SELECTED WRITINGS BY ELLIOT W. EISNER WITH RESPECT TO THE PROBLEM OF EVALUATION IN ART EDUCATION

Kaethe-Maria Lawn

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ABSTRACT

Kaethe-Maria Lawn

SELECTED WRITINGS BY ELLIOT W. EISNER
WITH RESPECT TO
THE PROBLEM OF EVALUATION IN ART EDUCATION

Eisner sees the goal of education as the betterment of mankind. The contribution of art education towards this goal is to help develop the ability to create and respond to visual form. He considers evaluation an important part of both the teaching and learning process, designed to improve the performance of student and teacher. He questions existing evaluation practices and certain misinterpretations, and presents a thorough basis for improved evaluation procedures.

This paper is intended to be a survey of Eisner's publications in which he discusses the problem of evaluation in art education. My personal opinions are included where they deviate from Eisner's views.

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INTRODUCTION

With regard to evaluation the opinions of art educators vary from the desire not to evaluate at all to the other extreme, i.e. a behavioristically orientated system in which only those objectives are sought that can be measured.

There is uncertainty among art educators regarding the meaning, function, and procedures of evaluation, and it is frequently mistaken for "grading". Most members of the profession are conscious of the existing dilemma and the shortcomings of certain evaluation procedures.

Several criteria for evaluation are to be considered, such as the orientation of the individual art teacher, the trend of art education at a given time, and the mentality of the student. Also, according to Eisner, the evaluation of children's art work should be in agreement with the general scheme of education to which it belongs as well as with the specific goals of art education.[1]

Furthermore, the development of curricula that may go beyond the goals of traditional school programs need to

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Evaluating Children's Art," School Arts, Vol. 63, No. 1, (September, 1963), 384.

be accompanied by different approaches to evaluation.[1]

A close relationship exists at all times between the aims of art education and evaluation. In order to evaluate one has to know what one values. The problem of evaluation is therefore one of the fundamental questions and of the greatest concern for all involved in education, regardless of discipline or level.

The nature of art, in itself variously definable, adds a further dimension to the problem. There are no "correct answers" agreed upon all inclusive, and it is often the unforeseen and unplanned that touches the greatest depth of artistic expression. Besides the diversity of personalities and orientation among art educators, it is, in my view, most of all the complexity of the subject matter that accounts for the difference of opinions as to how art should be taught and evaluated.

In a number of his writings Eisner has concerned himself with evaluation in art education and has published a comprehensive basis for it. I consider his work with regard to evaluation as well as his contribution to art education in general to be important. Therefore <u>this thesis is not meant to be a critique</u>, but I rather hope that through collecting and analyzing his work, I can help to make his ideas and findings more readily available

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, ed., <u>Confronting Curriculum Reform</u> (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971), p. 6.

to an interested audience. (My personal views are included when, at times, I wish to add to his discussions, or where I do not quite agree with his point of view.)

I believe that Eisner's efforts to clarify and, possibly, overcome the problems in evaluation are of value to all art educators. His ideas provide a background for theoretical considerations and are also useful for practical application in the classroom. Since the question how to evaluate is closely related to the problem of what and how to teach, Eisner's suggestions regarding evaluation could furthermore enrich the area of curriculum development.

In the beginning of this thesis I will describe briefly the history of art education as far as this is needed to understand the present situation. Emphasis will be placed on the development of behaviorism with its implication on art education, frequently referred to as "The New Rationality".

Although Eisner has been one of the strong voices in favour of behaviorism and has concerned himself intensively with its articulation, he has also become aware of its shortcomings.[1,2]

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Educational Objectives: Help or Hindrance?" School Review, Vol. 75, No. 3, (Autumn, 1967).

[2]Elliot W. Eisner, "The New Rationality in Art Education: Promise or Pitfall?" Art Education, Vol. 22, No. 2, (February, 1969).

I shall state his position in art education and will relate the assumptions and beliefs on which he bases his work to the various aspects of evaluation, such as meaning, function, and procedure.

Eisner discusses the difference between testing, grading, and evaluating. I will describe what he means by these terms, and how he thinks these concepts ought to be differentiated by art educators.

Although Eisner has concerned himself with a great number of problems in the field of art education, I will limit my source material to those of Eisner's writings in which he probes directly or indirectly the question of evaluation.

As an appendix I am including a selection of original articles by Eisner that I consider of particular importance for the understanding of my thesis. There is also a complete listing of Eisner's publications that might be useful to anybody who wishes to use it for further research.

EISNER'S POSITION WITH REGARD TO EVALUATION

Historical Background

Meaning

Function

Assumptions on which Eisner bases his Work

Instructional and Expressive Educational Objectives

The Difference between Testing, Grading, and Evaluation

Means of Evaluation in the Productive, Critical, and Cultural Aspect of Art Education

Evaluation Procedures
(Comparison to Peers, Past Performance, and a Criterion)

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

"The soft-romantic, liberal, and humane view of the nineteenth century is itself being reorganized and modified. Appreciation of the power of the environment and the importance of the teacher and instruction is coming to the fore."[1]

"...children learn best when taught and... a passive attitude on the part of the teacher is not only ineffective but irresponsible."[2]

"It is not upon the development of self-esteem, but in the power to create and respond to visual form that art educators must ground their claim in the school program."[3]

"There are some things that art education can achieve that are not possible in other areas, but the development of creativity is not one of them."[4]

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Changing Conceptions of Artistic Learning," Elementary School Journal, Vol. 68, No. 1, (October, 1967), 24.

[2]Elliot W. Eisner, "Art Education Today: Neither Millenium nor Mirage," Art Education, Vol. 19, No. 7, (October, 1966), 7.

[3]Elliot W. Eisner, "How Can You Measure a Rainbow? Tactics for Evaluating the Teaching of Art," Art Education, Vol. 24, No. 5, (May 1971), 37.

[4]Elliot W. Eisner, "Curriculum Ideas in a Time of Crisis," Art Education, Vol. 18, No. 7, (October, 1965), 9.

Changes in society bring with them changes in the ideology and methodology in education including art education.

The child of the early settler in North America was trained for his predictable place in society. Educational goals were determined by the needs of every-day life and the welfare of the country. Where art entered the curriculum, it was not intended to make the young person aware of visual form or to encourage him to create works of art himself, but rather to train his hand and eyes so that he would be better qualified for whatever vocation he would choose. (These reasons for education were stated in the laws passed in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1642 and 1647.[1])

In 1749 Benjamin Franklin advocated that instruction in art should be included in the curriculum for mainly materialistic reasons. He wrote: "To America... the invention of a machine...is of more importance than a master piece of Raphael."[2]

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Changing Conceptions of Artistic Learning," Elementary School Journal, Vol. 68, No. 1, (October, 1967), 19.

[2]Elliot W. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 29.

In the early nineteenth century, although education in general had become more liberalized, art education was still viewed much in the same way, provided it was included in the curriculum at all.[1]

In the early twentieth century a new concept of the child and its development emerged. Through the influence of Dewey and, indirectly, Freud, Thorndike and others, the child was now seen as an unfolding organism that would flourish if only given favourable and encouraging surroundings. Art educators believed that is was their task to stimulate through process orientated activities the latent potentials of the young person. Art was furthermore regarded as an outlet for emotional tensions and a means of meeting the child's various needs. "Creativity became the watchword of the day, art a vehicle for its realization."[2] Instructions and evaluation were often regarded as stifling and undesirable as it was thought that the child developed "...not so much from the outside in as he does from the inside out."[3]

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Changing Conceptions of Artistic Learning," Elementary School Journal, Vol. 68, No. 1, (October, 1967), 19-20.

[2]Elliot W. Eisner, "Curriculum Ideas in a Time of Crisis," Art Education, Vol. 18, No. 7, October, 1965), 8.

[3]Elliot W. Eisner, A Comparison of the Developmental Drawing Characteristics of Culturally Advantaged and Culturally Disadvantaged Children, Project No. 3086, OE 6-10-027, U. S. Office of Education, (1967), 8.

Furthermore, the process was regarded as being of greater importance than the product.

It should be noted at this point that, although art was regarded highly in this movement, art educators did not reach primarily for those goals that are unique to their field, i.e. "...help children develop the intelligence necessary to create and respond to visual form that is expressive and visually potent."[1] At that time art education rather strived for those ends that were then common to most other fields of education, such as the nurturing of creativity, which was understood in rather general terms.

Towards the late fifties a different trend developed. Triggered off by external political events (the beginning of the Russian space exploration) and significant internal changes within the field of education (the decline of the Progressive Education Association), the emphasis changed from an ideology that favoured non-intervention by the teacher to a new interest in cognitive learning and the importance of instructions. Based on the findings of research, psychologists and educators came to believe that the natural unfolding process can be greatly improved and reach a higher level through the acquisition of mental tools, such as a well developed, specific vocabulary and a thorough knowledge of the various aspects of the

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "How Can You Measure a Rainbow? Tactics for Evaluating the Teaching of Art," Art Education, Vol. 24, No. 5, (May, 1971), 37.

subject.[1]

Art education was included in this movement, and Eisner can be regarded as one of the main voices in favour of this development. He has contributed greatly to the clarification of its means and ends.

He strongly advocates that through mental tools both performance and appreciation can be improved and intensified. Therefore the quality of the product is, to a large extent dependent on the quality and range of mental tools that the student has acquired.

Research in art education does indicate that through a thoughtfully and intelligently developed curriculum the level of artistic ability and understanding can be raised in all students. This means that their art products are likely to become more refined, they will be more knowledgable in the critical realm and have a better understanding of the relationship between culture and art.

Based on these findings, Eisner is convinced that ability in the visual arts (as well as in other areas of education) is to a large extent the result of skillful instructions rather than a "talent" that a person either has or has not.

The quality of the instructions and of the teacher are of great importance. The outcome of instructions must

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Arts Curricula for the Artistically Gifted," Teachers College Record, Vol. 67, No. 7, (April, 1966), 499-500.

be evaluated for the benefit of both student and future activities.

Eisner believes that art educators must concentrate on those aspects which are the special province of art education. This does not mean that they ought to ignore those aims which are common to all areas of education, such as the development of self-esteem. But art educators can only then claim a place in the school program if they concentrate their efforts on that area which is specific to art education, i.e. help students to develop the ability to create and respond to visual form.

Eisner also emphasizes that "...art education has no franchise upon creativity."[1] Creative thinking can be developed in any subject area provided it is taught well.

Eisner narrows the scope of art education by dispensing with beliefs that can no longer be held in the light of evidence, such as the natural unfolding process and the broad influence of art education upon creativity in general.

Narrowing frequently results in significant exploration of depth, and I think that this holds true for Eisner's work. I believe that through concentration on the specific goals of art education he might lead art education in a new direction and help art educators to become more effective in their instructions.

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Curriculum Ideas in a Time of Crisis," Art Education, Vol. 18, No. 7, (October, 1965), 9.

MEANING

"Objectives in teaching art are not always pre-planned. What the student produces and what he learns are not always foreseen."[1]

"The problem of determining the best criteria to use in evaluation is not merely a methodological one. Such a problem rests upon a philosophical base. Deciding upon what is best as a means also implies that in the long run the means selected will contribute to the achievement of the larger ends sought."[2]

"The judgement by which a critic determines the values of a poem, novel, or play is not achieved merely by applying standards already known to the particular product being judged, it requires that the critic -or teacher- view the product to the unique properties it displays and then, in relation to his experience and sensibilities, judge its value in terms which are incapable of being reduced to quantity or rule."[3]

"The problem is not whether one talks about art, but one of determining the quality and utility of the talk. There is no reason why man should not use one of his unique intellectual tools, spoken language, as a tool for experiencing visual art."[4]

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Evaluating Children's Art," School Arts, Vol. 63, No. 1, (September, 1963), 384.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Elliot W. Eisner, "Educational Objectives: Help or Hindrance?", School Review, Vol. 75, No. 3, (Autumn, 1967), 256.

[4]Elliot W. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 226.

In most subjects taught in our schools evaluation is a relatively straightforward matter. It means that, after a set of educational objectives has been stated, evidence has to be found to show the achievements of the student, and a comparison be made of the achievements to the educational objectives.

As mentioned earlier, in art education the problem is more complex. For one, the nature of art itself makes it difficult to codify.

Although being clear about what one wishes to teach, and efficiency of methods are desirable in art as they are in other areas, one can predict less than in other subject areas what the student will learn and what his product (through which he expresses his knowledge) will be like. Furthermore, art being visual and subjective, often defies verbalisation, and for this reason as well cannot be reduced to objective components.

When concerning himself with evaluation the art educator must bear in mind that he ought to do more than describing or giving an explanation. He is asked to judge the value of something. This is a highly complex process which, in my view, can only be undertaken on the basis of a thorough knowledge of the nature of art and the aims of art education.

It must also be recognized that according to Eisner the works of mature artists are viewed in a different way than the achievements of the student.[1] While the products of the artist are evaluated as having complete life of their own, the works of the student are generally seen in the context of his background such as age, social setting, previous instructions and personality. Eisner suggests that the indication of growth, which can be recognized in the student's products, should be considered as a basis for evaluation through comparison with previous works.[2]

Artistic expression is a form of non-verbal communication. Why then should one talk about something that "speaks for itself"? Does it not defy the very essence of art if one attempts to translate it into verbal language? Why should a teacher discuss with his students how their work has progressed over a period of time, or how to see and interpret a masterpiece? Questions of this kind are frequently asked by art educators and artists who question the value of the spoken language in the realm of visual expression. Although Eisner does not advocate an entirely academic or linguistic approach to art education,

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Research in Creativity: Some Findings and Conceptions," Childhood Education, Vol. 39, No. 8, (April, 1963), 375.

[2]Elliot W. Eisner, "Evaluating Children's Art," School Arts, Vol. 63, No. 1, (September, 1963), 386.

he thinks that students should learn to talk intelligently about art, and use language as a tool for experiencing visual art.

I am in agreement with Eisner up to this point. However, when he suggests that, "Although verbal language is not now and can never be a substitute for the visual, it can function as a midwife to aesthetic experience..."[1] he does, in my opinion, consider the visual form of communication superior to the spoken language. Here I do not agree. I rather think that translation from visual to verbal language (and vice versa) is in itself a revelation of the original. Furthermore, since the verbal language is articulate in a different way than the visual, a communication of entirely different dimensions can take place.

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 226.

FUNCTION

"It's clear that teachers and school administrators have some responsibility to report to parents and other relevant adults about the achievements of the young and the effectiveness of the curriculum. Schoolmen have a responsibility to the public as well as to the child. Yet at the same time practices that interfere with the development of affection by the young for the objects of their study ought to be removed."[1]

"And should they come to feel inadequate in art by the end of the third grade, the talent myth can always be employed by teachers and parents alike to explain away the child's lack of competency- a lack fostered by little or no instructions with a curriculum that is concerned more with novelty than with learning."[2]

"To evaluate is to be aware of what one values, what one does, and what the consequences of one's doing yields."[3]

"If students drop out of school or if they turn away from art as a means of personal expression, perhaps the cause lies more in the curriculum than in the student."[4]

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), pp. 207-208.

[2]Elliot W. Eisner, "The Challenge of Change in Art Education," Art Education, Vol. 20, No. 2, February, 1967), 28.

[3]Elliot W. Eisner, "How Can You Measure a Rainbow? Tactics for Evaluating the Teaching of Art," Art Education, Vol. 24, No. 5, (May, 1971), 37.

[4]Elliot W. Eisner, ed., Confronting Curriculum Reform (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971), p. 204.

Evaluation has been regarded for a long time by many teachers as a means of rewarding and punishing students, particularly when it was understood as "grading".

Eisner stated three different functions of evaluation.

First, it should help the student to improve his artistic ability in the productive, critical and cultural realms of art. (This is discussed in detail on pp. 32-37.)

Second, evaluation serves as communication between the teacher and others, who also have an interest in the student's development, such as his parents, other teachers, guidance personnel and future employers. This communication should not, however, take place by assigning the student a grade or letter, but rather through an expanded, written statement and, if at all possible, a talk between those concerned.[1] (This is discussed further on p. 30.)

Third, evaluation should show how effective the teaching and curriculum have been. When evaluating the student's achievements, the teacher must accept a certain amount of responsibility for the level of quality that has been attained. He should not employ the "talent myth"

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 208.

as an excuse for the student's lack of competence. (It must be remembered, however, that there are still other factors influencing the learning process, and, vice versa, "... student learning is not the only criterion for evaluating teaching."[1])

Eisner considers the influence of evaluation on the improvement of instruction and curriculum to be the most important function of evaluation. He says: "...it has become apparent that we must go beyond evaluating the behavior of the student, we must even go beyond evaluating the content of the programs; we must also appraise the art of instruction."[2]

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Instructions, Teaching and Learning: An Attempt at Differentiation," Elementary School Journal, Vol. 65, No. 3, (December, 1964), 117.

[2]Elliot W. Eisner, ed., Confronting Curriculum Reform (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971), pp. 8-9.

ASSUMPTIONS ON WHICH EISNER BASES HIS WORK

"What has emerged in the field over the past few years is a conception of the child that conceives of development primarily from the outside in, rather than from the inside out. It is a conception which emphasizes environment over nativism, one that is concept more than media orientated."[1]

"...artistic learning is not an automatic consequence of maturation. The ability to produce and experience art is, in large measure, a learned ability."[2]

"We cannot assume that concentration on the productive aspects of art will 'take care of' the critical aspects of art."[3]

"If a child has to spend most of his efforts coping with dripping or bleeding tempera it is unlikely that he will be able to exploit the material for his own purposes."[4]

"...it was assumed that the most important contribution that art can make to the growing child is that which is unique to art: the acquisition of aesthetic experience, the ability to create art forms, and the understanding of art as an aspect of and an influence upon human culture."[5]

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Curriculum Making for the Wee Folk: Stanford University's Kettering Project," Studies in Art Education, Vol. 9, No. 3, (Spring, 1969), 47.

[2]Elliot W. Eisner, "Stanford's Kettering Project: An Appraisal of Two Years' Work," Art Education, Vol. 23, No. 8, (October, 1970), 4.

[3]Elliot W. Eisner, "Curriculum Ideas in a Time of Crisis," Art Education, Vol. 18, No. 7, (October, 1965), 11.

[4]Elliot W. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 158.

[5]Eisner, "Stanford's Kettering Project: An Appraisal of Two Years' Work," 4.

"...some aspects of artistic learning -even for the very young child- can be evaluated."[1]

"I hold that the distinction between creativity and intelligence is artificial, that the seeming separation between these concepts is due to a too narrowly conceived concept of intelligence."[2]

"I have argued...that artistic ability is a consequence of qualitative intelligence; art schools have demonstrated that such ability can be developed."[3]

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Stanford's Kettering Project: An Appraisal of Two Years' Work," Art Education, Vol. 23, No. 8, (October, 1970), 4.

[2]Elliot W. Eisner, "Research in Creativity: Some Findings and Conceptions," Childhood Education, Vol. 39, No. 8, (April, 1963), 375.

[3]Elliot W. Eisner, "Arts Curricula for the Artistically Gifted," Teachers College Record, Vol. 67, No. 7, (April, 1966), 500.

Eisner firmly believes in environmentalism rather than nativism. On this basis he regards the ability to produce and experience art as something that, to a large extent, can be learned. It is, in his view, neither a talent nor due to maturation, but rather the result of skillful instructions.

He questions that there is a transfer of ability from the productive realm to the critical and cultural realm, but rather advocates that instructions are necessary in each area.

He believes that art education, particularly for the older student should be concept rather than media orientated. But when instructing in the productive realm, the art teacher must be aware of the need for technical skills, as lack of competence drains energy from the creative process. It is, in his opinion, possible and indeed necessary to evaluate certain aspects of artistic learning at all age levels and in the various areas of art education.

He advocates that art education must concentrate on that area where it can be most beneficial for the child, i.e. help him develop the ability to create and respond to visual form, to understand art as an aspect of

culture, and to critically view works of art.

He furthermore believes that there is no difference between creativity and intelligence, and that artistic ability is the consequence of qualitative intelligence, which can be developed.

Although Eisner agrees that not all of schooling is educational, he places great power and responsibility in the hands of the professional educator.[1] I am to a large extent in agreement with his views, but I think that one should, at this point, also consider the influence of those powers which are beyond the control of the art teacher, such as the cultural level of the child's family and community and the values held by its members. The school provides only a certain part of the child's education, and the impact of those powers that act upon the child besides his teachers, is difficult to assess.

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "How Can You Measure a Rainbow? Tactics for Evaluating the Teaching of Art," Art Education, Vol. 24, No. 5, (May, 1971), 36.

INSTRUCTIONAL AND EXPRESSIVE OBJECTIVES

"The possibility that rationality in art education would be anything but a benefit to the field is a thought that I would not have dreamed of entertaining two years ago."[1]

"...requiring the specification of objectives in behavioral terms can lead to practices which assume that all ends in art education that are educationally significant are specifiable in advance."[2]

"Instructional objectives embody the codes and the skills that culture has to provide and which make inquiry possible. Expressive objectives designate those circumstances in which the codes and skills acquired in instructional contexts can be used and elaborated..."[3]

"...instructional objectives emphasize the acquisition of the known; while expressive objectives its elaboration, modification and, at times, the production of the utterly new."[4]

"And I would add that what is most educationally valuable is the development of that mode of curiosity, inventiveness, and insight that is being capable of being described only in metaphoric or poetic terms."[5]

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "The New Rationality in Art Education: Promise or Pitfall?" Art Education, Vol. 22, No. 2, (February, 1969), 6.

[2]Ibid., 10.

[3]Elliot W. Eisner, "Instructional and Expressive Educational Objectives: Their Formulation and Use in Curriculum," Monograph Series on Curriculum Evaluation, (Chicago: American Educational Research Association, 1969), p. 20.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Elliot W. Eisner, "Educational Objectives: Help or Hindrance?" School Review, Vol. 75, No. 3, (Autumn, 1967), 257.

As indicated earlier, Eisner has worked intensively towards a clarification of the objectives of art education, and the rational means to achieve these ends.

But in recent years he has gone beyond the positive contributions of the "New Rationality", and has also become aware of its shortcomings.

In 1969 he published "The New Rationality in Art Education: Promise or Pitfall?". In this article he discusses - among other problems in art education - those evaluation procedures that allow for measurable outcomes only. He does not deny the positive contributions of the "New Rationality" such as the development of improved evaluation tools and the increased ability of art educators to be more specific about their goals.[1] But at the same time he points out the limitations: 1) They tend to lead the art educator towards those practices that lend themselves to easier testing. 2) They can easily become restrictive for both teacher and student, thus excluding the element of surprise and individuality.[2] They do not allow for diversity or the unplanned since "...curriculum theory

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "The New Rationality in Art Education: Promise or Pitfall?" Art Education, Vol. 22, No. 2, (February, 1969), 10.

[2]Ibid.

which views educational objectives as standards by which to measure educational achievements overlook those modes of achievement incapable of measurement."[1]

In the same year Eisner published "Instructional and Expressive Educational Objectives: Their Formulation and Use in Curriculum Development". This article is, in my opinion, very important conceptually as it deals in depth with the problem of educational objectives as determiners of the tools and the ends of evaluation. In this publication Eisner comes to differentiate between instructional and expressive objectives.

Instructional objectives specify knowledge and skills. Provided that the students are approximately on the same level of development, and instructions and conditions are suitable, the outcome can be expected to be similar in character, and thus can be evaluated without too much difficulty.[2]

Expressive objectives do not specify what the student is to learn from the activity or instruction. They rather invite the student "...to explore, defer or

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Educational Objectives: Help or Hindrance?" School Review, Vol. 75, No. 3, (Autumn, 1967), 257.

[2]Elliot W. Eisner, "Instructional and Expressive Educational Objectives: Their Formulation and Use in Curriculum," Monograph Series on Curriculum Evaluation, (Chicago: American Educational Research Association, 1969), pp. 16-17.

focus on issues that are of peculiar interest or import to the inquirer. An expressive objective is evocative rather than prescriptive."[1] When concentrating on expressive objectives, the teacher hopes for very personal outcomes and surprising results. Therefore evaluation in this realm is a different matter compared to judging the achievements that derive from activities geared for instructional objectives. When dealing with instructional objectives, the teacher can ask, "Did the student learn what (he or I) intended?" In the realm of expressive objectives the question is, "What did the student learn?"[2]

Eisner stresses that, although the nature of art lends itself more readily to expressive rather than instructional objectives, both have their place in art education. "...the skills and understandings developed are used as instruments for inquiring more deeply into the significant or puzzling."[3] While instructional objectives can be regarded as transmitting the known, expressive objectives aim at variation, discovery, and creation of the new. They must interact in order to be effective. While

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Instructional and Expressive Educational Objectives: Their Formulation and Use in Curriculum," Monograph Series on Curriculum Evaluation, (Chicago: American Educational Research Association, 1969), p. 18.

[2]Elliot W. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 211.

[3]Eisner, "Instructional and Expressive Educational Objectives," p. 20.

the use of expressive objectives without preparation through instructional objectives is likely to be an abortive attempt, the reverse, i.e. working towards instructional objectives only, would lead to a dead end, as mere repetition generally does in intellectual matters.[1]

It is the task of the teacher to help the student acquire those skills that enable him to benefit from the achievements of those who were before him. Equipped in this way he can then set out to make his own contributions.[2]

It should be pointed out that a technically crude picture can be highly expressive. But in general, Eisner believes, lack of skill drains energy from the creative process. This can and should be avoided by suitable instructions.

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Instructional and Expressive Educational Objectives: Their Formulation and Use in Curriculum," Monograph Series on Curriculum Evaluation, (Chicago: American Educational Research Association, 1969), p. 15.

[2]Ibid.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TESTING, GRADING, AND EVALUATION

"Let me indicate what evaluation is not. It is not the same as testing. Testing is simply one procedure through which some kinds of evidence are obtained."[1]

"...tests can be and usually are used for the purposes of evaluation."[2]

"To grade is not to evaluate. Grading is the assignment of a symbol to a person's performance. It frequently takes the form of a letter and most often is used to indicate some level of performance relative to some criteria. But evaluation can occur without grading. One can evaluate a student's work, his effort, his attitude, and a host of other factors, without ever assigning him a grade."[3]

"...any tool, even the most useful, can be misused. Our problem, it seems to me, is not to throw away tools but learn how to use them with sensitivity and discretion."[4]

"By evaluation I mean that process through which evidence is secured and judged with respect to its educational value."[5]

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "How Can You Measure a Rainbow? Tactics for Evaluating the Teaching of Art," Art Education, Vol. 24, No. 5, (May, 1971), 36.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Elliot W. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 216.

[5]Eisner, "How Can You Measure a Rainbow?, 36.

Eisner points out that testing and grading are often mistaken for evaluation. It is necessary to clarify what is meant by these terms in order to avoid confusion when discussing evaluation.

He defines testing as "...one of several possible vehicles for gathering information for making...judgements."[1] It is a mechanical procedure frequently employed to gather data which, together with other information, help to make value judgements concerning the student's performance.

Tests need not be entirely verbal. The teacher can give a verbal stimulus, and the student is expected to respond visually. (Example: The student is asked to select out of a number of works of art the one that represents most clearly a certain direction in art.) Or, vice versa, a visual stimulus can be provided and the student be asked to respond in the form of an essay. Furthermore, the teacher can ask for a visual response to a visual stimulus. Eisner advocates a broader scope of response in all areas of education, not only in art education.[2]

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 204.

[2]Ibid., p. 235.

Since test situations are usually artificial, Eisner suggests that the teacher should try to find out what types of interest the students have in the arts program when they are not under the pressure of a test situation. Such observations are of importance not only with respect to the evaluation of the student's performance, but also when assessing the effectiveness of school programs.[1]

Eisner furthermore recommends group critique as a means for revelation. Although the art educator has to be aware of certain problems when using this technique -an unkind comment can be very destructive- Eisner believes that it has potential benefits: 1) The students can see how their classmates have handled the problem. 2) They have an opportunity to put their knowledge in the critical realm into practice. 3) It provides the teacher with the information how students respond to the work of others, i.e. what they notice and do not notice. Again, such information is valuable for the evaluation of the student (in a non-test situation) as well as for preparation of further instructions.[2]

Grading means assigning a symbol -usually in the form of a letter- to indicate the level of the student's

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 234.

[2]Ibid., pp. 234-35.

performance as compared to some criteria. Although Eisner agrees that teachers and school administrators have the responsibility of giving information concerning the achievements of the students and the effectiveness of the curriculum to those concerned, he argues that students' work should be evaluated but not graded. Grading tends to motivate students to work for high grades rather than for interest and joy. Eisner believes that the way in which grading is handled at the present is not generally helpful to the student. However, he does not say that it is essentially miseducational.[1]

Evaluation can be defined as judging the value of something. In art education the criteria which are used for these judgements are based on many factors, such as the personalities of students and teacher, his understanding and concept of art, and the social and psychological climate. To design a structure for evaluation that takes all these variables into account is an impossible task. However, the ideas on evaluation which Eisner suggests are, in my opinion, sufficiently flexible and open-ended to allow for individuality and diversity and, on the other side, definite and developed enough to be of use when encountering the problem of evaluation.

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "How Can You Measure a Rainbow? Tactics for Evaluating the Teaching of Art," Art Education, Vol. 24, No. 5, (May, 1971), 29.

MEANS OF EVALUATION IN THE PRODUCTIVE, CRITICAL, AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF ART EDUCATION

"...in the productive realm the goal of evaluation is to enable the student to improve the quality of his work as well as to recognize and appreciate what he has produced."[1]

"We cannot assume that concentration on the productive aspects of art will 'take care of' the critical aspects of art. Students need to learn how to look at art and they need to have tools with which to look."[2]

"Children can feel without being able to say, and to the extent that this is true, verbal evidence will not be a valid indicator of such experience."[3]

"We want students to understand that the men who create art are part of a human culture and therefore reflect that culture in their art. Furthermore we would like them to understand that although the culture in which artists work affects their work, it is not a one-way street. Artists, through their work, comment on that culture, provide models of value for it, and the great ones profoundly influence it. Art is more than a mirror; it also provides visions towards which men reach."[4]

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 222.

[2]Elliot W. Eisner, "Curriculum Ideas in a Time of Crisis," Art Education, Vol. 18, No. 7, (October, 1965), 11.

[3]Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, p. 225.

[4]Ibid., p. 232.

Eisner suggests that students should be taught and evaluated in the productive, the critical, and the cultural aspects of art. (In his earlier publications he used to refer to the latter as the historical aspect.)

He writes: "Artistic growth...is not limited to the making of art, but includes an awareness of the qualities of the great works of art, an understanding of the criteria that can be used to appraise these works and a respect for and appreciation of the culture out of which the works have emerged."[1]

The productive aspect has to do with technical and aesthetic skills that enable the student to create form of artistic quality. In this realm he tries to use a media to express what he knows and feels. When evaluating in the productive realm, the emphasis should lie on helping the student to improve the quality of his work and also to recognize the improvement as such. The quality of the product of an art activity provides the teacher with information concerning what the student has learned from the activity.

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Changing Conceptions of Artistic Learning," Elementary School Journal, Vol. 68, No. 1, (October, 1967), 25.

One aspect of evaluation in the productive realm is adequacy of technical ability. As mentioned earlier, technical skills are important. In order to be creative a person must not have to worry about tools and techniques. An artist must be aware of the demands of his media in order to master it.

Second, the aesthetic and expressive aspects of students' work can be evaluated. Questions such as "To what extent has the student attended to the organisation of form in the work? How does the form function? What types of expressive character does the work display?" can be considered relevant in this area.[1]

Third, the creative imagination that is visible in the student's product can be evaluated. The teacher can look for new approaches in handling the material, for ways in which the student tells about himself and his knowledge of his surroundings and for problem solving in visual form.

The critical aspect deals mostly with works other than the student's own. It can be said to be one of the goals of instruction in art criticism to develop sensitivity towards visual expression beyond the student's own works and help him to come to a better understanding of the meaning of works of art. There is evidence that until recently little stress has been placed on this

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 216.

area.[1] Eisner believes that in the past art educators have done little to help the student acquire the linguistic tools that make it possible to think and talk about art.[2] He questions whether the intensive occupation with the productive side of art education will necessarily develop the student's critical ability. He thinks that students need to be taught how to regard art, and that they must be given tools that will help them with this task.[3]

Eisner points out that the art teacher, when instructing in the critical realm, is frequently confronted with two tasks: first, the student has to learn differentiate between personal preferences and objective value judgements.

Second, the student must develop the linguistic tools that are needed when one wishes to comment on a work of art since art criticism usually takes place in the spoken language. A certain vocabulary has to be acquired along with the conscious experience of viewing a work of art before a person can be expected to make relevant, intelligent statements about it.

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Arts Curriculum for the Artistically Gifted," Teachers College Record, Vol. 67, No. 7, (April, 1966), 24.

[2]Elliot W. Eisner, "Changing Conceptions of Artistic Learning," Elementary School Journal, Vol. 68, No. 1, (October, 1967), 24.

[3]Elliot W. Eisner, "Curriculum Ideas in a Time of Crisis," Art Education, Vol. 18, No. 7, (October, 1965), 11.

Eisner says furthermore that the encounter between a viewer and a work of art can well be of the kind that cannot be put into words since the spoken language is by no means the sole transmitter of thought and feeling. People and particularly children can feel and understand deeply without being able to translate their experience into words.[1] In such cases the teacher needs to make inferences from the behavior of the student: Does he seem to respond to visual form? Is he eager for further encounter? I think that it is obvious that this kind of evaluation requires considerable insight and understanding of human behavior. Even under the most favourable circumstances the teacher can only hope to grasp a fraction of the student's perception, and even then he can be very wrong in his assumptions.

When, however, a student is capable of making verbal statements about visual form and, as mentioned earlier, has learned to differentiate between personal preference and value judgements, his comments can be used for evaluation. They can be regarded as <u>description</u>, <u>interpretation</u>, and <u>evaluation</u>.[2]

When the student is asked to <u>describe</u> a work of art, the teacher hopes that through this exercise the

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, <u>Educating Artistic Vision</u> (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 225.

[2]<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 224.

student will increase his awareness of visual information. The amount and quality of his observations can then be used to evaluate to what degree the student can receive such information.

The next step, which goes beyond mere description, asks for interpretation of the so far only visually perceived. It is not an easy task for the art teacher to judge whether the interpretative statement that a student might make about a work of art can indeed be supported by the work itself.

Finally, in the critical realm students can be led to the level of evaluative statements. Contrary to description and interpretation, the evaluation of a work of art has to do with its quality and significance, part of which is the transmission of feeling through form.[1]

It should be noted at this point that Eisner's ideas regarding evaluation of a student's performance in art can, in my opinion, also be applied in the case where the student is asked to judge the value of a work of art. The student should consider the unique properties of the work and then, using his experience and sensibilities, make a judgement in a way that is not dependent on a rule

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Education and the Idea of Mankind," The School Review, Vol. 73, No. 1, (Spring, 1965), 33.

or quantity.[1] Eisner believes that for primary school children the productive aspect of art is the most important. But during the years of instruction in art, the other two should also come to play a part.

According to my own experience I am inclined to believe that not even all higher level students can be expected to reach the described level of art criticism, while Eisner seems to consider this goal attainable. Much can be done to raise the level of qualitative intelligence which, in Eisner's view, is necessary for the creation of a refined work of art.[2] But besides a developed intellect a person needs, in my opinion, a certain knowledge of life and man in order to grasp the feeling that the artist is communicating through his work. If the student has not yet experienced such feelings he is not likely to recognize them or respond to them when confronted with them in a work of art. Eisner stresses the importance of visual education as a means of raising the artistic ability of a person. Although I am basically in agreement with this, I would like to add that I consider life experience, pre-disposition, and maturation additional, important factors in the process of acquiring

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Educational Objectives: Help or Hindrance?" School Review, Vol. 75, No. 3, (Autumn, 1967), 256.

[2]Elliot W. Eisner, "Art Curricula for the Artistically Gifted," Teachers College Record, Vol. 8, No. 1, (April, 1966), 500.

artistic knowledge and ability. I think that one must regard the acquisition of knowledge and ability as a combination of factors, and one cannot be certain about the exact contribution of each factor. Therefore I consider it important to bear these possible limitations in mind when evaluating the student's critical ability.

Besides the making of art (productive aspect) and a knowledge that can help students to view works of art in an intelligent way (critical aspect), the student should also know about those cultures out of which these works have grown. He should understand them as a product of that age and recognize the question that the artist has raised through his work.[1]

Evaluation in this third realm, the cultural (or historical) aspect, is mostly based on verbal expression, and since teachers generally possess the greatest skills in this type of communication, evaluation is less difficult than in the two previously discussed areas. The teacher can evaluate the student's knowledge concerning the origin of art, its function in human existence, and the place of a particular work of art within a major stream.

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "The Challenge of Change in Art Education," Art Education, Vol. 20, No. 2, (February, 1967), 29.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

(COMPARISON TO PEERS, PAST PERFORMANCE, AND A CRITERION)

"...it is illogical to conclude that a particular child ought to perform in a certain way simply because most children of his age do."[1]

"If we want to know if a child has gotten taller, it is fruitless to find out if he is above average in height. The analogy holds true for evaluating achievement in art."[2]

"Knowing the relative rank of an individual child in a particular classroom tells a great deal about his relation to others but nothing about his progress. In order to determine progress, past and present performance must be compared."[3]

"...the most prized outcomes of art education in particular and education in general are not pre-specifiable."[4]

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Evaluating Children's Art," School Arts, Vol. 63, No. 1, (September, 1963), 385.

[2]Ibid., 386.

[3]Ibid., 385.

[4]Elliot W. Eisner, "How Can You Measure a Rainbow? Tactics for Evaluating the Teaching of Art," Art Education, Vol. 24, No. 5, (May, 1971), 39.

The most common evaluation procedure in North American schools is group comparison. This holds true for education in general as well as for art education, although art educators are more often inclined towards individuality than their colleagues in other areas.

Although by no means the only way of assessing a student's achievements, group comparison is easily handled and gives, generally in the form of a grade, information where the student ranks compared to his peers. It is based on the assumption that the way in which most members of a group behave is "normal" or "right". This is, of course, questionable. Besides a few outstanding members of a group which are recognized as "above average" (or whatever the term may be) there are, on the other side of the scale, the "below average" students.

Eisner criticizes the fact that group comparison is used almost exclusively and suggests that it should be only one of different evaluation procedures, preferably the least important one, inspite of the fact that it is often desired by parents. The drawback of group comparison is that it discriminates against (or favours) the child who has a behavior pattern different from the

majority.[1] Also, it does not indicate the rate and range of growth of the individual. Some students are very successful in one media but have difficulties in another.[2] Furthermore, group comparison cannot be applied in the realm of expressive objectives as here the very personal outcome is desired. Eisner suggests that emphasis should be placed on evaluation of the individual student's growth and also on comparison with a criterion.

Judging what kind of progress the student has made in a given time, i.e. comparison with self, can be done by keeping samples of the student's work and, in certain time intervals, discussing with him the changes that are visible in his products. This method is superior to group comparison in so far as the student has an opportunity to conceptualize his own achievements which otherwise might not be noticed by him. While talking with the student about his art work or engaging him in a group discussion, the teacher can gain insight into the student's self-image, of his artistic abilities and his attitude towards art.[3] The teacher has furthermore an opportunity to detect weaknesses and plan activities that might help the student develop the needed skills.

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "Evaluating Children's Art," School Arts, Vol. 63, No. 1, (September, 1963), 387.

[2]Elliot W. Eisner, "Research in Creativity: Some Findings and Conceptions," Childhood Education, Vol. 39, No. 8, (April, 1963), 374.

[3]Eisner, "Evaluating Children's Art", 387.

I would like to repeat at this point that Eisner does not wish to see group comparison excluded from evaluation procedures, but rather suggests that, contrary to common practice, it should be of less importance than the comparison with self and comparison to a criterion.

Comparison to a criterion can be used only in the realm of instructional objectives. The teacher can judge the technical competence of the student and also the amount and kind of information that he possesses in the cultural realm. It can furthermore be applied in the descriptive area of the critical realm. But one must always be aware of the fact that the most significant achievements in art education are not pre-specifiable.[1]

In order to come to a balanced evaluation result, Eisner suggests the following evaluation grid:[2]

	Student with Standard	Student with Group	Student with Self
Productive			
Critical			
Cultural			

[1]Elliot W. Eisner, "How Can You Measure a Rainbow? Tactics for Evaluating the Teaching of Art," Art Education, Vol. 24, No. 5, (May, 1971), 39.

[2]Elliot W. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 233.

CONCLUSION

Eisner's work is strongly directed towards the improvement of education in the visual arts. He stresses again and again that the student's ability to create and respond to visual form can be strenghtened and brought to a higher level through an intelligently developed curriculum and a knowledgable, sensitive teacher. He regards evaluation as an important means towards improvement of the performance of both student and teacher and, although not directly, the researcher. Evaluation can, in my opinion, be regarded as a pause to look backwards in order to prepare for the next step, as any human activity is interrupted at intervals for assessment and re-orientation. Eisner has carefully and, I believe, successfully analyzed the terms grading, testing, and evaluation. He has described and analyzed the various aspects of art education in which the students' work can be evaluated, and has shown how this could be done.

Although I personally consider his work a very valuable contribution towards the teaching of art, I am aware of the fact that other art educators might hold a different view regarding evaluation. But then Eisner himself writes:

The ideas put forth are not meant to be offered, or taken, as dogma. The last thing I hope for is blind obedience to unexamined belief. Instead I hope the reader will treat my ideas as objects of critical attention, objects that invite and hopefully stimulate hiw own inquiries into the means and ends of art education.[1]

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[1]Elliot W. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. vi.

APPENDIX

Selected Writings by Elliot W. Eisner

(Entries are made in chronological order.)

Educational Objectives: Help or Hindrance?
(Selected Passages).

The New Rationality in Art Education: Promise or Pitfall?
(Selected Passages).

Instructional and Expressive Educational Objectives: Their Formulation and Use in Curriculum,
(One Passage).

How Can You Measure a Rainbow? Tactics for Evaluating the Teaching of Art,
(Complete).

Educating Artistic Vision, Chapter 8,
(Selected Passages).

Listing of Eisner's Publications

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES: HELP OR HINDRANCE?[1]

School Review, Vol. 75, No. 3, Autumn 1967

(Selected Passages)

"If one were to rank the various beliefs or assumptions in the field of curriculum that are thought most secure, the belief in the need for clarity and specificity in stating educational objectives would surely rank among the highest. Educational objectives, it is argued, need to be clearly specified for at least three reasons: first, because they provide the goals toward which the curriculum is aimed; second, because once clearly stated they facilitate the selection and organization of content; third, because when specified in both behavioral and content terms they make it possible to evaluate the outcomes of the curriculum." (p. 250.)

"The third point I wish to make deals with the belief that objectives stated in behavioral and content terms can be used as criteria by which to measure the outcomes of curriculum and instruction. Educational objectives provide, it is argued, the standard against

which achievement is to be measured. Both taxonomies are built upon this assumption since their primary function is to demonstrate how objectives can be used to frame test items appropriate for evaluation. The assumption that objectives can be used as standards by which to measure achievement fails, I think, to distinguish adequately between the application of a standard and the making of a judgment. Not all - perhaps not even most - outcomes of curriculum and instruction are amenable to measurement. The application of a standard requires that some arbitrary and socially defined quantity be designated by which other qualities can be compared. By virtue of socially defined rules of grammar, syntax, and logic, for example, it is possible to quantitatively compare and measure error in discursive or mathematical statement. Some fields of activity, especially those which are qualitative in character, have no comparable rules and hence are less amenable to quantitative assessment. It is here that evaluation must be made, not primarily by applying a socially defined standard, but by making a human qualitative judgment. One can specify, for example, that a student shall be expected to know how to extract a square root correctly and in an unambiguous way, through the application of a standard, determine whether this end has been achieved. But it is only in a metaphoric sense that one can measure the extent to which a student has been

able to produce an aesthetic object or an expressive narrative. Here standards are unapplicable; here judgment is required. The making of a judgment in distinction to the application of a standard implies that valued qualities are not merely socially defined and arbitrary in character. The judgment by which a critic determines the value of a poem, novel, or play is not achieved merely by applying standards already known to the particular product being judged; it requires that the critic - or teacher - view the product with respect to the unique properties it displays and then, in relation to his experience and sensibilities, judge its value in terms which are incapable of being reduced to quantity or rule." (pp. 255-256.)

"And I would add that what is most educationally valuable is the development of that mode of curiosity, inventiveness, and insight that is capable of being described only in metaphoric or poetic terms. Indeed, the image of the educated man that has been held in highest esteem for the longest period of time in Western civilization is one which is not amenable to standard measurement. Thus, the third point I wish to make is that curriculum theory which views educational objectives as standards by which to measure educational achievement overlooks those modes of achievement incapable of measurement." (p. 257.)

Notes

Since only selected passages are reproduced, only that note is rendered which appears in these passages. The number is given in agreement with the original text.

1. This is a slightly expanded version of a paper presented at the fiftieth annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, February, 1966.

THE NEW RATIONALITY IN ART EDUCATION: PROMISE OR PITFALL?

Art Education, Vol. 22, No. 2, February 1969

(Selected Passages)

"The title of this paper states succinctly the problem I wish to speak to. The possibility that rationality in art education would be anything but a benefit to the field is a thought that I would not have dreamed of entertaining two years ago.

Like the sciences and mathematics of a decade ago, art education is developing a new rationality. That rationality is manifested in the curriculum development work that is taking place in regional laboratories such as Cemrel and Carel, at universities such as Stanford, and in attempts to develop procedures and devices for assessing and appraising student development in art. Like the sciences and mathematics of a decade ago, the availability of new funds has stimulated, and at times required, art educators to reexamine the programs that have been offered to children in the name of art. It has encouraged them to make rational and explicit the practices that are being proposed, and it has nudged them

to think analytically, not only about the means of art education, but about its ends as well." (p. 6.)

"I believe that art education is developing a significant new direction, developed in part by the factors I have already identified. It seems to me important to examine the direction in which the new road in art education is leading; to look ahead, as it were; and to try to determine if there are blocks in the road or if the destination is worth reaching.

The new rationality in art education is not simply a way of making art education more efficient; it is a way of thinking about the nature of art, man, and education as well. The new rationality is based upon the belief that the careful specification of objectives, the analysis of learning activities, the optimal sequencing of learning tasks, and the evaluation of significant artistic learning are both possible and desirable. Rational approaches to education tend to be related in spirit and method to a type of scientific empiricism that pays little attention to the covert, experiential aspects of life. It tends to ask for evidence of success at the end of a teaching-learning unit, success which is to be demonstrated in observable behavioral terms. Now there is to my mind nothing wrong in asking for evidence - when empirical data is possible to obtain. The potential problem is that in focusing so much upon behavioral evidence and upon the

objective assessment of that evidence, significant aspects of experience and personal meaning may no longer be attended to or valued." (pp. 7-8.)

"Another consequence of using such methods in curriculum development is disregard of student interest and participation in curriculum development. While rational methods of curriculum development do not in principle exclude such participation, in practice they are seldom employed - and for good reason. If students are allowed or encouraged to define their own learning activities, the problem of formulating objectives and applying common evaluation procedures becomes enormously complex. In such an approach to teaching, the character of evaluation becomes clinical rather than statistical. One assesses student growth on the basis of individual progress, often toward vaguely defined goals. In such an approach, it is difficult to apply either norm-referenced tests or criterion-referenced tests for appraising student development, since achievements are often discovered in process rather than preplanned in terms of specified outcomes." (p. 8.)

"There are to my mind a large number of positive contributions the new rationality in art education can provide to the field.

First, by demanding analysis of beliefs and

values in the field, it can help make those beliefs and values clear. The careful examination of underlying assumptions was not characteristic practice in the field a decade ago. Today, work by Ecker, Smith, Chapman, and others is helping to clarify what we believe and what we mean when we talk about art and artistic learning.

Second, the new rationality, because it is so intimately related to empirical sciences, is asking us, indeed demanding us, to operationalize the ends and the means we value. The new rationality is asking for evidence for the attainment of the goals we seek and is asking for methods that can provide guidance to the teacher in the classroom. It is asking us to specify in operational terms what we want and how we propose to achieve the goals we value.

Third, the new rationality is helping us to take a much closer look at the processes through which children and adults learn aesthetic responsiveness. By attempting to conceptualize artistic development in relation to specific types of cognitive and affective components, the new rationality is providing a new realization of the complexity of artistic learning. It is taking what in the literature has been vaguely defined and expressed, and it is providing new distinctions about modes and domains of learning in art.

Fourth, the new rationality is facilitating the

development of a new and diversified variety of evaluation tools in art. As we all know, such tools have been exceedingly scarce. Evaluation through objective means has been virtually absent in the field. Published tests in art are scarce. Art educators in various parts of the country are now engaged in the development of useful evaluation instruments, and within the next decade they should have such tools in abundance." (pp. 9-10.)

"The new rationality, however, is not without limitations, and it is its very seductive rationality that poses the biggest potential problem for art educators. The position provides the illusion that it can solve most, if not all, of the problems in the field. I believe that, although this approach can have some very useful consequences, it has several serious limitations.

First, by emphasizing the operationalization of ends through testing devices, it can lead to a practice in art education which seeks only those ends which can now be evaluated. This strikes me as a restrictive idea for both the means and ends of art education. The field of educational evaluation and measurement has not yet made much progress in the reliable assessment of complex cognitive behavior. And the affective dimension of human behavior is still less well understood. To teach for what can be tested is to have means determine ends.

Second, requiring the specification of objectives

in behavioral terms can lead to practices which assume that all ends in art education that are educationally significant are specifiable in advance. The practice of art, perhaps even more than other practices, encourages and provides for emerging or discovered ends. Such ends or experiences are often surprising in character. Indeed, without a sense of surprise, the creative act can be reduced to a routine enterprise.

Third, assumptions based upon the philosophical underpinnings of rationality are alien to certain conceptions of art. Langer's view of the nature of art, as just one example, would be difficult to couch in this frame of reference. Thus, this orientation to practice has implications not only for how that practice should take place; it has implications for the way art itself is conceived.

Fourth, the new rationality can militate against individualization of curriculum for both teacher and student. The tendency of this approach to art education is to develop common materials, common content, common method, and common evaluation programs to implement and assess student learning. Needed individualization can be disregarded if a school or school district does not recognize the possibility of this occurring.

What, then, is the thrust of my remarks? Am I claiming that the new rationality is a pitfall for art education? Do I wish a return to the good old days when

art educators thought with their blood? Not at all. The thrust of my remarks is to help us recognize both the assets and the potential liabilities of the new rationality in art education. By recognizing its assumptions and the practices which it suggests, we might be better able to use it as the tool that it is for the achievement of those ends that only art education can help man attain." (p. 10.)

INSTRUCTIONAL AND EXPRESSIVE EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES: THEIR FORMULATION AND USE IN CURRICULUM

Instructional Objectives, W. James Popham, et al., American Educational Research Association, Monograph Series on Curriculum Evaluation, Rand McNally and Co., 1969

(Selected Passage)

"As an institution responsible for the transmission of culture, the school is concerned with enabling students to acquire those intellectual codes and skills that will make it possible for them to profit from the contributions of those who have gone before. To accomplish this task an array of socially defined skills must be learned--reading, writing and arithmetic are some examples of coding systems that are basic to further inquiry into human culture.

But while school programs attempt to enable children to acquire these skills, to learn to employ the tools necessary for using cultural products, schools are also concerned with enabling children to make a contribution to that culture by providing opportunities for the individual to construe his own interpretation to the material he encounters or constructs. A simple repetition

of the past is the surest path to cultural rigor mortis.

Given these dual concerns--one with helping children become skilled in the use of cultural tools already available and the other with helping them modify and expand these tools so that the culture remains viable--it seems to me appropriate to differentiate between two types of educational objectives that can be formulated in curriculum planning. The first type is familiar to most and is called an instructional objective; the second I have called an expressive objective.

Instructional objectives are objectives which specify unambiguously the particular behavior (skill or item of knowledge, etc.) the student is to acquire after having completed one or more learning activities. These objectives fit the scheme or criteria identified earlier. They are usually drawn from cultural products such as the disciplines and are laid out in intervals of time appropriate for the children who are to acquire them.

Instructional objectives are used in a predictive model of curriculum development. A predictive model is one in which objectives are formulated and activities selected which are predicted to be useful in enabling children to attain the specific behavior embodied in the objective. In this model, evaluation is aimed at determining the extent to which the objective has been achieved. If the objective has not been achieved, various courses of

action may follow. The objective may be changed. The instructional method may be altered. The content of the curriculum may be revised.

With an instructional objective the teacher as well as the children (if they are told what the objective is) are likely to focus upon the attainment of a specific array of behaviors. The teacher in the instructional context knows what to look for as an indicator of achievement since the objective unambiguously defines the behavior. Insofar as the children are at similar stages of development and insofar as the curriculum and the instruction are effective, the outcomes of the learning activity will be homogeneous in character. The effective curriculum, when it is aimed at instructional objectives, will develop forms of behavior whose characteristics are known beforehand and, as likely as not, will be common across students --if not at the identical point in time, at some point during the school program.

The use of instructional objectives has a variety of educational ramifications. In preparing reading material in the social studies, for example, study questions at the beginning of a chapter can be used as cues to guide the student's attention to certain concepts or generalizations that the teacher intends to help the student learn. In the development of certain motor skills the teacher may provide examples of such skills and thus show the

student what he is supposed to be able to do upon terminating the program. With the use of instructional objectives clarity of terminal behavior is crucial since it serves as a standard against which to appraise the effectiveness of the curriculum. In an effective curriculum using instructional objectives the terminal behavior of the student and the objectives are isomorphic.

Expressive objectives differ considerably from instructional objectives. An expressive objective does not specify the behavior the student is to acquire after having engaged in one or more learning activities. An expressive objective describes an educational encounter; it identifies a situation in which children are to work, a problem with which they are to cope, a task they are to engage in--but it does not specify what from that encounter, situation, problem, or task they are to learn. An expressive objective provides both the teacher and the student with an invitation to explore, defer or focus on issues that are of peculiar interest or import to the inquirer. An expressive objective is evocative rather than prescriptive.

The expressive objective is intended to serve as a theme around which skills and understandings learned earlier can be brought to bear, but through which those skills and understandings can be expanded, elaborated and made idiosyncratic. With an expressive objective what is

desired is not homogeneity of response among students but diversity. In the expressive context the teacher hopes to provide a situation in which meanings become personalized and in which children produce products, both theoretical and qualitative, that are as diverse as themselves. Consequently the evaluative task in this situation is not one of applying a common standard to the products produced but one of reflecting upon what has been produced in order to reveal its uniqueness and significance. In the expressive context, the product is likely to be as much of a surprise to the maker as it is for the teacher who encounters it.

Statements of expressive objectives might read:

1) To interpret the meaning of Paradise Lost,
2) To examine and appraise the significance of The Old Man and the Sea,
3) To develop a three-dimensional form through the use of wire and wood,
4) To visit the zoo and discuss what was of interest there.

What should be noted about such objectives is that they do not specify what the student is to be able to do after he engages in an educational activity; rather they identify the type of encounter he is to have. From this encounter both teacher and student acquire data useful for evaluation. In this context the mode of evaluation is

similar to aesthetic criticism: that is, the critic appraises a product, examines its qualities and import, but does not direct the artist toward the painting of a specific type of picture. The critic's subject-matter is the work done--he does not prescribe a blueprint for its construction.

Now I happen to believe that expressive objectives are the type that teachers most frequently use. Given the range and the diversity of children it is more useful to identify potentially fruitful encounters than to specify instructional objectives.

Although I believe that the use of expressive objectives is generally more common than the use of instructional objectives, in certain subject-areas curriculum specialists have tended to emphasize one rather than the other. In mathematics, for example, much greater attention has been given historically to the instructional objective than in the visual arts where the dominant emphasis has been on the expressive (Eisner, 1965).

I believe that the most sophisticated modes of intellectual work--those, for example, undertaken in the studio, the research laboratory, and the graduate seminar --most frequently emply expressive rather than instructional objectives. In the doctoral seminar, for example, a theme will be identified around which both teacher and students can interact in an effort to cope more adequately

with the problems related to the theme. In such situations educational outcomes are appraised after they emerge; specific learnings are seldom formulated in terms of instructional objectives. The dialogue unfolds and is followed as well as led. In such situations the skills and understandings developed are used as instruments for inquiring more deeply into the significant or puzzling. Occasionally such problems require the invention of new intellectual tools, thus inducing the creative act and the creative contribution. Once devised or fashioned these new tools become candidates for instructional attention.

Since these two types of objectives--instructional and expressive--require different kinds of curriculum activities and evaluation procedures, they each must occupy a distinctive place in curriculum theory and development. Instructional objectives embody the codes and the skills that culture has to provide and which make inquiry possible. Expressive objectives designate those circumstances in which the codes and the skills acquired in instructional contexts can be used and elaborated; through their expansion and reconstruction culture remains vital. Both types of objectives and the learning activities they imply constitute--to modify Whitehead's phrase--"the rhythm of curriculum." That is, instructional objectives emphasize the acquisition of the known; while expressive objectives its elaboration, modification and, at times, the production of the utterly new." (pp. 15-20.)

HOW CAN YOU MEASURE A RAINBOW?
TACTICS FOR EVALUATING THE TEACHING OF ART

Art Education, Vol. 24, No. 5, May 1971

(Complete)

The major function of this paper is analytic. It represents an effort to eliminate some of the confusion that exists in art education regarding the conception and practice of evaluation. Unlike some other fields in education, art educators have seen evaluation as an unwelcome intruder. To evaluate - in the eyes of many in the field - has been considered tantamount to closing off the well springs of the child's artistic development. Evaluation has suffered from guilt by association with testing, contests, grading, and measurement. Thus, I have heard and have read in widely used texts in the field that one should not evaluate children's work in art.[1]

I not only believe that evaluation has a proper place in art education, I believe that not to evaluate what occurs in the classroom is to be educationally irresponsible. To justify this assertion will require some clarification concerning what evaluation is, or in my

view, how it ought to be conceived.

First, I would like to distinguish between the meanings of terms I have already used; these are evaluation, measurement, testing, and grading.

By evaluation I mean that process through which evidence is secured and judged with respect to its educational value. Evaluation is not simply a description of something, nor is it an explanation; it is the process through which one judges the value of something. In education, the general criterion one uses for purposes of evaluation is one that is intimately related to the educational outcomes one seeks to attain. Let me again indicate what evaluation is not. It is not the same as testing. Testing is simply <u>one</u> procedure through which some kinds of evidence are obtained. To test is simply to secure a sample of a student's or group's behavior or product through a mechanism that is typically administered to them. To test is not necessarily to evaluate, although tests can be and usually are used for purposes of evaluation.

To measure is not to evaluate. Measurement deals with a quantification of data. Not all data, especially in art, need or can be quantified. One does not, and cannot, measure quantitative differences between a Matisse and Larry Poons.

To grade is not to evaluate. Grading is the

assignment of a symbol to a person's performance. It frequently takes the form of a letter and most often is used to indicate some level of performance relative to some criteria. But evaluation can occur without grading. One can evaluate a student's work, his effort, his attitude, and a host of other factors without ever assigning him a grade. Indeed, in general, I would argue that students' work should be evaluated but not graded.[2]

What we have had in the field, not only in art education, but in education in general, is a confusion, a confounding, of a variety of different terms which although related are distinctive. Testing is not identical with evaluation, nor is grading. Measurement is not the same as testing or grading or evaluation. Before we can reasonably discuss evaluation in art education, these differences need to be recognized.

I indicated earlier that I believe it is irresponsible for a teacher not to evaluate. I would like now to indicate why.

Schooling is one of the major social mechanisms through which children are educated. Now I realize that not all of schooling is educational; indeed for many children a small portion or even no portion at all may be educational. Yet the general goal of schooling is educational, and education is itself a normative enterprise.[3] That is, education is not merely a process of changing

people; it is a process of improving human life. Given this premise, the consequences of our actions in the classroom are consequences for which we should have responsibility. We need to be accountable for what we do. Thus, not to evaluate the effects of the decisions we make and the actions we take is not to know whether these actions are educative or miseducative. Evaluation is a necessary part of the practice of education. It is not an addendum or something we can do without. If as a practice it has had negative educational consequences in some classrooms, it has been because it was used badly not because it is bad. To evaluate is to be aware of what one values, what one does, and what the consequences of one's doing yields.

But having said that does not solve the problem of deciding what criteria should be used for evaluation in art education. The type of criteria that one uses in the classroom depends upon a host of factors: who the child is, what the teacher believes he needs at the time, the conception of art education that the teacher holds, and so on. In the practical world a multiplicity of factors impinge upon evaluation practices.[4] In this paper, however, I would like to distinguish between two types of concerns in the hope that they might be considered by teachers when they evaluate in their classrooms.

One type of concern deals with educational

outcomes that are peculiar to art education. These are outcomes that art education particularly addresses itself to in light of its special focus upon the visual arts.

A second type of concern deals with those outcomes that are educationally important but which are not peculiar to art education. Let me indicate what some of these concerns are. Most art educators would, I believe, agree that the child's self-esteem is important. What a child thinks of himself as a person, not only in art but in general, is significant, and art teachers would want to strengthen self-esteem, especially for those children who feel a lack of confidence in their own ability to manage their lives. I believe such a goal is of paramount importance in schooling. But I also believe that the nurturance of self-esteem is a goal for which art educators have no special monopoly. After all, other teachers, too, are equally as concerned with children's self-esteem as we are.

But now consider the development of the child's ability to use his feelings as sources for the formation of visual images. This concern, this goal, is one for which art educators do have a special responsibility. Helping children develop the intelligence necessary for creating visual form that is expressive and visually potent <u>is</u> the special province of the field of art education. The evaluation of student work and behavior in art

education can be focused in either or both of these areas of educational concern. In those areas that are indigenous to art I have in previous publications identified three general realms in which curriculum development, instruction, and evaluation can occur.[5,6,7] These are the realms of the productive, the critical, and the historical aspects of art. The productive realm deals with the development of those technical, creative, and aesthetic skills having to do with the making of visual images. The critical deals with the development of ability to encounter visual form on the plane of aesthetic meaning. That is, enabling children to see form as an expressive object, to understand the ways in which the forms within the whole interact, to be able to sense the problem the artist addressed himself to in the work and the devices he used to resolve it.

The historical realm deals with the development of the student's ability to understand where art has come from, the function it performs in human culture, relationship of a particular work of art to the aesthetic capitol that constitutes the historical stream of visual art.

These realms are ones in which artistic learning can be facilitated and in which evaluation can occur. But evaluation can and should also occur in those areas that are not peculiar to art education. While we do indeed need to know if what we have planned has occurred, we

also need to know what the side effects of our efforts as teachers are. Frequently the side effects are more potent than the ones we intended. Thus I believe evaluation in art education, to be responsible, needs to examine both those aspects of the student's development that emanate from what is indigenous to art as well as those that art educators share with other fields as general educational responsibilities.

Given these realms of attention I will focus upon the evaluation of those aspects of artistic development that are peculiar to art, for I believe that the rock upon which our claim to educational support rests is that which is unique to the field. If we cannot achieve what only art education can achieve, our place in schools can be challenged by any other field that can claim to do what we do. It is not upon the development of self-esteem, but in the power to create and respond to visual form that art educators must ground their claim to a place in the school program.

There are three major contexts that can be used for evaluating the student's development. These are the comparison of the student with his own past performance, the comparison of the student's performance with those of his peers, and the comparison of the student's performance with a criterion, usually stated in the form of an objective.[8,9] Each of these contexts provides a frame of reference for

evaluation, and each can, and often does, provide different conclusions concerning where a child is with respect to his growth in art.

The first context, the comparison of the student's present development with his development at a previous period requires that the teacher have some memory of previous development and that it be used as a base against which his present development can be compared. In the productive realm this can be done by keeping some record, usually in the form of samples of a student's work and by laying them out on a table and viewing them with the student. Such a procedure, in addition to helping the teacher see where development has or has not occurred, often makes vivid to the student growth in art that he simply has not recognized. For preadolescent and adolescent students who are frequently hypercritical, such a review can build confidence and thereby contribute to the self-esteem of the student in art.

When evaluating such growth a range of phenomena can be tended to. One can, for example, look at the student's work with respect to the development of technical skill. To what extent is the student becoming increasingly competent in the use of the materials and tools with which he works. Attention can also focus on the aesthetic aspects of the student's work. To what extent has he been able to fuse the "parts" of the work

in some coherent whole? To what extent has he developed a sensitivity to the transitions among forms, to their interplay, to the modulation of one to the other? These questions and others related to the problems that the student copes with in his particular work can be used to direct attention to the aesthetic aspects of his work. Judgment about the aesthetic, the technical, and the creative qualities of the student's work are to be seen as surrogates of his own developing ability. The qualities in his work are evidence of his developing ability or his lack of it. What we in fact do is to make inferences about a student's development from the empirical cues he provides. An important resource for such cues is the quality and character of his productive work.

This argument I hope will put to rest the meaningless dichotomy that some have made between emphasis on process as compared to product in art education. For art educators to claim they are interested in process and not in product is the result of poor analysis of the nature of thought and work in art. What children do is a consequence of process, processes that are internally operant and non-empirical. What children produce whether in the formative stages of work or in its conclusion are products of those processes. We can have products only through process, and can "know" processes only through products.

The third area of focus within the productive realm deals with the creative or imaginative ways in which materials, forms, and ideas are used in the work. It is clearly possible to be technically competent and, at the same time banal in one's work. Similarly it is possible to produce highly imaginative work that is technically crude and aesthetically bland or insensitive. The reason for making these distinctions is simply to point out that in dealing with children's art there are a multiplicity of ways in which it can be viewed and appraised and that each taken singly provides only a partial view. If a teacher or a critic is to aspire toward a comprehensive view of a particular work, a variety of frames of reference will need to be employed, for where a work fails in one area it may succeed remarkably in another.

A second context that can be used for evaluating student work is to compare a student's present work with that of his peers. This procedure is in fact the one most dominant in American schools, and it is so pervasive that we hardly realize either the assumptions upon which it is based or the consequences it has on our expectations as teachers. Benjamin Bloom, a leading scholar in the field of educational evaluation, writes as follows regarding this context for evaluation.

"Each teacher begins a new term (or course) with the

> expectation that about a third of his students will adequately learn what he has to teach. He expects about a third of his students to fail or to just 'get by'. Finally, he expects another third to learn a good deal of what he has to teach, but not enough to be regarded as 'good students'. This set of expectations, supported by school policies and practices in grading, becomes transmitted to the students through the grading procedures and through the methods and materials of instruction. The system creates a self-fulfilling prophecy such that the final sorting of students through the grading process becomes approximately equivalent to the original expectations.
>
> "This set of expectations, which fixes the academic goals of teachers and students, is the most wasteful and destructive aspect of the present educational system. It reduces the aspirations of both teachers and students; it reduces motivations for learning in students; and it systematically destroys the ego and self-concept of a sizable group of students who are legally required to attend school for 10 to 12 years under conditions which are frustrating and humiliating year after year. The cost of this system in reducing opportunities for further learning and in alienating youth from both school and society is so great that no society can tolerate it for long."[10]

Bloom's observations are cogent ones. The tendency to view a child's performance in relation to his peers as the dominant or exclusive context for evaluation has a number of consequences. First, it makes it difficult to examine uniquenesses among students since comparison of one with a population leads us to examine those characteristics that are shared by all members of the class. Second, it leads to grading practices in which the expectation of a normal distribution yields a self-fulfilling prophecy. Some teachers would probably feel guilty or believe themselves to be a soft touch if they were to give all students in their classes an A.

But even more than these consequences the tendency to use a group comparison base for evaluation leads to labels such as abnormal, subnormal, slow learner, and so forth. It harbors the implicit expectation that there is a right way for children of a particular age, for example, to draw. If most children age seven draw a house as a box with a triangle on its top and a tree as a lollipop, we too often conclude that that's what they're supposed to do. We move from "is" to "ought" and in the process commit the naturalistic fallacy of assuming what is, is true, good, beautiful. If most children age seven had ten or more cavities in their teeth would we conclude that those who have two should seek eight more? I think not! Yet in drawing or in painting there has been a tendency to view the child's work as sacrosanct and to use untutored levels of performance as objectives for evaluation.

I am not arguing here that group comparisons are not useful. I am arguing that group comparison is only one frame of reference for evaluation. One major problem in American education is that it has been for too long the dominant mode.

A third context for evaluation is that of comparing a student's performance to a criterion. In this procedure what one does is to formulate an objective, something one wants the student to acquire and then to

assess his performance or product in relationship to that objective. The recent advent of behavioral objectives into the thinking of art educators most naturally fits with this evaluation context.[11] If a program in art education has a set of behavioral objectives, objectives which describe in sufficiently precise terms the desired outcomes of instruction, these objectives can then be used as criteria with which to evaluate some aspects of the student's development.

That the use of behavioral objectives has certain important limitations in curriculum planning and evaluation I have articulated in several other publications.[12,13] I will not reiterate them here except to say that the most prized outcomes of art education in particular and education in general are not pre-specifiable.

Yet the use of objectives, in those areas where they are appropriate, such as in training tasks and in the development of specific skills such as learning how to stack a kiln, to stretch a canvas, to prepare a glaze, and so forth, can facilitate learning and make it more efficient. If a curriculum has a set of instructional objectives, there is no good reason I know of why students should not know what they are and be permitted and encouraged to demonstrate their competence with respect to those objectives whenever they believe they are able to do so. It is likely that a significant proportion of students at

both elementary and secondary levels would attain course objectives in a fraction of the time now prescribed.

Thus far in this paper I have attempted to clarify the meaning of the term evaluation and to distinguish it from the practices of measurement, testing, and grading. Further I have identified two large classes of educational concern to which evaluation can be addressed: those outcomes or concerns that are indigenous to art education, and those concerns that the field shares with all other fields directed towards the education of the young.

Within those concerns indigenous to art education I have identified the productive, the critical, and the historical as realms of artistic development, as areas for curriculum development, and for evaluation.

Finally I have indicated that evaluation in each of these three realms can be made by comparing a student's work to his previous work, by comparing his work to that of his peers, and by comparing his work to a criterion, usually in the form of a behavioral objective. These distinctions were made in my effort to sort out some of the important considerations when engaging in evaluation in art education.

I would be remiss, however, if in closing I did not indicate what I take to be the major function of evaluation. That function is not one of locating the student's place on a continuum, nor is it only one of

determining growth or development. The major function of evaluation in art education is the improvement of curriculum and instruction. What I believe we should be doing when we evaluate students is looking back to ourselves to see how, from the information we secure about where students are, we can make the programs we provide more effective. The data that we secure and the judgments we make should tell us not only about the student, it should say something about our own levels of achievement as educators. In short evaluation is, after all the analyses are made, a process through which the educational programs we provide might be made more potent, more useful, more engaging to the students with whom we work. To paraphrase John Donne, "Do not send to ask for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for all of us."

References

1 An example of the general confusion between evaluation and grading can be found in the 5th edition of Creative and Mental Growth by Viktor Lowenfeld and Lambert Brittain. The index listing evaluation leads the reader to a section titled, "Grading".

2 My recommendation emanates from the belief that grading practices, as they are now employed, are not generally helpful to the student. I do not conclude, however, that they are intrinsically mis-educational.

3 By normative I mean value oriented. An educational program that is value neutral is a contradiction.

4 For a superb discussion of this issue see Joseph Schwab, "The Practical: A Language for Curriculum", The School Review, Vol. 78, No. 1, November 1969.

5 Elliot W. Eisner, "Curriculum Ideas in a Time of Crises", Art Education, Vol. 18, No. 7, October 1965.

6 Elliot W. Eisner, "Curriculum Making for the Wee Folk: Stanford University's Kettering Project", Studies in Art Education, Vol. 9, No. 3, 1968.

7 Elliot W. Eisner, "Stanford's Kettering Project: An Appraisal of Two Year's Work", Art Education, Vol. 23, No. 8, October 1970.

8 Elliot W. Eisner, "Educational Objectives: Help or Hindrance", School Review, Vol. 75, No. 3, Autumn 1967.

9 Elliot W. Eisner, "Instructional and Expressive Educational Objectives: Their Formulation and Use in Curriculum", Instructional Objectives, W. James Popham, et al., American Educational Research Association, Monograph Series on Curriculum Evaluation. Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1969.

10 Benjamin Bloom, "Mastery Learning and its Implications for Curriculum Development", Confronting Curriculum Reform (Elliot W. Eisner, ed.). Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971, p. 17-18.

11 I am, of course, referring to local and state departments of education efforts to have art educators prescribe objectives in behavioral terms and to develop measures for them, as well as the pre-conference institutes that have focused on helping art educators learn how to write behavioral objectives.

12 Op. cit. (See No. 8.)

13 Op. cit. (See No. 9.)

CHILDREN'S GROWTH IN ART:
CAN IT BE EVALUATED?

Educating Artistic Vision, New York:
The Macmillan Co., 1972

(Selected Passages)

"This point cannot be too strongly emphasized - that evaluation can be seen as an educational device. For too long it has been used as a means for distributing rewards and punishments to students. It has been viewed as a mechanism for approving or disapproving what students do; it has too seldom been seen as a diagnostic procedure to improve what is done in schools. If students are not succeeding in school programs, if their experience is not satisfactory, the program that is offered and the instruction that is provided should at least be two of the conditions that are examined. If students drop out of school or if they turn away from art as a means of personal expression and satisfaction, perhaps the cause lies more in the curriculum than in the student." (p. 204.)

"Data for evaluation purposes are not only secured through the use of tests; data are also secured through

unobtrusive modes of data collection.[4] Perhaps the most commonly used of these is teacher observation. During the course of teaching, teachers collect data for making judgments - watching children paint or sculpt, listening to what they say in class, noting the level of enthusiasm they display, and observing the way in which they use tools and materials, are all ways in which data are secured by teachers. Typically, judgments are made almost concurrently with the observation of such conditions. The data that such conditions provide and the judgments teachers make with respect to them hopefully guide the teacher's actions in the classroom. Such data-gathering procedures are unobtrusive because the teacher does not ask the student to display his competencies in a formally structured test situation.

Classroom observation is only one important data collection procedure. Other unobtrusive methods of collecting data for purposes of evaluation include such things as finding out if students increase or decrease their interest in art by noting the number of books on art that are checked out of the school library, "by counting nose prints on the glass in front of the painting near the principal's office" and so forth. To use unobtrusive modes of observation is simply to look for evidence wherever it might be found. Although such methods are not infallible - no method is - such methods when developed imaginatively

and interpreted judiciously can provide information having high degrees of educational validity.

The typical testing situation puts students in an artificial situation in the sense that students know that they are being asked to perform and that their performance will be appraised and rewarded accordingly. In this sense test situations provide information as to how students <u>can</u> perform; they do not provide information as to how they in fact <u>do</u> behave outside of test situations. If we want that type of information we must demonstrate that test scores do in fact predict student behavior outside of the classroom, a type of demonstration that few educational tests have, or we must use students' actual out-of-class behavior as data for making judgments about the efficacy of the programs we have provided. Tests that do predict student behavior outside of the test situation are said to have predictive validity.[5] The latter type of data can be secured through the use of unobtrusive methods of data collection." (p. 205.)

"Those supporting the use of grading argue that each of these two criticisms is really not inherent in grading. They argue that teachers have a responsibility to evaluate and to communicate their evaluations in the form of grades to a variety of interested people - parents, teachers, administrators, and students. Grading practices can rest on clearly defined criteria; if they do not, it

is not because something is inherently wrong with grading, but because teachers have not thought through the criteria and communicated it to students.

They argue further that men in society are in fact rewarded in relation to the value that others place on their work. A competitive society rewards most highly those who "come in first." Since schooling should help children learn how to cope with the problems and characteristics of the society in which they live, the assignment of grades is considered appropriate; it is simply one of the reward systems that students will be dealing with throughout their lives. To avoid such a system in school is to increase the irrelevance of schooling in life.

Like most important educational questions there are no simple answers that are adequate. It's clear that teachers and school administrators have some responsibility to report to parents and other relevant adults about the achievement of the young and the effectiveness of the curriculum. Schoolmen have a responsibility to the public as well as to the child. Yet at the same time practices that interfere with the development of affection by the young for the objects of their study ought to be removed. On the whole, given the character of grading practices in American schools and the effects I have observed, I would argue for the curtailment of letter grades and the substitution of brief evaluative statements by the teacher

regarding the characteristics, strengths, and limitations of the student's development in art and other areas. When useful and feasible I would like to see teacher-parent conferences, at which time such written statements could be discussed and elaborated upon.

Again, this should not be interpreted to mean that I disfavor evaluation. On the contrary, I believe the teacher has a moral responsibility to evaluate.[8] I am arguing for the use of expanded written evaluation practices with teacher-parent conferences to supplement and explicate the meaning of such statements." (pp. 207-208.)

"It is important to note that the mode of evaluation procedure that one employs is implicitly related to the conception of education that one holds. Where education is conceived of as a process of discovery for both student and teacher and where curriculum planning is an on the spot affair, the use of post facto evaluation procedures dominates. Because little specific is anticipated in the way of outcomes, it is not likely that criterion referenced evaluation will be used. When education is conceived of as the development in the young of certain <u>specific</u> skills or understandings then criterion referenced evaluation is more likely to be employed. This is simply to say that policies regarding modes of evaluation and criteria for grading are part of a larger fabric;

that fabric constitutes the general view one holds about the means and ends of education." (p. 211.)

"It should be reemphasized here that it is possible for students to have deep and meaningful encounters with a visual form and not be able to articulate its qualities in discursive language. Children can feel without being able to say, and to the extent that this is true, verbal evidence will not be a valid indicator of such experience. Other types of evidence need to be sought. Yet when verbal evidence is provided the teacher is in a position to appraise its type and its quality to infer how far into the work students were able to go." (pp. 225-226).

"Now the assertion is often made by some art educators that verbalizing about art is deleterious, that it reduces visual experience to verbal experience. I see no validity in such an assertion as a necessary consequence of talking about art. The problem is not whether one talks about art, but one of determining the quality and utility of the talk. There is no reason why man should not use one of his unique intellectual tools, spoken language, as a tool for experiencing visual art. There is to my mind no necessary virtue in standing in mute silence before an art form or in uttering grunts. Where criticism is responsible, it helps those less able to see more clearly. Although verbal language is not now

and can never be a substitute for the visual, it can function as a midwife to aesthetic experience, and when used by students, it can provide evidence of the extent to which they are able to see and feel the work in question." (p.226).

"For evaluating learning in the third realm of the curriculum, the cultural realm, little will be said. This aspect of learning is essentially verbal in nature, and of the three realms, teachers usually have the most expertise in assessing this type of learning. In evaluating this aspect of learning what we are after is an assessment of the student's ability to understand, in discursive terms, the characteristics of the time and place in which art was created, the influence time and place had upon the form and content of art, and the character of major social practices and beliefs and their effects upon art. In many ways the contextual aspect of art criticism is much like performance in the cultural realm, the major difference being that in the contextual aspect of criticism the discourse is to be instrumental to a more profound appreciation of a particular work of art. In the cultural realm we might use works of art but they are generally instrumental to an understanding of the period - rather than the reverse." (pp. 230-232.)

"In any case, what concerns us in this realm of

artistic learning is to help students understand the sweep of a period in human history and the role art played within it. We want students to understand that the men who create art are part of a human culture and therefore reflect that culture in their art. Furthermore, we would like them to understand that although the culture in which artists work affects their work, it is not a one-way street. Artists, through their work, comment on that culture, provide models of value for it, and the great ones profoundly influence it. Art is more than a mirror; it also provides visions towards which men reach." (p. 232.)

Notes

Since only selected passages are reproduced, only those notes are listed that appear in these passages. The numbers given are in agreement with the original text.

4. For a discussion of unobtrusive measures see Eugene J. Webb, Donald T. Campbell, Richard D. Schwart, and Lee Sechrest, Unobtrusive Measures: Non-Reactive Research in the Social Sciences (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1966).

5. The concept of predictive validity is explicated in Lee Cronbach, Essentials of Psychological Testing, 2nd. ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1960).

8. This point needs emphasis. Because I believe education is a moral undertaking, not to evaluate the consequences of the situations teachers create for children is to be morally irresponsible.

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