





TEACHING WITH ART IN MIND

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CHAPTER 1

Chapter overview

In this chapter, we introduce and lay down the basic principles on which the whole book is based. We make claims that not only bring the arts into the mainstream curriculum, but seek to place them right at the centre of classroom practice, in the process dismantling the myth of the 'crowded curriculum' in primary schooling. To validate these claims in terms of classroom practice, we examine the relationship between the arts and the school classroom – what gets taught there, why and how: in other words the pedagogy. We start by distinguishing the characteristics of the school classroom, its timetabled activities and its occupants, along the way making distinctions between today's *creative* classroom, yesterday's *orthodox* classroom, and tomorrow's *potential* classroom.

Today's *creative* classroom: Artful and mindful teaching

We believe that the arts are so important that they should be at the centre of the primary school curriculum. In a few lucky and precious schools or classrooms they are, and there is a lot of research that shows those children to be considerably advantaged in their education. These are what we will call *creative* classrooms.

In this and the next six chapters we will explore what the arts have to offer young people that is essential to their wellbeing and becoming. We examine how the demands for creativity and for understanding the whole aesthetic dimension of 21st-century Australian life make the arts essential studies in themselves, connecting and value-adding to the whole curriculum rather than being just pleasant but dispensable 'Friday afternoon fillers'.

In this first chapter, we explore what creative teaching is and how mindfulness and artfulness go together.

Schools, classrooms and education policies are constantly changing. To understand how and why, we must first acknowledge the current realities of the classroom, the context of the systems they are part of, and the assumptions on which they are based. We need to know where these systems and assumptions come from, their legacy and their legitimacy.

From yesterday's *orthodox* classroom

The orthodox classroom, which has been standard in the vast majority of schools since the Industrial Revolution, was not set up with the arts, or the development of any form of creativity, in mind – quite the reverse. In fact,

several of the orthodox classroom's characteristics have worked against the incorporation of the arts into its core business, none more than an emphasis on *propositional knowing*.

The common currency of industrialised societies and their schools and education is propositional knowledge – what is often called ‘the basics’ (but only certain cognitive basics). Put simply, this is the kind of knowledge that is expressed and communicated in words and numbers. This is basically a limiting approach, where all knowledge is assumed to be universal and based on particular rules for handling empirical data: analysis attempts to be objective, ruled by cause-and-effect relationships, and is expected, under the same conditions, to respond consistently to those rules. A curriculum reflecting this view of knowledge sees the teaching and learning process as externally determined ‘according to the intrinsic knowledge of each discipline and relatively independent of learner experience’ (Arostegui, Stake & Simons 2004, p. 3) or the teaching context. From the 19th century, the classroom in Western societies has privileged these propositional forms of knowledge.

An alternative view of knowledge is ‘interpretive’, where knowing results not just from isolated cognition but from sensory, cognitive and emotional experience, and also social interaction, and is personally constructed. Knowledge becomes a verb (what we do) rather than a noun (something that is). This kind of knowledge (knowing) can be expressed in ways other than just words and numbers and is therefore ‘non-propositional’, or ‘not-just-propositional’. It can be made manifest by the body, by actions, by sounds, by symbols and signs, by ways we communicate our relations to each other and the more than human world . . . and above all by artistic expressions of all kinds. Where words and numbers *are* involved, cognitive-only concepts are not the primary purpose of expression. In song, drama and poetry for example, all of which use words, those words invariably have personal, social and emotional significance, and may also convey ambiguity, paradox and a multiplicity of alternative meanings. They may also not exist for all time, but for just in the moment, and be as evanescent as is their expression.

A person who values this type of knowledge reflects on the different possible meanings and comes to a judgment of what is worthwhile and meaningful for her, much as a judge weighs up different views and evidence and applies the law according to the facts of each case (Arostegui et al. 2004, p. 3).

This approach values the existence of multiple possible meanings, and recognises that knowledge is not universal and does not sit outside oneself. Knowledge comes from experience rather than propositions; it requires reflective judgment, and is dialogical rather than causal. An arts curriculum based on the interpretive view of knowledge sees teacher–student interactions in which each is regarded as an artist, constructing knowledge together, where the process is as important as the product, or more so, and the collective experience brought to the classroom is recognised.

By contrast, a propositional approach to arts education tends to prioritise study over art-making; the acquisition of technical skill over understanding; the reproduction of the Western canon (in music, for example) or other hallowed traditions over invention and creation; and the assessment, memorisation and reiteration of ‘objective’ knowledge of the discipline over the direct experience of art.

Perhaps the ideal classroom is one that acknowledges both. That is, it respects and understands the histories, discipline and context of artforms, at the same time as it recognises the generative capabilities of the arts as a ‘way of knowing’ oneself and one’s relation to the human and more than human world.

The knowledge most valued in the orthodox school classroom is that which is ‘certain’ and can be verified either by logic (science) or logos (the Word, given, handed down and taken for granted). Knowledge that is discovered by the learners themselves, through use of the imagination or through new connections made between reimagined realities, is rarely visible, valued or supported in the space of the orthodox classroom. And where in any of the cognitive logos and logic are the emotions, and the body?

The arts offer, by definition, distinct ways of experiencing and representing the world. They are disciplines where interpretive knowledge is important and they use distinctive symbol systems that provide an alternative to words and numbers to convey meaning. In classrooms even today, there is little inclination or space – literally – for any kind of embodied learning. This is especially true for dance, and all the other kinaesthetic and physical manifestations of learning, which have to find a space beyond the classroom before they can even begin. If you think about it, the opportunities for utilising the sense of touch and therefore tactile learning in any circumstances in the classroom are very limited, given the close proximity of the classroom inhabitants. In the *orthodox* classroom they also become unnecessary, since what is tactile cannot easily be recorded or assessed as propositional. Even the exploration of music and sound is, by its nature, of questionable relevance to the acquisition of propositional knowledge, as we noted above. So too are the exploration and evocation of experience through visual expression, representation and communication in 2D (drawing, painting), 3D (sculpting, ceramics, materials) and 4D (digital technologies). They struggle to find their place in the classroom that privileges propositional knowledge – except, ironically, when there is a need to make diagrams and models to represent ‘concrete’ knowledge in ‘national priority’ areas such as maths and literacy.

We aim to demonstrate what it is to be an effective teacher in the primary years: to be both artful and mindful. This literally means minding the arts and calling on them in your pedagogy. We will show this to be relevant for all the arts, and highlight how the principles of the arts can be instructive for the embodied ‘performance’ of teaching, and explore the advantages of considering your teaching role in this way. As we elaborate on how you can teach in and through the arts. We will also give you ideas about ‘engaging’ practice that is relevant across the disciplines. We will consider what the arts have to offer the whole curriculum and, more importantly, how you teach it.

With artfulness in mind: Essentials for arts learning

To begin with, the following essentials of learning are all *inherent* in arts teaching – in other words, connected with artistic practice. All of them are also characteristics of any good teaching. They are in alphabetical order and among them are many elements that use the language of the arts, drama in particular.

Atmosphere

All activities where people are gathered together can generate a distinct mood and ambience composed of the surroundings, the space and its physical attributes; the context and the purpose of the space;

and the attitudes and emotions that the participants bring to the space. Dramatists and teachers share a common starting point, which is a special, and quite tightly defined, space (for a teacher, the classroom; for a dramatist, usually a theatre), and the responsibility – and freedom – to use it for a wide diversity of purposes and human meetings. Both dramatist and teacher have content to deliver in this space, and to share in dialogue with the participants. Generating an appropriate mood – and that includes predicting and managing the attitudes and emotions of those participants – is equally the task of the teacher and the dramatist.

Collaborative, social learning and teamwork

Much of the work in all artforms, particularly performing arts, is utterly dependent on ensemble, collaboration, teamwork and social art-making and responding, countering a bias in many schools towards solitary, competitive learning structures. We will have more to say on these factors below in ‘Participation’ and throughout the book.

Creativity development

Creativity, as we shall see in detail in Chapter 2, is the arts’ core business, providing us with and allowing us to create new ways of seeing the world, where old ‘truths’, ‘right answers’ and assumptions are problematised by richer ways of perceiving what we thought we knew. New connections are made between the familiar and unfamiliar.

Dialogue

Dialogue is crucial to good pedagogy. That means vivid and exploratory discussion, and multiple conversations by word of mouth, which is how ideas are mainly expressed in the classroom. Furthermore, dialogue in life, as on the stage, involves reading each other’s body language and non-verbal signals, so that everybody can interpret the nuances of the very complex social interaction that is (or should be) the living classroom. Real dialogue is at the very least two-way – what’s called a duologue – and really much more. You may have 20–30 people in the classroom, each wanting a part in the dialogue. For more detail and ideas on this, see ‘Participation’ below.

Discipline

Working in and with the arts, we quickly discover that mastery of these creative processes is dependent on discipline: learning the elements, forms, skills and techniques of the arts as they have been practised before us, and negotiating them mindfully to explore and make meaning.

Embodied learning

The arts are first and foremost experienced through the body and senses – sight, sound, movement, touch – and only secondarily through words and numbers. That returns us to the discussion about propositional and interpretive knowing and prioritising the emergent qualities of contemporary teaching and learning.

Empathy

In drama, the single most basic action is empathic identification: putting oneself in somebody else's shoes, to question not only what they are thinking and why, but also how they are feeling, and why. Wherever students are learning about human behaviour and the world around them, the good teacher endeavours to help the students put themselves in other people's shoes, at least imaginatively, to consider the impact on others and the consequences of what they are learning.

Mindful and reflective practice

As the teacher and learners come together to construct new knowledge and understanding in the classroom, we must be attentive – both inside and outside the actual work being created – to the processes involved. That means being mindful by fully living and comprehending our actions and their consequences in the present, evaluating our impact and reflecting on the implications for our continuing practice.

Motivation and engagement

Because of the arts' unique relationship to play (which we will address in the next chapter), participating in arts activity is often naturally motivating and can lead to deep engagement and an experience of 'flow' (Csikszentmihalyi 1990). Children and adults alike do the arts because we enjoy them, because something inside us makes us want to explore and express our imaginations, thoughts and feelings and examine the human experience. With the arts, we can do this on our own and with others.

An important topic in recent educational research is how to foster and measure learner motivation and engagement. Yet, when it comes to the formative power of play in children's early learning, it is not hard to see how the arts' affinity with play offers teachers a natural motivator when it comes to engaged learning across the primary school curriculum. Returning to our description of the orthodox classroom, when we remove children from their natural home learning environment, for example, to put them in a conventional, post-industrial sedentary and transmissive classroom, we remove or overregulate one of the most powerful natural motivators, namely play. The arts are a way to readdress that and to bring playful vibrancy back into school-based teaching and learning. Like a great ball game or an improvisational play with model cars or clothes, the arts value the uncertain and the emergent while offering a set of rules for engaging with others.

If you look at schools, and perhaps your own schooling, you will see a number of commonly observable features in whatever arts are happening at the school:

- Arts classes are often extremely popular.
- Arts teachers are also very popular, and for the same reasons, which we will come to later in the chapter.
- The reasons that students give for enjoying the arts include that arts are 'different', that they are 'active', and that they allow the students to 'express ourselves' and 'do things we want to do' (see e.g. Martin et al. 2013).

- In schools and in the wider community, the arts are often turned to as a way to engage otherwise disengaged or marginalised students and community members. They offer ways to deal with circumstances and behaviours that are socially or emotionally challenging (see e.g. Donelan & O'Brien 2008)
- The arts are often most valued in working with the least 'academic' students, because they give those students the opportunity both to express themselves and to achieve in other ways.

Bringing the arts into both your curriculum and your pedagogy means returning to using natural motivators of learning. The arts can engage young people playfully and artfully by bringing together the realms outside (the physical and social) with the realm inside (the personal and emotional).

Narrative

Any lesson is a story told in time, from beginning to end, with motives and reasons for all the actions that happen within the time span. This is just like almost any play, whose storyline is driven by tensions such as those above. In a lesson too, it is important for the participants and audience to follow that story, to know where we've come from and where we are heading. The good teacher lets the students into her story – the narrative of the lesson – and keeps them involved so they know where they are in it and why things are happening as they are. Tension (see the section on this later in the chapter) plays a part here too, of course.

Participation and dialogical teaching

Making and responding in the arts (both creating artworks and appreciating them) cannot be done by the one-way transmission of given data – those assumed 'truths' and right answers – but involves teachers and learners together constructing meaning, understanding and skills, and, in the arts, often making art together. This involves a dialogue that includes all the participants in the classroom, not a teacher's monologue, or a Q & A duologue conducted by the teacher with a series of selected respondents who have put their hands up. It means that the teacher learns to ask questions to which you don't know the answer: sometimes because there is no right answer, sometimes because you tap into the children's experience and knowledge, and sometimes because the answer or answers will only come by everybody constructing them together. Knowledge is then socially constructed or shared, and is not the exclusive property of the teacher or the curriculum.

In practical terms this may mean a change both in the kind of questions you ask, and the way you set up that dialogue in the classroom. As soon as you change the question from the usual 'What is...?' or 'Who can tell me...?', the possibilities for both dialogue and creativity are opened. The question of 'What if...?' is possibly the most creative and genuinely productive form you can adopt. 'Does anybody have an idea why...?' or 'Can we work this out...?' are pretty good ones too. And the question needs to be one that will engage the students – that they can hook into with interest and want to respond to, because they know it will take them somewhere new. To deal with the 30 bright responses that these questions will sometimes provoke means that those responses cannot always be channelled back through an expected duologue

with the teacher, and stop there with you. Students can dialogue in pairs, triads, or in small working groups to share their responses and focus on the task that those responses lead to. You don't have to hear and control everything that is said by everyone! It's one of the most liberating – but for some teachers one of the hardest – steps you can take, to realise that children, even very young ones, are quite capable of taking a focused question and having a controlled conversation about it among themselves, as long as they are engaged and have a sense of purpose.

Performance

The classroom is a public space and in every class its 30 or so members are on view, on show, the whole time. The students are under the watchful eye of the teacher and are often called to speak, demonstrate or publicly discuss to an audience consisting of the teacher or a group of peers, and sometimes the whole class. The teacher is of course the most prominent performer in this show – not only setting the tone and the parameters from beginning to end, but regularly calling attention for everybody in the room to focus on you. As you do it, you are modelling for the students this public language and behaviour – this performance – throughout the lesson. Teachers do not have to be virtuoso actors (heaven forbid!), but you do have to be present in the moment, as an actor is. Your 'audience' has just as much right and need as a theatre audience to be interested, engaged and connected with you. This is no less true because your audience is a captive one, and cannot just walk out if they are unsatisfied or bored. Good teachers therefore do need to cultivate the skills of an actor who can be open to the moment and skilled in presenting as well as in keeping attention.

Imagine yourself not as a celebrity though! Rather, you're the leading member of an ensemble who are all engaged jointly in that participation and dialogue we discuss above. That adds a further dimension to the good classroom, for if the students are engaged and involved in the collaborative dialogue of learning, they will all need to be developing for themselves the public speaking skills and the self-confidence for public performance. This needs to be encouraged, taught, and above all, modelled by you. This is discussed further in Chapter 6.

Rich and contextual learning

Engaging with artworks (whether we are making them or responding to other people's) inevitably involves understanding of the personal, social, cultural and historical contexts of the work and also all the symbols, communication systems and messages, and reference points used in the art-form being studied.

Tension

The element of tension is the force – in art and life – that can keep our interest in something until the end, whether in a lesson, a joke, a game, a story, a ballad, a symphony or a play. Tension can best be explained by considering the structure of a game. When children or adults for that matter are engaged in playing, or in watching a game, it's no fun if it is too easy. The game or puzzle is only worth playing if it is made as difficult as possible – in other words, a challenge. This may seem a very odd component to add to our

good pedagogy, since often a teacher's energy is spent trying to remove tension in order to make learning as easy and quick as possible for our students: 'facilitating' their learning. However, we believe that one of the arts of good teaching is the exact opposite: to set up exciting and absorbing challenges, not to facilitate but to 'difficultate' learning, using constraints and tensions for the students to wrestle with. It can be described as 'the art of constraint': the teacher puts in plenty of constraints to prevent, for as long as time permits (or until patience is exhausted), the achievement of the resolution. The definition of tension we are using here comes not from education but from studies of an artform – in this case drama – but it applies equally across arts teaching – and all teaching. In the next chapter we will explore in detail the close and symbiotic relationship between arts and play, as this is just one manifestation of that relationship.

We need to understand these productive tensions in our planning, teaching and assessing. These include:

- the 'tension of the task' (making the task purposeful, urgent and hard)
- tensions of mystery and suspense
- tensions of withholding information, rather than revealing all at once
- the tension of dilemma, where difficult choices have to be made
- tensions of conflict, involving the exploration of clashes of interests, rights and power (hard for teachers who spend much time keeping conflict out of the classroom!)
- tensions of misunderstanding, where the satisfaction is in unravelling and sorting out the misapprehensions. (Haseman & O'Toole 2017)

These characteristics can be described as good pedagogical practice, which all proud professional educators strive towards in any subject area. In the current Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL 2014), similar features appear in the criteria for 'proficient' and 'highly accomplished' teachers. One of them, 'actively embodied teaching', stretches above and beyond such standards. In arts teaching, these characteristics are a matter of course and within any teacher's reach.

Mindful teaching

One way to nurture mindfulness as a teacher, whether teaching the arts or integrating them within your teaching of other subjects, is to recognise and cultivate communities of practice within and beyond the school. While the best communities of practice are those that voluntarily come together over a shared interest or issue rather than being imposed (Wenger et al. 2002), the intention to establish informal, collaborative networks for sharing creative pedagogy is itself good mindful practice. Both within the school (with colleague teachers) and beyond the school (with artists and creative practitioners), there are people with whom teachers can connect, to sustain their *own* motivation and engagement, their embodied learning, creativity, and collaborative and social learning as adults and arts educators. In this way, teachers become the kind of learners they want themselves to foster and teach: motivated, engaged, creative, and curious. Such a commitment to ongoing professional learning is critical to sustaining quality arts education in Australian schools.

Not all teachers need to identify as artists or claim to be expert themselves in aesthetic ways of knowing. Rather, it is necessary to first *recognise* that there are educator and artist peers whose conversation, collaboration and companionship can help inform and improve your own practice. That in turn will cultivate the most impactful kinds of learning experiences for students. With the insight gained from open dialogue, reflection and exploration of 'the productive mess' and complexity of creating art, you can become more emboldened in the actual time and space of classroom work *to be fully present*. You have the potential to become an artful and mindful educator when you sharpen your presence of mind and confidence to integrate both what the learning context asks for and what the students offer, in the moment.

This is what it means to become a co-generator of new knowledge – that is, knowledge 'that does not yet exist'. It involves engaging with your students as artistic collaborators and risk-takers who revel in the productive falterings along the way as much as the final end-point achievement. In the time and space of classroom 'work', the mindful teacher reflects *in* action and acts *on* reflection. You develop your own *flow* as a result. Communities of practice can help support you in that. They can help you build confidence in constructing and deconstructing artistic and cultural meaning and values, develop deeper disciplinary knowledge, as well as help you become braver as a teacher who is willing to play. Communities of practice harness your own, your colleagues' and your students' potential on so many levels that they lead us towards our greater goal of the *potential* classroom.

The arts are not an automatic panacea for all the ills of the orthodox classroom, of course. Indeed, we can all probably recognise or remember occasional arts teachers whose classes we dreaded, or which we felt to be a waste of time. That is because they were forgetting their art: teaching artlessly and mindlessly by neglecting to take care of the elements of their own artform, neglecting to model their artistry for students, and neglecting to interpret, reflect on and improve what was going on for their students.

Why then do not all teachers use the arts all the time as motivators to learning, quite apart from the other advantages we have alluded to? And why do students not always respond with unbridled enthusiasm to any mention or introduction of the arts?

Some of the reasons for this are questions of confidence, skill and experience, for both teachers and students. These relate in part to the historical legacy of the orthodox classroom. Because the arts have been *devalued* and marginalised in traditional schooling, only a small proportion of children grow up having had sustained and substantial education in the arts, particularly across the whole range (compared with having had a minimum of six and up to twelve years of continuous schooling in Maths and English). Some children never receive sustained education in any art, and a much larger number have only encountered one or at most two artforms. Most teachers, too, only receive a brief introduction to the arts in their pre-service training, sometimes not even that.

When they graduate from their preservice education program, many teachers are still basically *unaware* of the importance or the relevance of the arts to their students. Even many of those who are aware of their importance, or are excited by their potential, feel they do not have the necessary basic skills themselves, let alone the pedagogy, and so they are too fearful to take the risk. And some of those who graduate with the confidence and skills to do the job find themselves in schools where there is little understanding, support, or resources. It therefore becomes much easier *not* to teach the arts.

Some teachers do try or are dragooned into teaching the arts, armed with insufficient understanding, skills and pedagogy. As you probably know, and will see in these pages, teaching the arts is not simple, especially because arts teachers (like any good teachers) should take part themselves in the learning, not just stand outside and give out information and instructions. Let's now look at it from the perspective of what the students need.

- Teaching dance demands knowledge of how the body works and what its capacities and tolerances are at different ages.
- Teaching drama demands an understanding of how to frame a situation so as to provide protection and permission, as well as dramatic tension and action, and how to manage groups in role and performance.
- Teaching media arts demands some technical and critical understanding of those media.
- Teaching music demands some specialist knowledge, and at least a willingness to try musical activities with children.
- Teaching visual arts demands visual acuity, design sense, and some control of a pencil (or mouse/touchpad).

The common thing they all need, more than anything else, is the understanding and ability *to know where the students are at, and start there*. To start too high, or expect too much, is a recipe for fear and demoralisation; to start too low is a recipe for boredom and contempt.

It is not all so bleak, but we are painting this picture so that you will be both robust and realistic about what you can achieve. Just remember that the vast majority of children and young people look forward to the arts, are strongly and consistently motivated by them, and love to encounter them in school. This is partly why, in spite of that daunting list above, we believe – and all the authors in this book can vouch from their own experience – that you will be able to become a capable and enthusiastic arts teacher, especially with this book in your hand!

Towards tomorrow's potential classroom

There's another reason for our confidence too, so long as we understand that we need to make a small but crucial paradigm shift: from the *orthodox classroom* to the *potential classroom*. To achieve this *potential classroom* of the future, we have to address some of the prevailing myths that surface when teachers contemplate teaching the arts in the generalist classroom. This is the first one, and two more are addressed (and busted) in the next chapter:

Myth-busting – #1

Generalist teachers can't teach the arts because they don't know enough about them (just refer to the dot-points above).

Q: How can teachers be expected to teach the arts, especially as many as five different artforms, if they have never studied them and don't know anything about them?

A1 (orthodox paradigm): We should not expect them to try, and, instead, we will limit the students' exposure to the arts to what the few specialists around can teach.

A2 (potential paradigm): It's nonsense to say that educated adults don't know anything about the arts. What most of us don't know is how much we do know! And how many resources are around to help us.

If teachers were being asked impromptu to teach quantum mechanics, or Napoleonic history, then the question above would be entirely sensible, because the assumption of ignorance would be literally true for most. But it is quite untrue when it comes to the arts, even if the adults concerned have had the kind of arts-limited or deficient education described above (and in any school there are some who received much better than that, and have plenty of expertise and their own arts enthusiasm to share).

Socially and culturally, we have all been engaging with all the arts since long before we went to school. We started singing and composing and playing with rhythms and melodies and harmonies before preschool, and there has likely not been a day in most people's lives that they have not been exposed to music – from vinyl records to the radio to digital devices and the internet, from film and television to muzak in the supermarket, from bands playing in parks and sacred places to music broadcast in football stadiums and shopping malls. During this time, most hearing-enabled adults have developed some form of discernment: likes and dislikes, turn-ons and turn-offs. In drama, we were all probably role-playing expertly, and often performing for our parents and friends, before we went to school, and often after, too. In adulthood, we may encounter concert parties and camp skits, street theatre busking, role-play training, and we may rarely miss the opportunity to dramatise and act out accounts of the more memorable moments in our day to our friends and relatives or watch a drama as audience, on screen at least. In dance too, our lives may feature dance in our social celebrations and everyday gatherings, from weddings to Bar Mitzvahs to embodying stories of life and creation from Elders to the young. From the days when our parents may have put up our first scribbles and paintings proudly on the fridge, to now when we create artistry via Instagram or Tumblr or in the designs for our gardens or homes, we are – and have long been – steeped in visual decision-making.

We know heaps, but we may not have realised just how much discernment and skill we have. Even if it is something we choose to demur about or deprecate – 'I can't sing,' 'I'm no good at drawing' – we do know a lot more, have a lot more experience, and much more background knowledge than many of the children with whom we work. There will of course be those children in your class who have been to ballet school or played the violin for five years or who may already be Instagram heroes, but what a wonderful bonus resource those students are for your classroom, for the teacher mindful enough to tap into that expertise as a key resource.

In other words, although you don't probably know enough yet to teach the arts, you *are* already on the way there. Gaining the extra necessary skills is a smaller step, and more enjoyable, than you fear. There are lots of resources to help you, however remote or disadvantaged your school. If your school itself has few resources, and your education system cannot help out, you will find that parents and the community have some of them (maybe not the ones you were expecting!). Arts teachers' associations and other arts bodies run workshops. The professional arts industry, and especially major arts companies and galleries, are spending much time and resources nowadays on young people's work (it is after all the first sixth of the

human life-span, and art-lovers don't start at 21!). Most companies and arts agencies are keen to engage in residencies and support schemes. There is also a feast of educational resources on the web, many of them developed specially for the Australian Curriculum.

To start to teach the arts takes some minimal training and resources, and it takes experience to improve. We hope this book will provide the beginning of that training and some useful resources, which will give you the confidence to get started, and constantly grow in your own way as you gain that experience.

ACTIVITY

Individual reflective writing task

Referring to the distinction between propositional knowledge and interpretive knowing:

- Think about the artform (or artforms) you know best: what kinds of non-propositional knowledge are involved, and which senses do you perceive them with?
- How might you go about assessing or evaluating learning in that kind of knowledge?

Class or small group discussion

Referring to the 'artfulness' section:

- Which elements of artful teaching do you think are the most important?
- Discuss examples of the elements you have observed in school and university classrooms.

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