros and Cons of Inclusion in Art Classrooms	
Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with disabilities do well around typical students (Teacher C) • Everyone can feel successful, just because they are in special education doesn't mean they are not talented (Teacher E) • More pros than cons (Teacher E) • Special needs students are 100% better seeing what they should do (Teacher A) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many special needs students in the typical classroom can get out of control (Teacher A) • Hard to stay quiet (Teacher A) • The amount of paperwork required (Teacher D) • More time is spent with students with special needs, limits time with typical students (Teacher C) • Students don't get the idea, get disinterested then behavior problems occur (Teacher E) • Some disabilities take away from everyone else (Teacher C)

Conclusion

All five participants seemed to agree when it comes to facing the challenges of having students with disabilities in their classes. Even though many had not had formal training in special education, they all seemed to come up with modifications

and alternative methods for their students when needed. In the words of Teacher A, they did, “Whatever it takes.”

On the topic of collaboration with other professionals, the participants’ responses confirmed the information found in the literature. Many times, participants reported having students come to their classes without knowing that a student has a disability. This echoes the findings of Schiller (n.d.) when she said that many art teachers are unaware of any disabilities students may have when they come into their classes for the first time, and working with other professionals helps to make inclusion more successful. All the participants agreed that when they do have students with disabilities in their classes, they go to the special education teachers and other professionals for help if they need it.

When the participants were asked questions about their classroom management techniques and accommodations, many of the techniques were mentioned in the literature. Some of these techniques include pairing up students with special needs with their typically developing peers to help keep them on task (Mastropieri, 2000), reading test questions to the students (Earle, 2005), and encouraging students while they are working (Earle).

During the interviews, some participants mentioned using basic inclusion strategies in their own art room, many of these strategies have been mentioned by (Marshak, 2007). The common strategies include fill-in-the-blank notes during lecture and note taking, providing written suggestions, reading to the students, and extra time on tests. Marshak also suggested using visual aids to help benefit the student, which is a given in art since most projects require the technique to be demonstrated and have a finished product to show the students.

Accommodations in the art room are common for students with disabilities. Many of the participants reported using accommodations for their students, sometimes on the spot. Several teachers reported using grips so the students can hold onto the material better, also suggested by Copeland (1984), and hand straps to keep the material in their hand (Loesl, n.d.).

Recommendations

In order for art teachers to better meet the needs of students with disabilities, further research needs to be conducted. Unfortunately, there has not been a lot of research performed on the topic in the past few years. Many of articles and research are still valid, but there needs to be information that is more current on the topics and issues arising in today's classrooms.

It would be interesting to see the methods and accommodations used by art teachers who teach in different settings around the country. There are many different types of schools, and it would be interesting to see the differences in teaching styles and the progress of all the students.

In addition to further research, college education programs need to prepare pre-service teachers to better accommodate the needs of all their students. Many programs only require a basic special education class, but not one that specially applies the theory into practice. Many times art teachers do not feel prepared to accommodate students with special needs, so additional field experiences would be beneficial to the pre-service teacher and their future students.

Summary

The use of inclusion is beneficial to help meet the needs of students with disabilities. Students who are included in general classes feel more like they are a

part of the school, and do not feel segregated from the other students or left out (Lewis, 2006). Since art is an area that is common for inclusion, art teachers need to be prepared to meet the needs of these students. Through differentiated instruction, adaptive materials, peer interaction, and one-on-one help, all students can work and achieve success in the inclusive classroom.

References

- Anderson, F. E. (1994). *Art-centered education and therapy for children with disabilities*. Illinois: Charles C. Thomas.
- Carrigan, J. (1994) Attitudes about persons with disabilities: A pilot program. *Art Education*, 47(6), 16-21.
- Copeland, B. (1984). Mainstreaming art for the handicapped child: Resources for teacher preparation. *Art Education*, 37(6), 22-29.
- Council for Exceptional Children. (2006). *Inclusion*. Retrieved June 1, 2009, from <http://www.cec.sped.org/Content/NavigationMenu/NewsIssues/TeachingLearningCenter/ProfessionalPracticeTopicsInfo/Inclusion/default.htm>
- Earle, K., & Curry, G. (2005). *Meeting SEN in the curriculum: Art*. London: David Fulton Publishers.
- Eubanks, P. (n.d.). Art as a visual language that supports verbal development. In A. L. Nyman, & A. M. Jenkins (Eds.), *Issues and approaches to art for students with special needs* (pp. 109-117). Reston, Virginia: The National Art Education Association.
- Guay, D. (n.d.). A way in: Strategies for art instruction for students with special needs. In A. L. Nyman, & A. M. Jenkins (Eds.), *Issues and approaches to art for students with special needs* (pp. 17-33). Reston, Virginia: The National Art Education Association.
- Guay, D. M. (1995). The sunny side of the street. A supportive community for the inclusive art classroom. *Art Education*, 48(3), 51-56.
- Henley, D. R. (1992). *Exceptional children: Exceptional art. Teaching art to special needs*. Massachusetts: Davis Publications, Inc.

- Lewis, R. B., & Doorlag, D. H. (2006). *Teaching special students in general education classrooms* (7th ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Loesl, S. D. (n.d.). Art education for students with disabilities: Practical strategies for successful inclusion. In A. L. Nyman, & A. M. Jenkins (Eds.), *Issues and approaches to art for students with special needs* (pp. 55-62). Reston, Virginia: The National Art Education Association.
- Mastropieri, M. A. (2000). *The inclusive classroom: Strategies for effective instruction*. New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall
- Marshak, L. (2007). Strategies to help students with disabilities succeed in general education classes. *Council for Exceptional Children*. Retrieved May 11, 2009, from <http://www.cec.sped.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Search&template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=9288>
- Nyman, A. L., & Jenkins, A. M. (1999). Current trends in education for students with special needs. In A. L. Nyman, & A. M. Jenkins (Eds.), *Issues and approaches to art for students with special needs* (pp. 1-6). Reston, Virginia: The National Art Education Association.
- Schiller, M. (n.d.). Access to art education: Ethical and legal perspectives. In A. L. Nyman, & A. M. Jenkins (Eds.), *Issues and approaches to art for students with special needs* (pp.7-16). Reston, Virginia: The National Art Education Association.
- Schiller, M. (1994). Give students with special needs something to talk about. *Art Education*, 47(6), 12-15.
- Turnbull, A., Turnbull, R., & Wehmeyer, M. L. (2007). *Exceptional lives: Special*

education in today's schools. New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.

United States Department of Education (n.d.). *Children 3 to 21 years old served in federally supported programs for the disabled, by type of disability: Selected years, 1976-77 through 2003-04*. Retrieved May 11, 2009, from <http://www.nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=64>

Zederayko, M. W., & Ward, K. (1999). Art class: What to do when students can't hold a pencil. *Art Education*, 52(4), 18-22

Appendix

Questionnaire for Inclusion Strategies for the Visual Arts Classroom

- 1.) Years as a teacher:
- 2.) Grades taught:
- 3.) Training or professional development about special education:
- 4.) Experience with working with individuals with disabilities?
- 5.) What are some of the strategies you use in your classroom for students with disabilities?
- 6.) What are some strategies you have used and have been successful when accommodating students with special needs?
- 7.) What training and materials have you used to help you to be prepared to work with students who have disabilities?
- 8.) Do you adapt your curriculum and instruction for students with disabilities?
How?
- 9.) Do your students all work on the same project, or do you modify projects?
How?
- 10.) What types of alternative materials do you use?
- 11.) Grading methods?
- 12.) In what ways do you work with special education teachers and other professionals to assist with the needs of your students with disabilities?
- 13.) Pros and cons