A Study on the Cultivation of Students' Creative Practical Literacy in the Fine Arts Curriculum Based on the UbD Model

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Abstract: Traditional art classrooms generally have teaching problems such as students do not have clear intellectual goals, and teaching design is dominated by focusing on indoctrination and activity-based teaching. In the practice of art teaching, the construction of the reverse teaching mode of teaching for understanding and the end as the beginning can effectively cultivate students' creative and practical abilities. How to use the UbD model to enhance students' creative practice literacy and promote students' understanding and transfer of what they have learnt has become a challenge for teachers to explore. This paper combines the UbD model with the analysis of the core qualities of art, aims to cultivate secondary school students' creative practice literacy, and explores the teaching of specific courses as an example, in order to explore the curricular innovation of art teaching.

Keywords: UbD model; arts core literacy; creative practice

1. Introduction

The modern art curriculum is oriented to the development of students' core artistic qualities, stressing the integration with social life and helping students to form a sense of innovation and self-direction. At this stage, the focus of the majority of art teachers on the objectives of the curriculum is still on basic knowledge and skills, and the focus of teaching is on indoctrination and testing, which results in students not having sufficient time for thinking and practice, and does not achieve the teaching objectives of improving students' creative and practical abilities. Based on the perspective of the cultivation of creative practice ability, combined with the requirements of the art curriculum, the UbD model is adopted in teaching, which starts from the expected learning outcomes, refines the major concepts of the discipline, and designs expressive tasks linked to real life, which is conducive to students' full understanding of the nature of creative practice literacy and the transfer of subject knowledge.

2. Overview and characteristics of the UbD teaching model

The UbD (Understanding by Design) model is an understanding-first teaching model proposed by American educators Jay McTeigue and Grant Wiggins [1], which takes explicitly targeted outcomes as its starting point and teaches by reverse design, aiming to enhance students' comprehension and promote their true understanding of learning goals.

2.1 Focusing on broad concepts

Big concepts are not basic concepts or fuzzy words, but are at the heart of a discipline, which can powerfully explain phenomena and provide scientific investigation [1]. Teachers can determine whether the selected content is a big concept by operationalising the definition: big concepts are broad, abstract, can be characterised by one or two vocabulary words, and are transferable. The identification of big concepts helps designers and learners to understand the focus of the content and helps students to connect the dots.

2.2 'Understanding First' Teaching Philosophy

Understanding in the UbD model is based on facts and experiences that encapsulate transferable

concepts that teachers want students to ultimately master, help students transfer what they have learnt to new environments and challenges, and promote individual students' active exploration of knowledge and the conduct of efficient and meaningful learning, thereby enhancing students' core literacy. Knowledge and skills are necessary elements for understanding, but more is needed for understanding to develop; keen insight, the ability to approach problems flexibly, the ability to self-assess, etc.

3. Second, the significance of the cultivation of creative practice literacy in the core arts literacy

3.1 The meaning of core arts literacy

The 2022 Art Curriculum Standard proposes new core qualities for the art curriculum based on the characteristics of the subject and the new requirements of the development of the times, i.e., aesthetic perception, artistic expression, creative practice and cultural understanding [3]. They are complementary and mutually reinforcing, and are implemented in all aspects of teachers' curriculum teaching and students' learning in the compulsory education stage. Art core literacy points out the answer to the question of what kind of person art education should cultivate, which is the height and level of individual art literacy development should reach.

3.2 Nurturing Objectives of Core Arts Literacy: Creative Practical Skills

Education in the new era of the 21st century requires that students be equipped with critical thinking skills and creative thinking skills [2], emphasising the development of creativity and innovation, problem solving skills, and interaction and collaboration skills. Creative practice literacy is more and more important with the development of the times, and teachers should pay attention to the cultivation of students' creative practice literacy, so that students can gradually develop the attitude of adapting to change and embracing the future, and improve their critical thinking, creative thinking, and complex interaction skills [2]. The cultivation of creative practice literacy as the nurturing goal of art core literacy is not only the requirement of the compulsory education art curriculum but also the starting point and landing point of the development of education in the new era of the 21st century.

4. Strategies for Cultivating Students' Creative Practical Literacy in UbD Teaching Mode

The design of a curriculum for developing creative practice literacy using the UbD model is divided into three phases:1. Clarify the expected outcomes at the beginning of instruction, prioritise the learning objectives, and identify the essential questions.2. Reflect on what can be used to demonstrate the achievement of the learning objectives.3. Design the activities based on the expressive behaviours required by the learning objectives, the essential questions, and the evidence for the assessment[4].

4.1 The UbD model starts with prioritising the teaching objectives and using them as a beacon to establish the basic questions

Only by prioritising the learning objectives can teachers reverse-engineer accordingly to the importance of the objectives. Essential questions, which are based on the learning objectives, point to and highlight the core objectives and big concepts, which promote students' understanding of the content of a particular thematic unit.

4.1.1 Clarifying learning objectives

Teachers can take the broad concepts pointing to the curriculum as the core objectives, the knowledge and skills needed to influence students' success in mastering transfer tasks related to understanding as the tasks to be mastered and completed, and all the content related to the curriculum as the content to be familiarised with.

Firstly, the broad concepts and core tasks are clarified. The art curriculum, which focuses on design application and modelling expression, takes students' creative expression of their feelings about nature and society, the development of creative thinking, and the formation of design consciousness as its teaching focus. Teachers can take artistic innovation and practical application as the major concepts of the curriculum. Define the core objectives of the course through the broad concept: through the art practice in each class hour, to form the basic artistic innovation[4] and practical application ability, and to be able to mobilise rational thinking and emotional feelings to design art works.

Secondly, to clarify the important tasks that need to be mastered and accomplished. The art curriculum emphasises guiding students to explore traditional and modern tools and media, and to creatively complete works with different forms of art expression. Teachers can take mastering relevant art skills and using different tools and materials to create art works in different forms of expression as the second objective.

Finally, there is a need for familiarisation. Teachers need to think about what knowledge they want students to listen to, read, study, or accidentally acquire during the course. Teachers choose information that will allow students to quickly understand big concepts as well as process knowledge in teaching and learning that will help them perform better in expressive tasks [4].

4.1.2 Establishing the basic problem

The basic of a question has four connotations: the first refers to recurring issues of importance [1]. The second refers to the core ideas and inquiries of a subject. The third refers to what is needed to learn the core content. The fourth refers to what will engage the learner to the greatest extent possible. A question is an essential question if it engages students to explore the big ideas and core content, generating deep thinking and new understanding.

4.2 Gathering appropriate evidence to demonstrate achievement of learning objectives

Teachers need to identify evidence that can be used to demonstrate successful learning - expressive tasks versus traditional quizzes and tests - based on the instructional objectives and essential questions. Performance tasks are important evidence for assessing whether students understand the big concepts and core objectives, and are usually authentic, complex, and open-ended. Tests that are primarily multiple-choice and constructed-response are valid evidence for assessing students' mastery of essential facts and skills.

4.2.1 Architecture expressive tasks

Teachers can structure expressive tasks according to GRASPS:

Goal: let the student understand what his task is.

Role: Let the student do a role play and choose a job.

Audience: Let the student choose a client and think about how to convince him to accept your work.

Situation: in what situation the student will design the work, what are the tasks he needs to challenge and deal with.

Performance: Design and create a piece of work through which the student will explain his/her design concepts and ideas.

Standards: The student's results must meet the following requirements: you can write about your design concept, design process, innovation, and find out the shortcomings of the work.

4.2.2 Other evidence

Short-answer questions: the questions are open-ended, with no unique answers, and students are expected to think critically about the answers and analyse and interpret them.

Random quizzes: simple, curriculum-focused questions are chosen, usually with unique answers.

Informal checking of understanding: based on teacher questioning, observation, and checking of work without marking or grading.

4.3 Designing lesson plans based on expected objectives and assessment evidence

To ensure that the teaching objectives are met, teachers design lesson plans to ensure that they are engaging and effective. Engaging means that students delve deeper into the topic, develop a desire to learn, and participate in the activities. Effectiveness refers to helping students develop higher level skills and understanding so that they gain deeper understanding and reflective skills. Lesson plans are based on authenticity, with clear challenge and performance objectives, and can be organised by the teacher according to the seven elements of WHERETO.

W (why): The lesson plan must have clear and explicit objectives so that students understand the broad concepts and core tasks of the lesson.

H(hold): Immerse students in the learning of big concepts and expressive tasks to awaken their motivation for inquiry.

E(explore): Provide the necessary knowledge to prepare students accordingly and enhance their ability to learn.

R(reflect): Enhance the understanding of important concepts and guide students to self-assess and improve their performance and achievement.

E(evaluate): Guiding students to self-evaluate, self-adjustment, and discovering the parts that need to be adjusted and improved.

T (tailor): To meet the developmental needs of different students and adapt to diverse learning environments.

O (organise): to develop and deepen students' understanding, and to ensure the participation and effectiveness of the classroom.

5. Cultivation of Students' Creative Practical Literacy by the UbD Model in the Fine Arts Curriculum - Application of the UbD Teaching Model in the Fine Arts Classroom; Taking Paper Cutting as an Example

Paper Cutting is taken from the first lesson of the second unit of the ninth grade of People's Education Press. This lesson requires students to appreciate the traditional art of paper-cutting, understand the style and subject matter of paper-cutting, master the basic techniques of paper-cutting, develop students' creative thinking, and encourage students to contact the reality of life to make a creative modern paper-cutting works. Below, the author specifically discusses how to 'paper-cutting' a lesson in reverse teaching design.

Stage 1: Defining Expected Outcomes

The expected objectives of this lesson are the following four:(1) Understand the importance and social value of creative practice literacy and the connection between art and life (big concept). (2)Know the basic concepts and aesthetic spirit of paper cutting. (3) Master the basic techniques of paper cutting. (4) Complete modern paper-cutting based on an understanding of the broad concepts, record problems, and conceptualise how the work can be applied to life.

1) Basic problem analysis: (1) What is the definition of paper cutting. (2) What are the subjects and styles of paper cutting. (3) How paper cutting can be used in social life. (4) Learn how to make paper cuttings. (6) Design creative paper cuttings.

2) Expected results that students may achieve: (1) Understand the basic concepts of paper-cutting and the role that paper-cutting plays in contributing to the beautification of life. (2) Understand that excellent cut and carve is a balance between the flavour of the knife and the feel of the paper. (3) Understand that creative practice literacy is not only associated with artistic creation but also closely related to real life.

3) Key Knowledge and Skills Expected to be Acquired: (1) Know the development of paper-cutting expression style, cultural connotation and aesthetic characteristics. (2) Master the production method of traditional paper-cutting. (3) Know that paper-cutting stresses decorative interest and exaggerated deformation.

Stage 2: Identifying Evidence for Assessment

1) Expressive task: Your task as a paper-cutting designer requires you to illustrate the value of creativity and the connection between paper-cutting and human life through your work. The objective is to create a contemporary paper cutting for a publisher to be used in a book or advertising design. The challenge and task to be dealt with is that your design sketches face rejection.

2) Other Evidence: (1) Have students describe the artistic shapes and artistic features of different paper cuttings. (2) Have students describe and practice the steps of making paper cuttings through video demonstrations and teacher demonstrations. (3) Describe two paper-cutting modelling problems caused by improper handling and analyse how to avoid them.

Stage 3: Design a learning programme based on the seven elements of WHERETO.

Session 1: Creating a Context, Appreciating and Communicating

Teacher's activities: 1. Teacher's questions: Recall your life experiences and tell us what impressive paper-cutting works you have seen. What are their characteristics? If you are a paper-cutting artist, how do you design paper-cutting? Introduce, integrate students into the class and clarify the learning objective of the lesson [5] - to make creative and modern paper cuttings. (W) 2. Lead students to appreciate the paper-cutting works and ask questions: What are the artistic characteristics of the auspicious phrases and patterns of paper-cutting? What are the cultural connotations of paper-cutting? Who will say the definition of paper-cutting? (W) 3. Play a video on the making of paper-cutting to familiarise students with the method of making paper-cutting. (E1, H)

Student Activity: 1. Recall the paper cuttings you have seen in the past and think about what kind of a paper cutting you would design. Raise their hands to share with classmates and teacher the artistic feeling that paper cutting brings. (H) 2. Discuss in small groups how paper cuttings are made and think about the aesthetic characteristics and cultural connotations of paper cuttings. (E1) 3. Reflect on how to use their creativity to make a modern paper cutting that can be applied to life. (W)

Design intention: 1. to attract students' attention and keep their interest in learning. 2. to let students learn and explore the content of this lesson with a clear goal. 3. to let students have a basic understanding of the definition and production process of paper-cutting, so as to facilitate the depth of the lesson.

Session 2: Conceptualising and Practising, Analysing and Applying

Teacher activities: 1. Teachers show the work of the window, guiding students to discover the process of cutting and carving points of attention. For example, the order of cutting and carving, avoiding the repetition of knives, and sticking the works up in time after cutting and carving. (E1) 2. Use PPT to show the details of paper-cutting of monkeys, the 15th day of the first month of the lunar calendar, etc., so that students can analyse the characteristics of good paper-cutting. For example, line is the basis of paper-cutting modelling, cutting and carving should have the taste of knife, and the works should have decorative interest and appropriate deformation and exaggeration. (H, E1) 3. Students are asked to take on the role of a paper-cutting creator and to conceptualise and design a piece of paper-cutting for a publisher for use in modern media. Teachers need to personalise their teaching to the different needs, interests and abilities of their students. (W, T) 4. Observe and record typical behavioural and attitudinal characteristics of students as they practice. (T)

Student Activity: 1. Discuss in small groups the characteristics of good paper cuttings and the details of their production. (E1) 2. Explore expressive tasks and draw drafts creatively. (W) 3. Make paper-cutting creations: start a draft layout, make a drawing on paper according to the draft, after that, fix the draft with the paper and cut and carve in order, glue the work for display after the cutting and carving is finished. (E1) 4. Prepare a design brief that explains the design concept and the social context in which the work can be used. (W)

Design Intentions: 1. To give students the opportunity to practice and deepen their understanding of the connotations and techniques of paper-cutting. 2. To promote the development of students' creative abilities and the application of creativity in art creation. 3. To enable students to understand the connection between creative practice literacy and life.

Session 3: Presentation and Evaluation, Lesson Summary

Teacher's activities: 1. Encourage students to make presentations, share the creativity and applicability of their works, and talk about the problems encountered in cutting and carving and their creative experiences. (R) 2. Encourage students to evaluate others' cut-outs and design outlines. (E2) 3. Critique and encourage students' work, design outlines, and classroom performance. 4. Summarise Lesson Content: The aim of this lesson is for students to apply their knowledge and skills of paper-cutting to complete creative paper-cutting on their own.

Student activities: 1. Show their paper cuttings, chat about the uniqueness and creativity of their work, reflect on the shortcomings of their work and think about how to improve and correct them. (R) 2. Conduct mutual evaluation, find out the innovative and different points of their classmates' works, analyse the shortcomings of others' works and make suggestions for improvement. (E2)

Design intention: 1. To improve students' ability to express themselves and self-evaluation. 2. To expand students' thinking.

6. Conclusion

In the process of new curriculum reform, UbD teaching around creative practice literacy can effectively enhance students' creativity and innovation and highlight the value of art education. Art teachers should deepen the UbD model in practice, summarise practical experience, understand creative practice literacy from multiple dimensions, and promote students' comprehensive development.

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