

# INCLUSION OF ARTWORK IN VARIOUS SUBJECT AREAS

JANJA BATIČ,<sup>1</sup> PETRA LEBAR KAC<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of Maribor, Faculty of Education, Maribor, Slovenia  
janja.batic@um.si

<sup>2</sup> Osnovna šola Janka Padežnika, Maribor, Slovenia  
petra.lebar-kac@guest.arnes.si

**Abstract** This paper discusses a case study on exploring how works of art could be included in the teaching of various subject areas. The study included a sample of one class of fifth graders and their teacher. One week of lessons was organised in such a way that students discussed works of art before beginning a new unit in various subject areas. A questionnaire was used to obtain data from the students. Data were also obtained through participatory observation. The obtained data show that the implementation of lessons with the inclusion of works of art was very well received by the students, and the conversation about the works of art motivated the students with respect to further activities. At the same time, within a very short period, the students became familiar with many different works of art outside of art class.

**Keywords:**

fine arts,  
works of art,  
cross-curricular  
integration,  
motivation,  
case study

## 1 Introduction

The importance of fine art in education transcends the boundaries of the art class (Robinson & Aronica

Viewing artwork can trigger various responses in the viewer. Artwork has the potential to awaken strong emotions, both negative and positive. “Visual images are unique” and can, as Leavy said (2020, p. 236), “evoke particular kinds of emotional and visceral responses from people; they are typically filed in the subconscious without the same conscious interpretative process people engage in when confronted with a written text.” How an individual responds to a work of art to a large extent depends on previous experience and knowledge. Children are introduced to art in preschool without even realising it. The first contact with fine art is most often connected to reading picture books and viewing illustrations. Sipe (2001) sees this kind of experience as an opportunity for children to become familiar with art or even art movements, styles, artists, etc. Viewing illustrations, moreover, represents the child’s first artistic experience. Later, students experience fine art or photographs in art classes, especially in classes where fine art is taught by a specialised art educator. When viewing, discussing and exploring artwork, students learn about the basics of art theory, artistic motifs and techniques. In doing so, they gain an aesthetic experience that is, as Dewey (2005) said, “a manifestation, a record and celebration of the life of a civilization, a means of promoting its development, and it is also the ultimate judgement upon the quality of a civilization” (p. 339). However, it should be noted that viewing art in photographs is mostly an alternative experience (Savedoff, 1993) that does not allow the student to experience the original work in an authentic environment and with all the senses. Even in the case of a video, viewing a video is a different experience when students view the video in a classroom or in an exhibition space.

, 2015). Marshall and Donahue (2014, p. 3–4) noted that “from a systems perspective, academic disciplines are components of a system of inquiry and knowledge in which all parts contribute to the workings and purpose of the system. Art, as a component of the system and as a mode of investigation and interpretation, can support the system and knit it closer together by promoting systemic, integrated learning.” The integration of fine arts with other subject areas requires various learning strategies. Marshall (2010) outlined five strategies based on contemporary artistic practices. Three of the five are suitable for all student age groups (*Table 1*).

**Table 1: Creative strategies and learning**

Strategy	Learn through	Learn about
Depiction	Observing/interpreting	Learning through image-making
Projection	Imagining/envisioning	The power of fiction & imagination
Mimicry	Copying/performing	Various methods of inquiry

Source: Marshall, J., & Donahue, D. M. (2014). *Art-centered learning across the curriculum. Integrating contemporary art in the secondary school classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Examples of depiction include drawing a plant in biology or an illustration of a myth or a legend. Projection refers to exploring what might happen to, for example, the depiction of a historical person if they lived in the present, or to anticipating what the technology in the future might solve environmental problems. Mimicry is a form of play-acting, where a student imitates, for example, the work of a botanist by exploring and collecting plants, and then makes drawings or sculptures (Marshall, 2010).

This means of integrating fine art with other subject areas enables students to acquire knowledge about these subject areas, while learning about artistic approaches and ways of working. Marshall (2010, p. 19) demonstrated that the various approaches to teaching fine art are not mutually exclusive but are compatible, saying that “these strategies testify that learning through the arts is compatible with learning in the arts.”

## 1.1 Artwork

Works of art are a whole of form, theme, and context (Sandell, 2006). Form refers to the material and design of the work (materials and artistic technique, design methods, artistic elements, and composition), while theme refers to the concept (motif, what is depicted, what the idea of the work is) and context (when and where the work was created, who created it, for whom it was intended, why it was created, and appreciated) (Sandell, 2006). In fine art classes, research on form is usually at the forefront in order to learn about artistic theoretical concepts. The problem with this way of using art is that students do not experience the works of art as a whole. Such conversation deprives students of important insights and new experiences. A typical example of such partial knowledge of artwork is the observation of Picasso’s artwork from the blue period in the fifth grade, when students learn about cool colours and consolidate their knowledge of brightness. The artwork is presented to

students with the aim of acquiring artistic theoretical concepts, leaving out motif, i.e., what is depicted, what is the idea of the work, why the artist has portrayed a particular motif, etc. Students observe the brightness of the picture, looking for the darkest and brightest shades of blue, while being deprived of thinking about why the artist used only blue, how the selected motifs of that period are consistent with the choice of blue, and the idea behind it. Their creative response is channelled into painting a particular subject using only cool colours of varying brightness. The performance criteria are based on the number of shades used, the students' technical performance, and the layout of the composition. In doing so, the idea of the selected artwork, which refers to the confrontation with the sadness and suffering that marked Picasso's blue period, is completely neglected. The creative response of students can arise not only from the form of the artwork but also from knowledge of the subject and context.

A conversation about artwork, which acknowledges equally their form, theme, and context (Sandell, 2012, Hubard, 2010), can motivate students with respect to various activities, not just artistic expression. Therefore, works of art are ideal for cross-curricular integration. An example of cross-curricular integration is a project for primary schools called "Take One Picture", run by the National Gallery in London. In this project, researchers explored a simple idea: they chose one painting as the starting point for teaching and learning various content from the curriculum (Hosack Janes, 2014). The results of the project showed that fine art is an important stimulus for learning and teaching different subject areas because: (1) learning becomes personalised, and students get the opportunity to express their thoughts, ideas and guide their learning, (2) students use their own experiences, so learning is more thoughtful and leads to better learning through the development of transferable key skills, and (3) it improves school cooperation and school participation with the wider community and also nurtures the interests of teachers and students (Hosack Janes, 2014).

## **2 Method**

### **2.1 Research Problem and Research Questions**

Works of art have great potential for cross-curricular integration in primary school, as they relate to very different areas of human activity. Artwork has the power to attract our attention, affect our senses and evoke strong emotions. However,

students rarely encounter artwork during their elementary education. Most often, art is addressed in art classes taught by an art educator. The case study was used to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What experience do students have with fine art?
2. Is it possible to integrate works of art into all the subject areas?
3. What are the students' views on fine art after the case study?

## **2.2 Sample and Participants**

A convenience sample was used, since the survey was conducted among fifth graders in a primary school with which the authors frequently collaborate on prospective teacher training. The survey included all fifth graders ( $n = 22$ ), but not all of them were present during all units owing to occasional legitimate absences. The class counted 12 boys and 10 girls.

The survey included a generalist teacher with 13 years of experience and a faculty researcher with 18 years of experience.

## **2.3 Instruments**

The case study was conducted between 22 February 2021 and 26 February 2021 (*Table 2*).

The data obtained from the survey questionnaire were analysed using descriptive statistics. Questionnaire 1 was used to check the students' attitudes towards fine art and what their experiences of it are. Questionnaire 6 checked the students' attitudes towards fine art after the case study was carried out. Both questionnaires included a combination of open and closed questions.

Questionnaires 2, 3, 4 and 5, looked at what students remembered most from everything they did during the day, whether the students remembered which works of art they viewed, which work of art they found most interesting, and which of the works presented they would like to see live.

**Table 2: Case study schedule**

Date	Activity	Monitoring
	Student opinions on fine art and artwork.	Questionnaire 1
22/2/2021	Motivating students with artwork in the following subjects: Social studies, Slovene language.	Questionnaire 2
23/2/2021	Motivating students with artwork in the following subjects: Slovene language, Sports, Mathematics, and home-class period.	Questionnaire 3
24/2/2021	Motivating students with artwork in the following subjects: Slovene language and Natural sciences and engineering.	Questionnaire 4
25/2/2021	Motivating students with artwork in the following subjects: Slovene language, Mathematics and Home economics.	Questionnaire 5
26/2/2021	Motivating students with artwork in the following subjects: Sports and Music.	Questionnaire 6

### 3 Results

#### 3.1 Students' Attitudes Towards Fine Art and Their Experience Before the Case Study

The first questionnaire obtained data on students' experiences of fine art before conducting the case study. Nineteen students responded to the questionnaire.

*Table 3* shows that the students had a positive attitude towards fine art. Most of the students liked to look at artwork and did not agree that art is boring. However, they believed that artwork was more interesting to adults than children. More than a third of the students thought they know of many works of art; however, a very large proportion of the students did not go to exhibitions with their parents. More than a third of the students only discussed artwork with a teacher.

**Table 3: Students' answers (Questionnaire 1)**

	True		Neither true nor false		False		Total	
	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%
I like to look at works of art because they are interesting.	13	68.4	5	26.3	1	5.3	19	100
I find art boring.	1	5.2	4	21.1	14	73.7	19	100
Works of art are more interesting to adults than children.	8	42.1	7	36.8	4	21.1	19	100
I know of many works of art (paintings, statues, graphics by famous artists).	7	36.8	11	57.9	1	5.3	19	100
My parents and I usually visit art exhibitions together.	4	21.1	5	26.3	10	52.6	19	100
I've never been to an art exhibition with my parents.	3	15.8	10	52.6	6	31.6	19	100
I only talk about artwork at school with a teacher.	7	36.8	2	10.6	10	52.6	19	100

The students were asked which work of art they had last seen, what the piece was like, and what they remembered about it. The students' responses were very modest, only a few remembered the artwork they had seen and described it, and only two of them remembered the artist's name.

### 3.2 Motivating Students with Artwork in Social Studies and Slovene Language Class

On the first day of the case study, the students had the following scheduled classes: social studies, Slovene language, English or German language, and fine art (painting of a fantasy landscape with warm and cool colours). Works of art were integrated into the social studies and Slovene language classes.

The students discussed karst phenomena in social studies. The aim was to be able to list and describe surface karst phenomena, which also include karst valleys.

The students were introduced to the spirit of the landscape or genius loci in art as their introductory motivation. They viewed the *Drava Landscape* (1937) painting France Mihelič and the *Karst Village* (1955) graphic by Lojze Spalal. The students were not told the title of either work; only the fields of art were mentioned. The students' attention was first focused on the motif and finding similarities and differences between the two works of art. This was followed by conversation about colours. The students saw that the first painting was dominated by green, grey, and brown, while in the second piece, the colours were more varied and striking. The students were then told the names of the artists and the titles of the pieces. Over the course of the discussion, the students found out that both artists had been working on the same motif (landscape). The biggest difference they saw was in the use of colours. They realised that every landscape has its own mood. Artists who depict a landscape try to convey the spirit of a particular place. What followed was a conversation about why each landscape had a different mood, a different colour.

During the Slovene language class, the students discussed and analysed a poem by Srečko Kosovel titled "Poem from the Karst". The goal was to perceive and experience the sound of poems, perceive rhymes, and create imaginative sensual visions of the Karst landscape about which the poet wrote.

For introductory motivation, they looked at photographs of two works of art. The first piece was a painting by Ivana Kobilca called *Summer* (1889–1890). The second piece was a painting by Ivan Grohar called *Štemar's Garden* (1907). The students compared the pieces and looked for similarities and differences in the motive and method of depiction. Ivana Kobilca realistically depicted the time of year, children having fun, and greenery in the garden. She painted her younger sister Fani and her children. Ivan Grohar, on the other hand, portrayed a feeling and an impression. What followed was a discussion about whether the impression of an experience could be shown in words.

At the end of the class, the students answered Questionnaire 2. Twenty students responded to the questionnaire. In response to the first question "What do you remember most from today?", the students replied that they remembered the paintings and fine art the most. Some wrote that they remembered the social studies class the most.



To the question “Do you remember which works of art we saw?”, as a rule, the students did not respond with the titles of the pieces but with descriptions or words left in their memory. Most of the time, they mentioned the pieces that had been seen in connection with the analysis of the poem. They highlighted the work of Ivana Kobilca, entitled *Summer* (“lady and three children”, “family”) and on several occasions, the work of Ivan Grohar, called *Štemar’s Garden* (“Garden”, “Yes, we looked at a picture of a garden with tables. It was empty because there was a storm coming on”).

The next question was “Which work of art did you find most interesting? Why?” Once again, the students described the piece by Ivan Grohar, *Štemar’s Garden* and the piece by Ivana Kobilca, *Summer*. The students’ reasons for choosing the first painting were different (colours, trees), and in the second one, the students were drawn to the details and realistic representation of the figures.

The last question was “If you could see the original work of art, which piece would you choose and why?” Most students wrote down which work they would choose and explained their choice; most of them said that they would like to see the piece by Ivana Kobilca, *Summer* (“I would choose *Summer* because I am interested in the details that I could not see so well.”, “*Summer* because it is incredibly well painted.”).

### **3.3 Motivating Students with Artwork in the Subjects of Slovene Language, Sports, Mathematics, and in Home-Class Period**

On the second day of the case study, the students were motivated by fine art in all subjects: Slovene language, sports, mathematics, and home-class period. In Slovene class, the aim was for the students to consolidate nouns and adjectives on the basis of a text about the *Portrait of Sister Fani* painting. In the introduction, the students were shown a picture of Ivana Kobilca’s *Summer*, which they had observed the previous day, and they focused their attention on the persons depicted. They were then shown another piece, *Portrait of Sister Fani* (1889), in which Kobilca portrayed her sister. The following discussion referred to the motif of a full body portrait. The text in hand, entitled “Sister Fani”, was taken from the informative part of the text of Andrej Rozman Roza’s poetry collection *Poems from the gallery* (2018).

In sports class, the students were shown two works of art: Ivan Vavpotič's *Boy with a Hoop* (Borut Žerjav) (1922) and Ivana Kobilca's *Boy in Navy Dress* (1891–1892). The discussion focused on the similarities and differences in the depiction of the motif (the first boy is standing, the second is sitting; the first one has something in his hands, the second does not; where they are located, etc.). This was followed by a conversation about colours (in which painting dark colours were dominant, in which painting bright colours were dominant) and mood (which image would be associated with melancholy and anxiety, and which one with joy, exuberance for life and playfulness). The group looked for possible reasons why the first boy depicted (painted in the outdoors, in vibrant and bright colours) looked happier than the second (depicted in dark colours, sitting on a chair indoors with a sad expression on his face). The group focused the conversation on how they could become more like the first (more cheerful) boy.

During mathematics class, the students learned about exponentiation. The goal in learning about exponentiation is for the learner to understand that the product of the same numbers can be written in the form of an exponent. For introductory motivation, three works of art were shown to the students: *The Young Rabbit* (1502) by Albrecht Dürer, drawings of sheep from a sketchbook by artist Henry Moore (1972), and a large painting of cats by painter Karel Kahler, *My Wife's Lovers* (1893). The students compared the pieces to each other and found that all artists portrayed animals in such way that the animal's hair (texture) is shown. The pieces differ in their artistic techniques, format size, and number of animals depicted. The students' attention was then focused on 42 cats, portrayed by Karel Kahler at the request of the cats' owner. The latter is believed to have had as many as 350 cats on her property. The students were asked how the owner could have obtained so many cats. The authors set up a problem situation on the basis of which they presented the students with a calculation of exponents.

In the home-class period the discussion was centred on values. The students were shown paintings by: Franjo Golob, *Vineyard Worker's Family* (1939/40); Janez Vidic, *Self-Portrait with Family* (1959); Petra Varl, *Portrait of the Rijavec Family* (2000); Jožef Tominc, *The Family of Dr Frušič* (before 1835), and Matija Jama, *Rožj Bleimeis with Her Children* (1901). The conversation about the works of art was focused on similarities and differences (number of people depicted, the size of the paintings, the way in which people are depicted, colour, composition, facial expressions, gestures, relationships between the depicted). The students found that artists depicted the

same motif (family) in different ways. The authors directed the conversation to find the reasons why this motif was so common in art and what family usually meant to people. Then the conversation was focused on exploring other values.

At the end of the class, the students answered Questionnaire 3. Fourteen students responded to the questionnaire. To the first question “What do you remember most from today?”, the students mainly mentioned math class (cats and exponents) and the conversation about families.

When asked “Do you remember which works of art we saw?” the students most often mentioned the pieces by Ivan Vavpotič, *Boy with a Hoop (Borut Žerjav)* and Ivana Kobilca, *Boy in Navy Dress*. “Families” appeared in the responses several times, with students not naming any work of art specifically. When asked “Which work of art did you find most interesting? Why?”, the students again described the motifs but only a few students also explained their choice (“42 cats. I like it because I love animals.”, “Cats, because there really were a lot of them.”, “A little boy with an exercise ring because I love sports and because it is happening on a beautiful sunny day.”, “The boy who was pale. Because he’s weird.”). When asked “If you could see the original work of art, which one would you choose and why?”, the students described different works of art, but most of them did not explain their choice.

### **3.4 Motivating Students with Artwork in the Subjects of Slovene Language and Natural Sciences and Engineering**

On the third day of the case study, the students had Slovene class, sports, mathematics, and natural sciences and engineering on their timetable. Artwork was included in the subjects of Slovene language, and natural sciences and engineering. In the Slovene language class, the students consolidated knowledge about how to describe a building. As introductory motivation, the students learned about Hutter’s colony (a conversation about living conditions today and in the past, about the textile factory in Maribor and its founder, Josip Hutter, and the two-family houses built for the workers on his initiative). The students were then shown a photograph of Maribor by photographer Matjaž Wenzel. The selected photograph was part of the HK photography project (2008) and shows Hutter’s colony today. The students then wrote a description of the building.

The objectives of the natural sciences and engineering class were to learn about water circulation and changes in the aggregate state of water. The students were first shown photographs of Brazilian artist Néle Azevedo's work. Students were shown photographs of her installations, in which she places small human figures in open public spaces ("Minimum Monument"). When viewing photos of the installation, the students recognised that the figures were made of ice. The artist places hundreds or thousands of ice figures in a public space, which then melt quickly. The discussion was focused on what materials statues in a public space are usually made of, why they are usually made of bronze or stone, and why the artist had used ice instead of materials that are much more long-lasting. Together with the students, the authors of this paper looked for possible reasons (alerting people to climate change, melting glaciers, etc.)

At the end of the class, the students answered Questionnaire 4. Eighteen students responded to the questionnaire. When asked "What do you remember most from today?", most students replied that they remembered the installations by the Brazilian artist most; slightly fewer students gave the sport and the twin house as answers. When asked "Do you remember which works of art we saw?", "Which work of art did you find most interesting? Why?" and "If you could see an original work of art, which one would you choose and why?", most of the students pointed out the ice statue installation. In large part, they also explained their choice ("Ice people because there really were a lot of them.", "Water, because I didn't know you could make something out of water.", "Because she used ice and because you can see through the statues.").

### **3.5 Motivating Students with Artwork in the Subjects of Slovene Language, Mathematics, and Home Economics**

On the fourth day of the case study, the students had Slovene class, social studies, mathematics, and home economics on their timetable. The works of art were included in the subjects of Slovene language, mathematics, and home economics.

The objective of the Slovene class was to do a text analysis of an excerpt from Fran Levstik's *Martin Krpan*. First, the students were presented with two illustrations of Martin Krpan lifting a horse and moving it to the side of the road. The first illustration is Hinko Smrekar (1917), and the second is Tone Kralj (1954). Both illustrations

depict the identical event. While observing the illustrations, the students looked for similarities (surroundings, horse lifting) and differences (art technique, composition).

In mathematics class, the students were engaged in computational operations. The objective of the lesson was to write down mathematical calculations using various calculation operations.

The students were shown two non-figurative works of art, one by Thea van Doesburg, *Composition VII (The Three Graces)* (1917) and Kasimir Malevich's supermatist painting, *Aeroplane Flying* (1915). The students looked for similarities and differences. In particular, the students focused on the composition and colours (chromatic, achromatic). The students were then challenged to calculate how many primary colours were in the two paintings combined. The students wrote different mathematical calculations with the same result.

In the home economics class, the students learned about advertising messages. The objective was for the students to learn about the components of advertising, how messages are designed and their purpose.

The students were shown Vincent van Gogh's *Self-Portrait* (1889) and Piet Mondrian's *Composition II with Red, Blue, and Yellow* (1930). The group discussed both pieces (motif, portrait, abstract painting) and the authors told them that both works of art were considered to be very famous. Vincent van Gogh was not recognised as an artist while he was still alive, but today he is considered to be one of the most recognisable artists of all time. Piet Mondrian created many similar compositions. Designer Yves Saint Laurent combined Mondrian's distinctive compositions with high fashion and designed a clothing collection (the students were shown a photo of a dress). Afterwards, the students were shown two more images – two advertisements that companies use to advertise their activities. The first advertisement combined text and image. The text said, “fine art stays fine when we ship it,” and the image showed a composition of coloured shapes that looked as though someone had demolished one of Mondrian's compositions. It was a delivery ad. The second image was a French optics advertisement. Mirrors were placed in front of a reproduction of Van Gogh's self-portrait. Around the mirror, the self-portrait was painted in Van Gogh's distinctive style with short brush strokes and curved lines so that the surface appeared to be swirling, varied and restless. In the mirror, however, the image appeared sharp and clear. The following discussion was

about how designers take advantage of the fame of certain works of art to advertise various activities.

At the end of the class, the students answered Questionnaire 5. Eighteen students responded to the questionnaire.

When asked “What do you remember most from today?”, the students replied that they remembered mathematics and home economics the most. When asked “Do you remember which works of art we saw?”, the students described different works. Van Gogh and the advertisement – referring to van Gogh’s self-portrait and abstract art – appeared among the answers (the students did not name any individual piece). When asked “Which work of art did you find most interesting? Why?”, most students mentioned Van Gogh’s self-portrait. Some also explained their choice (“because it is very original”, “because it is a portrait”, “because it is realistic”). Some students chose abstract works, however in most cases they did not explain their choice. In answering the last question, “If you could see an original work of art, which work of art would you choose and why?”, in a similar proportion, the students indicated Van Gogh’s self-portrait and abstract paintings.

### **3.6 Motivating Students with Artwork in the Subjects of Sports and Music**

On the last day of the case study, the students had mathematics, natural sciences and engineering, sports, and music on their timetable. Art was incorporated into the introductory motivation in sports and music.

In sport, the students were engaged in upper-body strengthening exercises and throwing the ball to the finish line. The students were shown photographs of two works of art: Myron’s *Discobolus* (a 2<sup>nd</sup> century Roman marble copy) and Duane Hanson’s *Supermarket Lady* (1969). They were shown several photographs of the pieces that had been taken from different angles. In finding similarities and differences, the discussion pertained to depicting a human figure and what message the students could read from the pictures (disc thrower, sports, healthy spirit in a healthy body versus shopping, accumulation of goods, unhealthy lifestyle).

In music, the students learned about folk songs. The students observed artwork by Ivana Kobilca, *Women Ironing* (1891) and by Jurij Šubic, *Grandmother Sewing* (1882). The students looked at both pieces and described them (what the people were doing,

how they were painted, what colours prevailed). They were then told both titles and had the lesser-known terms explained to them. The students learned that the people in the paintings are depicted engaging in everyday tasks and that this motif is called a genre. At work, however, workers in the past usually helped the time pass by singing folk songs. Following this, the students learned about a new folk song, which described work at a mill.

At the end of the course, the students answered Questionnaire 6, which related not to the last day of the study but to the entire experience with fine art that the students had had during the course of the case study. Nineteen students responded to the questionnaire. The teachers presented the students with the questionnaire and told them that the questions related to all the artworks they had seen so far.

The students expressed a positive view regarding the integration of fine art into the classroom (*Table 4*). Most students were surprised by how many different school subjects could be linked to fine art. The authors conclude, therefore, that before the performance of the case study, the students primarily connected works of art with the subject of fine art. Most of the students were attracted to the artwork presented, and some of them would also have liked to see it in person. A small proportion of students would have been happy to present some of the artwork they saw to friends or relatives.

The students were also asked to answer three open-ended questions. First, the authors wanted to know of all the works presented which one they would have liked to see in its original version. The students mostly described the pieces without mentioning the authors or titles, but the descriptions showed which piece or group of paintings they preferred. They pointed out the different works of art they had seen in class, and most of their answers related to Myron's *Discobolus* (a Roman marble copy from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century) and to Néle Azevedo's installation, *Minimum Monument*.

With the next question, the authors wanted to find out what students remembered most from that week. The students recorded multiple responses or activities, and some responses could be assigned to several subject areas at once. Most students mentioned fine art in their answers, and sport also appeared a few times.

**Table 4: The students' answers on Questionnaire 6**

	Yes, very much.		Yes, I'm pretty sure.		I don't know.		No.		Not at all.		Total	
	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%
Do you find art interesting?	10	52.6	5	26.3	2	10.5	1	5.3	1	5.3	19	100
Did you enjoy learning about art at the beginning of the lessons?	7	36.8	8	42.1	4	21.1	0	0	0	0	19	100
Were you surprised by how many different subjects we linked to art?	11	57.9	5	26.3	0	0	1	5.3	2	10.5	19	100
Would you like to see any of the artwork we saw this week in their original versions?	12	63.2	2	10.5	2	10.5	2	10.5	1	5.3	19	100
Would you like to present any of the artwork you saw this week to friends who have never seen these pieces?	3	15.8	7	36.8	5	26.3	3	15.8	1	5.3	19	100
Would you like to present any of the artwork you saw this week to your parents or other relatives?	4	21.1	5	26.3	7	36.8	3	15.8	0	0	19	100



During the case study, the students also learned about artists from various historical periods while studying the works of art. With the last question, the authors wanted to know whether they had ever met an artist in person, would they like to meet one in person, and what they would ask an artist. Most students had never met an artist in person and would have liked to. The typical questions they would ask artists related to what type of art the artist prefers, how many pieces they have already created, how difficult it is to make a statue, where they get their ideas for their work, etc.

#### **4 Survey Findings**

The objectives of the case study concerned students' attitudes towards fine art and the possibilities of integrating artwork in various subject areas. The authors selected the subject areas taught by the fifth-grade teacher. This means that artwork was not included in the German or English lessons taught by other teachers at the school. The findings of this case study showed that the students had a mostly positive attitude towards fine art before conducting the study. At the same time, they thought that fine art was more interesting to adults. They had trouble recalling works of art they had already learned about.

The planning of lessons was carried out collaboratively between the two authors of the paper, who sought opportunities to integrate artwork into the objectives and content of individual subject areas. In the search for appropriate pieces, it was necessary to consider the objectives of the fifth-grade art class. The conversations about the works of art were planned and realised in such a way that the students reinforced the artistic elements in the curriculum (motifs, techniques, colours, colour relationships, composition) during discussions. For the most part, the lessons were designed in such a way that the pieces served as an introductory motivator for the specific content of the selected subject area. The students responded positively to the work presented and were enthusiastic, which was also reflected in the questionnaires they answered after each day of instruction. Few students did not answer any of the questions asked. It was particularly interesting that the students made it very clear, which pieces impressed them the most and that their responses were very diverse.

At the end of the case study, the students were surprised that they were able to link fine art to all their school subjects. At the level of the student-artwork relationship, a positive attitude towards artwork was perceived. Most students liked that art had been included at the beginning of lessons. The art was interesting to most students, and they would have liked to see the original pieces. However, for a large proportion of students in this class, fine art was not something that could be a topic of conversation outside the classroom. When asked “Would you like to present any of the artwork you saw this week to friends who have never seen these pieces?” almost half of the students replied that they would not like to. When asked “Would you like to present any of the artwork you saw this week to your parents or other relatives?” more than half of the students replied “I don’t know” or that they would not like to. The answers are meaningful because, in a way, they indicate the general state of fine art in the learning process and in society.

## **5 Conclusion**

Art can be meaningfully integrated into the teaching of various subject areas through thoughtful planning. Motivating students with artwork creates a space for non-burdensome conversation about varied topics and enables teachers and students to explore the content of the curriculum through fine art. The works of art that were included in the case study encouraged students to discuss form (colour, colour relations, composition, artistic technique), themes (motives, idea of work) and context (why the work was created, circumstances). This is not to say that the students were learning about individual pieces in depth, but rather that the conversation highlighted an aspect that was directly related to the content (including objectives) of each of the lessons. When talking about works of art, the students consolidated the concepts from the field of fine arts in an unobtrusive and spontaneous way. The biggest problem with motivating students with artwork, which was detected by the authors of the study, is adjusting the time to talk about art. The students wanted to discuss the pieces for a longer time than had been allotted because they were drawn to them, and they wanted to share their experiences and observations with the teacher.

The original research plan was adapted to distance work. While exploring the possibility of integrating artwork into various subject areas, the authors wanted to encourage students to participate more actively in distance lessons through art. However, the remote work was cancelled just before the execution, so a live case

study was conducted. The survey was conducted in the first week of the return to live classes. The authors believe that the integration of art helped to achieve a more relaxed transition from distance work to the school environment. At the same time, due to the risk of a retransition to remote work (e.g., if the whole class should be quarantined), the case study was carried out within a very short period of time. Under normal circumstances, the same amount of artwork would be included in the classroom over a longer period of time.

Despite the limitations and nature of the study, which does not allow for generalisation, the authors believe that the case study has shed light on the possibilities of integrating fine art into various subject areas.

## References

- Dewey, J. (2005). *Art as experience*. New York: Penguin Group.
- Hosack Janes, K. (2014). *Using the visual arts for cross-curricular teaching and learning: Imaginative ideas for primary school*. London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Hubard, O. M. (2010). Three Modes of Dialogue about Works of Art. *Art Education*, (63)3, 40-45. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20694835>
- Leavy, P. (2020). *Method meets art. Arts-based research practice*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Marshall, J. (2010). Five ways to integrate: Using strategies from contemporary art. *Art Education*, 63(3), 13–19. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20694831>.
- Marshall, J., & Donahue, D. M. (2014). *Art-centered learning across the curriculum. Integrating contemporary art in the secondary school classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Robinson, K., Aronica, L. (2015). Kreativne šole: Množična revolucija, ki preoblikuje izobraževanje. Nova Gorica: Eno.
- Sandell, R. (2006). Form + Theme + Context: Balancing considerations for meaningful art learning. *Art Education* 59(1), 33–37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00043125.2006.11651576>.
- Sandell, R. (2012). What Excellent Visual Arts Teaching Looks Like: Balanced, Interdisciplinary, and Meaningful. [http://www.arteducators.org/advocacy/NAEA\\_WhitePapers\\_3.pdf](http://www.arteducators.org/advocacy/NAEA_WhitePapers_3.pdf) 13. 8. 2015.
- Savedoff, B. (1993). Loking at Art through Photographs. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 51(3), 455-462.
- Sipe, L. (2001). Using Picturebooks to Teach Art History. *Studies in Art Education*, 42(3), 197–213.

