

Look for more
candid photos SOON from
NYSATA Conference
2009: 21st Century
Art Smart, on the
Website galleries!

What's the
BIG
Idea?
2010
November 19-21
Rochester Hyatt Regency
125 East Main Street
Rochester, NY 14604
NYSATA 62nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Join us for the NYSATA 62nd Annual Conference, ***What's the BIG Idea?***, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Rochester, NY from November 19-21, 2010. This two-and-a-half day conference is packed with over 100 workshops; a commercial and college exhibitor showcase; and presentations by renowned artists and influential art educators in our field.

For more info, go to: <http://www.nysata.org/mc/page.do?sitePageId=102089&orgId=nysata>

The success of the annual conference depends largely on the high quality workshops that individual members present each year. Experience the personal rewards of giving back to your profession by sharing some of your expertise with colleagues. *Presenters must be current NYSATA members and register for the conference at the member rate.*

Download a Workshop Proposal Form (PDF) to print and mail (Deadline June 1, 2010)

http://data.memberclicks.com/site/nysata/Workshop_Proposal_Form_Revised_Address_2010.pdf

Sneak Preview!

Keynote 2010



Dr. Sydney Walker

**Professor, Art Education
The Ohio State University**

Dr. Walker holds a Ph.D. in art education and a MFA in painting. Currently she teaches graduate and undergraduate courses related to artistic practice and contemporary theory and, prior to 1980, she taught and supervised K-12 art education. In her research into artistic practice she has authored the text, *Teaching Meaning in Artmaking* (Davis Publications, 2001) as well as numerous journal articles. Dr. Walker's research interests also include curriculum theory and practice and she has served as a curriculum consultant on a national level along with participation as a faculty member and director of numerous teacher curriculum institutes. In 2005, she co-authored *Rethinking Curriculum in*

Art Education, (Davis Publications) based on her curriculum work with the Annenberg-Getty Challenge, *Transforming Education Through the Arts Annenberg-Getty Challenge (1998-2003)*. Publications related to her research into artistic practice and curriculum theory can be found in *Art Education*, *Visual Arts Research*, *Studies in Art Education*, *Arts Education Policy Review*, *Teaching Artists Journal*, *The International Journal of Art Education*, and *Journal of Aesthetic Education*.

She has served as a curriculum consultant for the Virginia Beach City Schools, Norfolk Public Schools, Newport News City Schools, Nebraska Public Schools, Bradley-Bourbonnais Illinois School District and the Metro Nashville Public Schools; participated as a faculty member at the Virginia Beach Contemporary Art Center summer institute since 1997; conducted teacher institutes and workshops and presented nationally and internationally in Nebraska, California, Ohio, New York, Alaska, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Michigan, and Taiwan and South Korea.



PAINTS WORD PICTURES.

SAINT ROSE GIVES TOAN TRAN THE FREEDOM
TO EXPLORE THE *LOOK* OF LANGUAGE.

I got the idea from reading continental philosophy: the whole concept of words and what they stand for. Sometimes the words are important; sometimes it's the *mark*, like the effect of calligraphy or bold block letters. Maybe some of it even goes back to my family — they speak only Vietnamese, and I struggle with the language.

So I started exploring words visually. I'd scratch them out in paint with my fingers, or brush them on — or take an old white board with faded words already on it, and write more words on top of them.

I wouldn't have done this without Saint Rose. Karene Faul and the other faculty push us to explore, critique ourselves, open our understanding. They keep taking us down to the galleries in New York City. It's all made such a difference.

I've been told I articulate my work better than most artists. But all Saint Rose art majors are like that; we have to be. The professors ask you to write about your art all the time.

This time next year, I should be in New York, working on my MFA. After that, maybe teaching. But always the art. Always.

Passion. Knowledge. Purpose.



www.strose.edu

The College of Saint Rose

PASSION ART HUMANITY

How can BIG Ideas help my students see
art's connection to the larger world?



BIG IDEAS IN YOUR ART PROGRAM

by Jen Childress

*How can
Big Ideas help me teach
with more depth and
meaning?*



Can Big Ideas help
colleagues and
parents respect
my program
more? 'Cause
that's where I
need help.



Um.... what are Big Ideas
anyway, and why do they have such a
silly name? I heard about them about
ten years ago, but then they kind of
disappeared -know what I mean? I
thought they just died, you know how
all that stuff just goes away after
awhile, and then it was a waste of
all your precious time, so I hope
no-one asks me about this...
I would just die!



What are BIG IDEAS?

Example

A novelist might write about **family conflict** between a mother and child, while a sociologist would investigate the number, variety, and quality of mother/child relationships within a cultural setting; a psychiatrist or psychologist would study the causes of such conflict; and the artist might create a sculpture, painting or performance piece that wrestles with the emotions involved in such conflicts.

Example

A physicist will test ideas about **chaos** and **order** through mathematical modeling, tests, and measurement of the natural world; a historian would look for the emergence of pattern (order) or persistent themes within a chaotic tumble of events; and an artist like Jackson Pollack or Louise Nevelson would explore the possible intersection between visual and formal chaos and order, all in quite different ways.

What's the background?

A “Big idea” is a term most closely associated with Grant Wiggins and Jay McTigue’s seminal curriculum book, *Understanding By Design*. Wiggins and McTigue argued that big ideas should drive curricular choices and organization, so that students would see the connections between what they studied in school and the larger world; and be able to organize their growing understandings in a connected way. **This is not a new idea**, in fact Dewey proposed something similar about 100 years ago; and perhaps we could go as far back as Socrates as well. The early discipline-based spiral curriculum design that Jerome Bruner proposed (Man, A Course of Study), was driven by this idea of large connecting ideas that grow outward in content and sophistication over time.

The NYS Social Studies and Math/Science/Technology

Curriculum Guides are organized around big-idea-like large themes and concepts? This organizational structure is both discipline-specific AND friendly to interdisciplinary efforts. The ELA and Arts Standards are organized quite differently. While big ideas and themes are assumed implicitly in the language of these Standards sets, the overt organizing principles for ELA and the Arts are what skills are to be acquired and generalized content areas. A Curriculum Guide for the Visual Arts could bridge this gap!

Big ideas are large categories - like **Power, Family, Leisure, Pride, Conflict, Emotion, Environment**, etc. that capture essential and enduring themes of human life. These concepts are trans-disciplinary, which means that they are not the sole concern of one discipline, but that humans seek to make meaning of these concepts through a variety of means (including art!)

I've also heard the term ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS What's the connection?

Essential questions tease out aspects of big ideas. They are not art specific, or any discipline-specific; but rather can be answered and investigated through a variety of means. Some essential questions relating to the big idea(s) of order and chaos might include: ***Does some kind of order always emerge from chaos? How do chaos and order co-exist? Are both necessary to human life? What are the different ways we know something is chaotic? Orderly?***

Wiggins and McTigue took things several steps further however, as they proposed ways to assess for this larger view of education through “**backward design**” – what should kids be able to understand about the world, *what are the different ways it would look like if they did understand*, how does a teacher design curriculum that scaffolds student investigation of such ideas and leads to deeper understanding?

Did you know?

Big Ideas and Essential Questions conceptual framework has been thriving in many pockets of the United States, but it is true that the past ten years at the national level took a drastically different approach to education. While educational reformers on one side of the question pushed for deeper understanding based on a constructivist view of teaching and learning, the Bush Administration Department of Education's emphasis on large scale testing of primarily lower order thinking skills is philosophically based on seeing

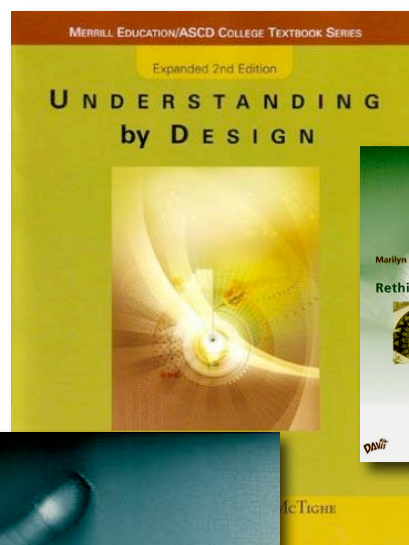
If this idea has been around, why a conference on

knowledge as discrete units of information and programmatic skills, rather than something much larger, deeper and dynamic. It is important to remember that we *can* think only at the lower order level, but we cannot think at a higher level well, without a solid knowledge base in place. So **teaching to higher order thinking skills – the kind of teaching that actually aids students in grasping and wrestling with big ideas** – is a much, much richer and more meaningful approach to education. This is the opportunity we have now – to push the national conversation back into this arena – which by the way, is much more inclusive of the important learning offered to students through the

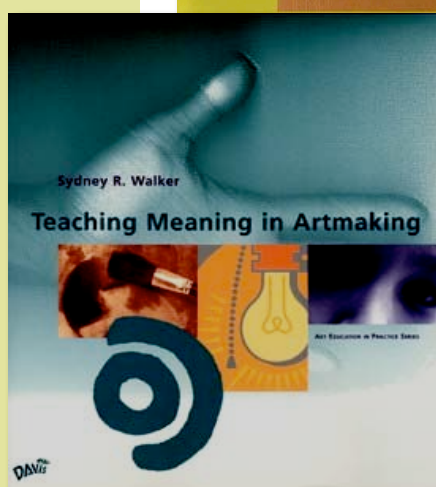
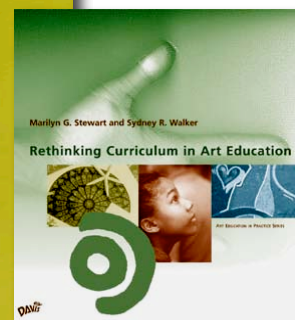
BIG IDEAS now?

If you've been a follower of the Davis Publications' *Art In Education Practice Series*, much of this will be familiar to you already. Sydney Walker's excellent book, *Teaching Meaning in Artmaking*, started the conversation about big ideas and essential questions nationally in art education circles. This is still one of the best resources I have found for thinking through this way of approaching curriculum in art. Marilyn Stewart and Walker also published a follow up book with Davis, *Rethinking Curriculum in Art*, but Walker's first book still remains the most lucid explanation; and is full of examples that illuminate the difficult decisions teachers must make as they shift to this more meaningful way of teaching.

Sydney Walker will be a keynote speaker for the 2010 annual NYSATA conference, "What's the Big Idea?" in Rochester, New York, November 19-21.



arts.



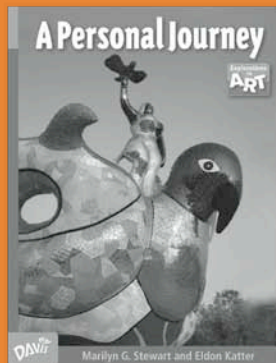
ART is a big idea

Davis is the number one publisher of K–12 art programs.

Look to Davis for unparalleled images, content, and resources



Elementary



Middle School



High School



High School



first in art education since 1901

DAVISART.COM

800-533-2847

For more information, call your local sales representative, Jerry Miller at 518-731-6043 or e-mail him at jmiller@davisart.com.

50 PORTLAND STREET, WORCESTER MA 01608

Davis's Elementary and Middle Level art textbook series utilize a Big-Ideas-like approach to curriculum organization and meaning-making.

There is **powerful intersection between the Big Ideas approach to curriculum design and 21st Century Skills**. While 21st century skill building emphasizes ways to think that are creative, critical and collaborative in nature, a Big Ideas-like approach to content gives us something meaningful to think about.

BIG IDEAS **21st century skills** **ECOLOGY NATURE VIEWS OF REALITY**

Essential Questions about the Big Ideas, shared by Art and Science

The choice of a familiar and frequently featured artist like Monet was purposely done, to help you compare your usual questioning with big-ideas style questioning. What do you find similar? Different?

How do we see?

How is light perceived at different times of day?

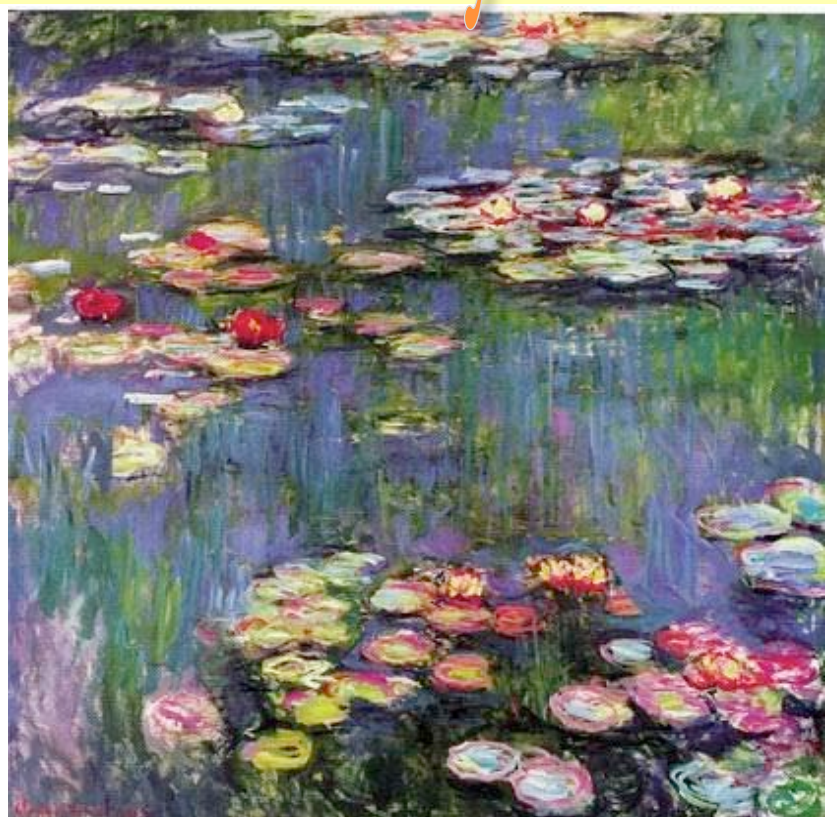
Why is color affected by light?

Why is it important to record our observations of the natural world?

What can the careful study of nature help us to understand? How do things grow in relation to each other?

How does the life of one organism impact the life of another nearby?

What is beautiful about the organic patterns of the natural world?



*Related ART questions, about
one of Monet’s water lilies paintings:*

**How does Monet focus our attention on patterns of growth
in a lily pond?**

Composition shows both tight and loose clusters of plants.

What has he noticed about space in this area of his pond?

*Lilies that are further away cannot be seen as well as those
up close, and seem smaller.*

**What time of day might it be, and how do his color choices
help us to know that?**

*Early morning or later in the afternoon, colors are saturated
but dark shadows are also present, cool tones used.*

**What could be above the pond, not shown in the painting?
How do we know?**

*Trees, and other garden plants probably, indicated by the
vertical green and lavender strokes that seem to indicate
reflections.*

**What about Monet’s painting technique helps us to know
that light is being reflected off of water?**

*Transparency and brushstroke definition, size, direction, color
choice and placement.*

What do you think fascinated Monet the most?

What evidence in this painting supports your opinion?

**What do you imagine would capture your attention the
most if you were there?**

How might you communicate that with paint?

Observe
Gather
data
Organize
Group
Deduct
Infer
Compare
Contrast
Confer
Experiment
Research
Conserve
Speculate
Practice
Evaluate
Learn from
mistakes
Reflect...

21st Century Skills



What specific art vocabulary would we put with each lesson?

3 rd Grade Big Ideas: Time, Natural Beauty	7 th grade Big Ideas: Natural Patterns, Mystery	10 th grade Big Ideas: Natural Patterns, Time, Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a small painting of a section of a lily pond, which shows a cool time of day.• Make sure that some of your lilies get smaller as they move up on the picture plane, to show they are further away.• Experiment with different brushstrokes and their effects to show how calm and beautiful water looks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a painting of a section of a pond that indicates near and far through patterns of plant growth.• Research the type of plants that you want growing in “your pond.”• Show some reflection of an unseen world above, through specially chosen direction and length of brushstrokes.• Cooler times of day should be indicated with color choice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a painting of a large or small section of water (your choice).• Indicate near and far through patterns of plant growth and scale change.• Show some reflection of an unseen world above, through use of transparency, color and brushstroke direction. Unseen world should be believable part of this painting; but location of your water source will determine what can be there. (Research the possibilities.)• Time of day is your choice and should be indicated with color choice.• For an extra challenge, choose a different time of year. What pattern of growth would be seen in early spring? Late fall? What would be reflected then?

Essential Questions *for Teachers*

Big ideas in art sometimes guide artistic investigations, and sometimes arise from the investigation itself. Give students opportunities to work both ways.

What other big ideas could be used to direct artistic thinking and **questioning**?
How does posing an assignment in this way **connect** students to the larger world?
Their own world?
Engage student **curiosity**?
Help students become **problem-solvers**?
Teach students to **search** out their own problems?
How could **collaboration** be emphasized in parts of this lesson?
Help you the teacher avoid formulaic teaching and become a more **creative teacher**?
Bring attention to the **cognitive skills** that artists employ on a regular basis?

INVITATION

How have you been using Big Ideas and Essential Questions in your lessons and curriculum? Send in your story for the print edition of the next NYSATA News. Include the following:

1. Title of Lesson or Unit
2. 1-2 most important Big Ideas this lesson investigated
3. 1-3 Essential Questions that arose from, or guided, the work
4. Description of Project (150 words limit), including artwork titles that may have been included as examples for students
5. Pictures of students and student work (with permission, see below)

Deadline for inclusion in Summer 2010 Print Edition of the NYSATA News: April 15.

Article Submissions to the News

This is the first full pilot electronic issue of the NYSATA News. **Comments and submissions are welcome!** Please send to:

Jennifer Childress, NYSATA News Editor
36 Journey Lane, Glenmont, NY 12077

Electronic submissions preferred:
childrej@strose.edu

Deadlines

Winter NYSATA News (electronic) December 1
Spring NYSATA News (print) February 15
Summer NYSATA News (electronic) May 15
Fall NYSATA News (electronic) July 15

Sponsors

For sponsorship ads, contact Pat Groves by e-mail at phgroves@aol.com.

Share this electronic issue of the NYSATA News with colleagues and friends. Encourage them to become part of NYSATA today!

Not a member yet or need to renew?

Membership information can be located at
<http://www.nysata.org/mc/page.do?sitePageId=87036&orgId=nysata>

You can also join online by following the links on this same webpage to create a log-in and password.

Membership questions, changes of address and inquiries about receiving the News should be directed to:

Teri Konu, NYSATA Membership Chair
9200 Sixty Road, Phoenix, NY 13135

(315) 695-2500 or tkonu@twcnny.rr.com

About the NYSATA News

Photo and Graphics Submissions to the NYSATA News – send in JPEG, TIFF or PDF format

We love showing off your students, your teaching, and their artwork! For purposes of accurate identification and acknowledgement, **photos of people** sent to the NYSATA News MUST be accompanied by the name of the photographer and their e-mail or phone number; and first and last names of persons in the photo from left to right, front to back. **Images of artwork** must include the artist's name, school name, teacher name and NYSATA region. Any photos that depict **students under 18** must have parental permission to be printed.