

A Voluntary Summer Art Course for At-Risk Students

Attending Job Corps: A Qualitative Study

by

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ABSTRACT

Many alternative schools for at-risk students do not offer art classes to their students. Phoenix Job Corps is one of those schools. I conducted a qualitative study about a voluntary summer art course at Phoenix Job Corps, a vocational school for at-risk students. I had thirteen student volunteers, eight of them refugees from other countries. All the participants created a narrative painting about something in their lives. The purpose of this study was to examine this voluntary summer art course and to determine its usefulness as a beneficial tool to the lives of the students. This included looking at participants' narrative paintings to determine common themes or subjects, finding out their opinions on whether or not their school should offer an art course, their willingness to share their stories, determining whether they think it's important for others to see their work, and lastly concluding what artwork they like best and why. I found that the majority of students do want an art class offered at their schools, and all but one participant was more than willing to share their story about their narrative painting. Common themes amongst their paintings were family, a specific memory or event, or their present and future lives. I found similar subject matter in their paintings such as animals, houses or huts, and people. My research also unveiled a large difference in the refugee students' paintings as opposed to the other United States participants. The findings also suggest that participants judged other work based on meaning more so than aesthetics. This study explores, in detail, the narrative art and experiences of a very diverse group of students.

DEDICATION

To B, you always believed in me and kept me going when I felt I could not.
I love you.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Alternative education differs from traditional public education and is usually intended for students whom the public school has failed, due to students' challenging behaviors (Tobin & Sprague, 2000). Although only one percent of the student population attends alternative schools, these schools play an integral role in allowing students, with unique needs, a second chance to obtain their high school education (McKee & Conner, 2007). Carver and Lewis (2010) estimate there were approximately 10,300 alternative schools around the nation for at-risk students in the 2007-08 school year. Many students coming from low income families are attending alternative schools. Students who attend alternative schools are "typically at risk of educational failure (as indicated by poor grades, truancy, disruptive behavior, pregnancy, or similar factors associated with temporary or permanent withdrawal from school)" (Carver & Lewis, 2010, p. 1). Annually, across the nation about one in fifteen students, ages sixteen to nineteen dropout from the public school systems and are labeled at-risk (Children's Defense Fund, 2008).

In some instances, alternative schools do not offer a diverse choice of electives such as music, art, or physical education, for their students. This could be because they tend to be smaller in size; some alternative schools work with online curriculums; or they may be vocational training facilities. When electives are not an option, school districts need to look at the availability and/or possibility of creating after school programs.

After school educational programs exist in schools, both alternative and traditional, all over the United States. These programs serve as enrichment activities for students. After school classes tend to be beneficial to the students both socially and educationally. A study conducted by Posner and Vandell (1994) with low-income students concluded that there is a positive correlation with time spent in formal after school activities and a student's academic performance, including grades, conduct, emotional health, and peer relations.

Statement of Problem

Morman Unsworth (2001) sums up, in my opinion, one of the greatest benefits of art when he states, "Art is not a product arrived at through following directions, copying, or conforming to a given model. Art is not just skill. It is the process of thinking, imagining, risking, seeing connections, inventing, expressing in unique visual form" (p. 6). One might argue that all students should be given this opportunity, if not through fine art electives, then from voluntary art programs.

There exists a significant portion of high school age students being denied the opportunity to take art classes or electives in general, which is detrimental to the growth and well-being of the student. If art electives are not offered to the students in school their only option remaining becomes after school art programs. In most of the studies I read, these programs were for middle age school students and younger. I could not find many studies of after school art programs for high school students. But what about the high schools that do not offer art as an elective? What about the alternative schools that do not give students the option

of taking art classes? Currently in the state of Arizona, according to the Arizona Department of Education (1994, March 18) students only need one credit of fine arts or career and technical education and vocational education to graduate. This means many students in Arizona are graduating high school without taking any fine arts classes at all. This in itself is a problem for those who believe art is essential in education. Many alternative schools will not offer art classes to students because a technical and vocational education is offered in its place. What experiences are these students missing? Could these students benefit from an after school art program?

I conducted my research at Phoenix Job Corps, an alternative vocational training school that offers at-risk students the opportunity to receive a high school diploma, but does not offer students any fine art electives. The students receive career and technical education credits by completing a vocational trade in place of fine arts. These trades may include training in areas of construction, business, security, retail, health care, and computers.

We live in a visual culture and it is important for students to learn and understand the culture in which they live. I think that one way of learning this may be through art. Art is everywhere, in our past, present and future, and it may be beneficial for students to have not only the exposure to art but also the tools necessary to understand and interpret art in the world in which they live.

Currently, students attending a Job Corps school in Phoenix, AZ do not have the opportunity presented above; there is currently no art education program

available. There are no studio art classes or art history classes. Two years ago the Job Corps in Phoenix cut the only class remotely close to art. It was an elective arts and crafts class, taught by a non-certified instructor during the last period of the school day. The class focused on craft more than art; all student projects had almost identical outcomes. There was no art education involved in this course, but at least it was something. Now there are no art classes, and I believe students are missing a very valuable part of their education

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative study is to understand the impact a voluntary art program had on at-risk students, who otherwise had no art classes available to them, attending Job Corps in Phoenix. The voluntary art program in this study is defined as one elective art class, with four one and one half hour sessions, providing education about art, artworks, artists, and painting as a personal narrative.

Definition of Terms

Refugee

Many of the students I worked with were refugees who were exiled from their home countries. Throughout my study, I will refer to some of the students as refugees. A refugee is someone who is forced to leave her or his home country and enters another country (in this case, the United States) legally. Refugees generally come from war torn countries and have experienced genocide, displacement, political oppression, religious persecution, etc. (Rotas, 2004).

United States At-Risk Students

For my research, I considered a student to be at-risk if she or he is economically disadvantaged, lives in an unstable environment, has a disruptive home life, has behavioral problems, and/or is in danger of dropping out of school. At-risk students are students who are vulnerable of dropping out of, or failing out of school because of risk or problem behaviors such as youth violence, substance abuse, and high risk sexual behavior (Guerra & Bradshaw, 2008). Students lacking family support, students in danger of homelessness, teen parents, gang members, addicts, and students living in high crime areas are just a few examples of the types of students who sometimes fall into this category.

International At-Risk Students

All of the refugee students I worked with in this study were international at-risk students. An international at-risk student is a student from another country who is at risk of dropping out of or failing out of school, usually due to language barriers, lack of family support, homelessness, and/or emotional instability. Also, many international at-risk students (in my research) are refugees with little to no family support. They also tend to have trouble succeeding because they came to the United States at an older age, have limited English skills, and have few options to receive an education.

Narrative Art

Narrative art was the major theme of the voluntary art class in which students participated. Wilson and Wilson (1976) describe narrative as visual memory. I define narrative art, in this study, as a story or account of events,

experiences, or the like, expressed visually in a work of art. In other words, visual memories portrayed in artwork.

Alternative School

The term alternative school generally refers to high schools that are for students who have not succeeded in the mainstream school system and usually provide education for students who have unique and individualized needs (Tice, 1994).

English Language Learners

“Because the United States is a country of immigrants, the historical ebb and flow of immigrants to the United States from other countries has challenged American schools to devise various ways in educating immigrant children who were unable to proficiently speak English” (Verdugo & Flores, 2007, p. 167). American educators refer to these students as English language learners or ELL students. Many of the participants, at the time of my study, had limited English language skills and were classified by Job Corps as ELL students, based on their performance on the Arizona English Language Learner Assessment, otherwise known as AZELLA.

Limitations

The limitation that impacted the study the most was the language barrier. About half of the participants are English language learners, meaning English is not their native language. It was difficult for the participants to express detailed interpretations of their artworks because their English skills were very limited. Because I knew about the language barrier before the classes began. I defined

difficult vocabulary as often as possible. I checked often to make sure participants understood the questions they were asked. I also tried to verify or reiterate the answers as I understood them. Participants were restricted in how they answered my questions based on the size of their English vocabulary.

Participants were also limited on the materials and paints used based on what I was able to provide for them. The time we spent painting was also limited and one participant did not have enough time to finish his painting. Lastly, my own participation in the study, as the instructor, may have affected my understandings. Although I tried to rely only on the data I collected, the results of this study are limited by my interpretations of the findings.

Research Questions

1. Do at-risk students, attending Job Corps, think art should be a class that Job Corps offers students? Why or why not?
 - a. If yes, should it be during the school hours?
2. What personal narrative themes do at-risk students, attending a voluntary art class at Job Corps, portray in their art work?
 - a. How do participants represent subject matter in their paintings?
3. What student peer art work do at-risk students, attending a voluntary art class at Job Corps, like most and why?
4. Do at-risk students, attending a voluntary art class at Job Corps, feel their personal narrative is important for others to see? Why or why not?

By conducting my research I intended to conclude these questions as well as others that emerged. I based my answers on responses to group and individual

discussions, interviews, observations, and questionnaires that I conducted throughout the elective art class.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A literature review allowed me to look at other related studies and provided me with a point of reference to compare against my conclusions (Creswell, 2009). Researchers have conducted many studies of at-risk students, alternative education programs, after school programs, and after school art programs for at-risk students. Some of the studies I looked at focused on student behavior, student sense of self, subjects and themes for student art work, and the importance of art for at-risk students.

Mason and Chaung (2001) conducted a study to evaluate after school culturally based arts programs for low income urban children. The arts program, named the *Kuumba Kids* (*kuumba* is Swahili for creativity), was led by African American artists who had four goals for the program; 1) use art to build constructive behavior patterns for urban children living in poor neighborhoods, 2) provide African American role models to children with similar cultural heritage, 3) provide concrete evidence that arts can help solve community problems, and 4) help get permanent culturally based programs established in neighborhoods (Mason & Chaung, 2001, p. 47). The findings concluded a statistically significant increase in participants' self-esteems, social skills, and leadership competencies when comparing an experimental group to a control group (Mason & Chaung, 2001). The study also concluded that the after school art program was positively affecting students' environment in regards to interpersonal relationships with students and staff. Such a course could be very beneficial to students who have

not had positive school experiences in the past. I will elaborate on this topic later, but most of the students I will be working with have had negative experiences with both students and staff at other schools. Any experience that may strengthen students' relationships with others is beneficial to the students' educational future. Could art be that experience for my students?

Merme Klippel and Fanelli (2001) created an after school program for inner city youth that incorporated performing arts and studio art. They based their research on Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences (Gardner, 1983). Gardner's theory proposes that there are different components of intellectual functioning, each with visible and measurable abilities (Morgan, 1996). The program incorporated each of Gardner's intelligences. The culmination of the after school art program was a play that participants performed, based on an African American folk tale. Klippel and Fanelli concluded that each participant in the program felt valued and respected. The researchers gave detailed accounts of individual student troubles and breakthroughs. Merme Klippel and Fanelli (2001) concluded that it was evident from student behavior that students benefited through gaining a sense of self, trust in self, and creativity. They also concluded that students had a better understanding of both their interpersonal and intrapersonal skills through collaboration and group performance.

Wallace DiGarbo and Hill (2006) conducted an art based intervention program with at-risk seventh and eighth graders and found that the program helped students with cooperative planning and meaningful engagement with staff and students. The goal of the program was to empower the students through a

collaborative art making experience, mural painting (Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006). The project lasted six weeks with a total of ten sessions. The study focused on a change in student attitudes and psychological adjustment. “The most at-risk participants showed the greatest improvement” (Wallace DiGarbo & Hill, 2006, p. 124).

Wright, John, Alaggia, and Sheel (2006) conducted a Canadian study to determine the effects a voluntary based art program had on youth in low income communities. Art classes were 90 minutes long two times a week after school. “The youth participated in a 9-month arts program that focused on theatre but that also included visual arts (mask-making, set design, and painting) and media arts (digital filming and editing)” (Wright et al., 2006, p. 638). The study used both quantitative and qualitative methods to determine findings. Based on the data collected, Wright et al. (2006) determined that the program had a statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) impact on art skills development (p.645). $P < 0.01$ meaning there is a one percent chance that Wright et al., 2006 was wrong in their conclusions. Participants also showed a slight decrease in emotional and behavioral problems as well.

The above articles focus mainly on the effects of voluntary and/or after school art programs. Although my study will not determine the effects the program had on participants, I find it beneficial to understand the large portion of literature that is written about these types of voluntary art programs and its impact on at-risk youth. These studies have helped me to understand various types of after school art programs.

I found it difficult to locate research involving art education at Job Corps facilities around the states. Because Job Corps is a vocational school, there is not a big push to incorporate the arts. I did however find an article in *Art Education* about a visiting sculptor, Berthold Schmutzhart and his wife, who taught art to Job Corps students. In the article written by Spiegel (1966), he quoted Schmutzhart, the sculptor who worked with the students.

Art is just as essential to our lives and these Job Corps youngsters [lives] as any other force or influence[s]. They need a balanced diet, not merely of the physical things but the artistic. Since man became what we may call civilized he has had science. He also needs art, and this is where our job comes in as art teachers. We try to show these young people that there is great pleasure and fulfillment in art, in the worth of working toward the acquisition of such things, but even more important, to become aware of the bounties in the world (p. 24).

The Schmutzharts volunteered at eight other Job Corps centers and found their experiences to be beneficial and rewarding to themselves and to students (Spiegel, 1966).

Cohen-Evron (2002) also writes about an art teacher who taught art at another vocational school, slightly different from Job Corps. The teacher “identified with her students’ resistance and their ‘outsider’ position, and found meaning in her work, using art as a tool to enhance their damaged self image[s]” (Cohen-Evron, 2001, p. 85). At the beginning of my research I hoped my participants would realize that they each have a unique story to tell and using

narrative painting is one method of telling those stories, in turn, find meaning and value in their own artwork.

Some of my participants are refugees. I am very interested in the personal narratives they created and found myself wondering whether their paintings would have anything to do with their refugee experiences. Rotas (2004) wrote a very interesting article about his experiences studying refugee art. Throughout his writing, he compares and contrasts refugee art with multicultural artists. An important point Rotas (2004) makes is that being labeled a multicultural artist has a sense of pride attributed with it whereas, the term refugee artist rarely infers the same sense of pride or other positive associations. Being labeled a refugee artist may not be as desirable as being labeled a multicultural artist. Rotas (2004) speaks of the negative connotations attributed to the label refugee or asylum seeker and suggests émigré and exile as more appropriate terms. Rotas (2004) also mentions that not all refugee art is about the artist's experience as a refugee. The artist may not want to be considered a refugee artist. Keeping this in mind, I was sure not to influence my refugee students in regards to the subject of their artwork. I was careful to keep in mind that their narrative paintings might have something to do with their refugee experiences, but it might not.

Another study I found very relevant to my research was a study about determining origins of student themes in artwork created in a voluntary summer art program for high school adolescence. I found this article useful because my study includes reviewing the subject matter my participants chose for their narrative paintings and exploring the reasoning behind their choices. Hafeli

(2002) studied a four week voluntary summer art program that offered courses in very diverse mediums. She determined the content and sources of students' ideas, in artwork, as the following: 1) formal aspects and their effects, 2) art materials/techniques and their effects, 3) representing objects/people/settings by observations, 4) representing real, imagined, or documented event/experience/story, 5) representing ideas, feelings, or beliefs, 6) representing ideas through symbolism, 7) development of skill, 8) art lesson or teaching, 9) other lesson or teaching, 10) art worlds, and 11) culture—family, traditional, school, local community, and popular culture (p. 32). Hafeli's (2002) research entailed in-depth interviews with eight of the one hundred thirty participants. Of the eight, she wrote about three of the students. One of her students in particular reminded me of my own participants. He was a seventeen year old South American immigrant. "Eduardo's account of his sculpture illustrates several aspects of content development identified in the collective analysis; in particular, Eduardo's narrative ideas exemplify how adolescents, like many contemporary artists, chronicle and comment on both personal and cultural beliefs and identities" (Hafeli, 2002, p. 34).

Some major themes I noticed intertwined through these studies include improvement in sense of self, self-confidence, and self-image. Almost all studies mentioned the pleasure and enjoyment students appeared to experience while participating. My study adds to the literature on voluntary art programs for at-risk students and will contribute data to research about art programs in vocational training and alternative school settings. My research also adds to the literature

about international at-risk students and their chosen subject matter in narrative paintings, a topic which little is written about.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

I conducted a qualitative study. Qualitative research explores and attempts to understand or make meaning of individual experiences or a group of individuals' experiences and attribute them to a collective problem (Creswell, 2009, p. 4). Applying Creswell's (2009) explanation of qualitative research to my study, I attempted to understand at-risk youth attending Job Corps and the impact a voluntary art program had on them. It was important for me to utilize qualitative research methodologies for this study because I wanted to understand each of my participants, their experiences with art, and their experiences during my voluntary painting class. I wanted a detailed study that focused on my participants and their thoughts and experiences. Because many of my participants had limited English skills, I thought qualitative data was necessary to get a true understanding of my participants and their experiences throughout my research.

Stokrocki (1997) elaborates on the three stages of qualitative research including data collection, content analysis, and comparative analysis. I followed these stages while conducting research, reporting findings, and making conclusions. As often done in qualitative research, I used three main methods to collect data which included observation, interviewing, and analyzing written documents (Patton, 2002). I also photographed and analyzed their paintings when the course was completed.

By using a system of checks and balances, through content analysis, I attempted to clarify anything I may have initially misinterpreted. To ensure

reliability of data I used comparative analysis and the method of triangulation when I collected and organized information. Triangulation compares three different methods and three different viewpoints to increase validity (Casey & Murphy, 2009). Triangulation helped ensure that I understood the participants' answers as they intended me to. For example, many times, because of the language barrier, I used the questionnaires as a guide to ask further questions in order to clarify answers. At times, when interviewing participants with limited English vocabulary, the language barrier made it difficult for the participants to express their answers verbally.

Contextual Background

Before presenting my study, I think it is important that the reader have an understanding of Job Corps and its student population. Job Corps is a unique program for unique students, funded by the Department of Labor. "Each year, it serves more than 60,000 new participants at a cost of about \$1.5 billion, which is more than 60 percent of all funds spent by the US Department of Labor (DOL) on youth training and employment services" (Schochet, Burghardt, & McConnell, 2008, p. 1664). Job Corps is the nation's largest free, residential academic and vocational training program for low income, at-risk youth, ages 16-24 (Schochet, et al., 2008). The Department of Labor funds Job Corps and spends taxpayer monies to provide training and education for students. Job Corps' goal for these students is to make them employable, taxpaying, and contributing members of society.

There are 124 Job Corps centers across the nation, including three centers in Puerto Rico and one in Washington D.C. The Phoenix Job Corps, where I conducted my research, is located in downtown Phoenix, Arizona. Students attending Job Corps receive free housing, food, transportation, clothing, medical coverage, dental coverage, counseling, and many other amenities. For a student to successfully complete the program, she or he must complete a vocational trade program, complete a General Education Development Test (G.E.D) or high school diploma, and have a documented job within six months of exiting the program. The vocational trades offered at Phoenix Job Corps are carpentry, cement masonry, painting, plastering, facilities maintenance, computer repair, retail, security, office administration, and medical assistant.

At the time of my research there were approximately 470 students attending Phoenix Job Corps. About half of these students lived in the dormitories on campus, the other half commuted to the center daily. Students can only stay enrolled in Job Corps for a maximum of two years, with an additional year allotted if they attend college. Many of the students that enter Job Corps have not acquired high reading and math skills. In some cases, when assessed, students have as low as first grade reading and math scores. Within this two year period, faculty goals are to get students performing at grade level, train them in a vocational area, and assist students in earning a high school diploma or G.E.D.

Participants consisted of underprivileged students from all walks of life. Many Job Corps students, who had attended school previously, had dropped out for one reason or another. Some students have children of their own. Other

students have dropped out to take care of sick or dying family members. Some told me stories of drugs, alcohol, gangs, and abuse that left them homeless and out of school. A portion of students at Phoenix Job Corps were refugees who were forced to flee their home countries because of war and destruction. All these students tended to have one thing in common, their pasts left them without a quality education or little to no job training, and by entering Job Corps they were trying to receive an education and learn job skills to better their lives.

Phoenix Job Corps also has a very strong international population, but unlike many other schools, most of the international students are at-risk refugees, coming from very poor and helpless situations. In the past five years at Job Corps, I have worked with students from all over the world including, Romania, Russia, Liberia, Somali, Afghanistan, Burma, Thailand, Togo, Ethiopia, Sudan, Congo, Marshall Islands, Iraq, Cuba, Iran, Tanzania, Egypt, Eretria, Kenya, China, Japan, Mexico, Taiwan, Philippines, Vietnam, and others. I have learned as much from my students as they have from me. I teach them academics and American ideals and they teach me about poverty, war, destruction, death, religion, resilience, and perseverance. Most of the international students came to the United States for two reasons; freedom and education.

Understanding the population of Job Corps is important to grasp the context of this study. Job Corps is a unique alternative educational facility with unique students. To fully understand this study, I feel it necessary for the reader to understand the program and what it entails. These students are in dire need of an education and job skills, and in my opinion, they are also in need of a quality art

education program. This study looks at a voluntary summer art program at Phoenix Job Corps with some of the types of individuals described above.

Context and Instructional Procedures

I offered a series of four art classes for students who were interested. It was a voluntary program offered over their summer break. Because students created a final project, which was a culmination of all four sessions, they were encouraged to attend all classes. The class focused on creating a painting as a personal narrative. Before beginning, I interviewed each student to get background information. In the interview I also wanted to gather information about how much experience each participant had with art.

I conducted the study over a four day period. Each lesson was to be an hour and a half long. The first lesson, day one, began with a questionnaire which is included in Appendix A. The purpose of this questionnaire was to gather information about participants' expectations of the course, experiences in art, and knowledge of art.

After I collected the questionnaires, I introduced narrative art to the participants. I defined narrative art to my participants as art that tells a story or account of events and experiences about themselves. In class we discussed narrative art and their understanding of the word narrative before I presented examples. I presented examples of artists who use(d) art as a personal narrative. I showed students work from various artists including Frida Kahlo, Faith Ringgold, Carmen Lomas Garza, Romare Bearden, Lee N. Smith III, and John Biggers. I told the participants a little about each artist and then showed them paintings by

these artists. We discussed the paintings' narrative aspects. In some cases students knew what the painting was about just by looking at the image, and in other cases, I explained the story behind a painting. For example, the students knew that the painting *The Suicide of Dorothy Hale*, by Frida Kahlo, was about a person taking her own life. The intention of this presentation was not only to show examples but to engage students with questions and discussions about narrative art, as well as attempt to create a safe environment where participants felt they could share openly. After the presentation, I gave an explanation of what students would be creating; a painting that expresses a personal narrative of their own life. After the presentation, participants began thinking about the narrative stories they would like to tell with their paintings. I asked the participants to brainstorm and sketch out some ideas on newsprint. To help facilitate thinking, I passed out a brainstorming worksheet, included in Appendix B, to help students think of ideas. Participants were given time to fill out the worksheet if they wanted, in English or their native language, whichever the participants thought would help them more. The first lesson ended and I encouraged students to come back the following day with finished ideas and sketches.

The second lesson, day two, began with a brief presentation on color, color mixing, paint, and painting techniques. I demonstrated these basic painting techniques to students and presented a short lesson on how to mix colors. On this day I posted a color wheel on the board as a reference for the participants. I also helped students mix their desired colors if they asked. The students then used the

remainder of the time to sketch their final ideas onto the canvas board.

Participants who completed their sketches began painting.

The third lesson, day three, was a full day of painting. Students spent their time painting and I circled around the room offering to help when participants asked. According to Hetland, Winner, Veenema, and Sheridan (2007) an art assignment should allow students, at any level, to build skills through exploration and reflection. After teaching students some basic drawing techniques they created a painting that narrated a personal experience.

On the fourth and final day of class, each student presented her or his own painting to the group and explained his or her personal narrative. I facilitated a lesson in which each participant had the opportunity to reflect on and share her or his painting to the group. Before beginning, I explained to the class some basic boundaries. This was not a critique so I instructed participants not to criticize any artwork. I encouraged participants to ask questions about each other's stories. I also made sure they understood that they did not have to share their narrative paintings if they did not feel comfortable doing so. Participants took a very long time discussing their individual artworks to the group. Participants asked many questions of each other. After participants shared their paintings, they filled out a final questionnaire, Appendix C.

Materials

The materials students used for their paintings included acrylic paint, canvas board (18" x 24"), brushes, pencils, paper, erasers, rulers, newsprint, and for some participants, printed images. These materials were used first for creating

a sketch on paper and second, creating their painting on a canvas board. I purchased and/or provided all the materials listed above. Job Corps provided the facilities and the projector. I used the projector and my personal computer for sharing examples of narrative artwork and also for searching images when students requested. Students were able to keep any work they created in class after I photographed and cataloged it for my research. Lastly, I used the PowerPoint (Appendix D) presentation I created to show participants. The presentation included narrative artists and their paintings. These artists included Frida Kahlo, Faith Ringgold, Carmen Lomas Garza, Romare Bearden, Lee N. Smith III, John Biggers, and Jacob Lawrence. I wanted to represent artists that were similar to my participants' ethnicities and genders. I used artists from different ethnicities, including Black, White, and Hispanic, and I chose both men and women artists.

Role of Researcher

As the researcher, my role was to collect and analyze data. I also conducted in-depth interviews with each participant before the class began. Part of my role was also to be the instructor for the after school voluntary art program. I wrote and taught all the lessons. I guided and instructed students throughout the four sessions. I also took thorough notes while students worked. Finally, I collected and organized all data to present my findings and conclusions.

Data Collection

To help answer my research questions, I conducted interviews and recorded the audio for later analysis. I created student questionnaires, took

detailed notes throughout the lessons and class discussions, and also analyzed student art work through a group share out session.

Before participants began, I individually interviewed each student and also had each person complete a questionnaire. The interviews took place before our first class met. When I interviewed each student individually, I wanted to find out as much about them as possible. This included asking for information regarding their previous education, their art experiences, school experiences, family life, and why they chose to participate in my art class. Interviews began with a few guiding questions. Students' answers led me to ask probing questions about the information they shared to get more in-depth information about them. I also took thorough notes before, during, and after each of the four lessons. I documented conversations, discussions, questions, and any other communications that occurred throughout each lesson. Upon Institutional Review Board (IRB) and student/parent/guardian approval, included in Appendix E, I then proceeded with my research.

Participants filled out questionnaires on the first day before class began. These questionnaires asked about their experiences with education and art education experiences, past and present (Appendix A). I wanted to see what participants thought of art and whether or not they believed art could be beneficial to their lives. I also conducted a post survey, included in Appendix C, with similar questions as well as questions about their experiences in the class.

Participants

In order to be considered for Job Corps students must meet specific criteria. According to Schochet et al. (2008)

Applicants must meet 11 criteria to be eligible for Job Corps: (1) be age 16 to 24; (2) be a legal US resident; (3) be economically disadvantaged (receiving welfare or food stamps or having income less than 70 percent of DOL's "lower living standards income level"); (4) live in an environment characterized by a disruptive home life, high crime rates, or limited job opportunities; (5) need additional education, training, or job skills; (6) be free of serious behavioral problems; (7) have a clean health history; (8) have an adequate child care plan (for those with children); (9) have registered with the Selective Service Board (if applicable); (10) have parental consent (for minors); and (11) be judged to have the capability and aspirations to participate in Job Corps (p. 1865).

All participants for this study met the eleven criteria listed above and were enrolled in Job Corps at the time my research was conducted. Participants were at varying education levels, especially in regards to reading and writing ability, which is important to consider when looking at questionnaire responses. I had a total of thirteen participants, seven females, and six males, who chose to participate. Some of the participants were refugees from other countries and others were American.

In general, students of Job Corps, and particularly my participants, have had many unpleasant experiences in their lives. While teaching, I needed to

consider the vulnerability of this student population. Many of the personal narratives students created could trigger memories of a difficult time in their lives. I tried to create a classroom environment where students felt safe and secure and free to express themselves and share their stories.

Setting

Phoenix Job Corps is located in downtown Phoenix. The facility consists of five different buildings. Three are for classes, one for administration, and one for student dormitories. I conducted the voluntary art class inside one of the Job Corps classrooms. Only students participating in the art lessons were present in the room. The classroom had twelve large tables, which allowed students to spread out when working. The front of the room had a projector screen, which I used to show a PowerPoint with examples of artists and their work (Appendix D). I conducted research during the students' summer break so the building was typically empty and free of interruptions. The lessons started on Monday, July 4th and concluded on Thursday July, 7th. The class began at 9:00 am and went to 10:30 am but on most days students stayed later to work.

Chapter 4

FINDINGS

While I was conducting this qualitative study my participants provided me with a vast array of information, into which I have delved deeply. The findings below describe the breakdown of my participants in regards to gender, age, ethnicity, refugee status, and country of origin. Following the demographics, I report my findings of the individual participants including their histories, past experiences with art, and the narrative nature of their paintings. I based my findings on interviews, questionnaires, observations, and the stories participants told about their art work.

Participant Demographics

There were thirteen participants in my study. All participants were over the age of eighteen, however their ages varied greatly. Table 1 shows the percentages of the varying ages of my participants. Their ages varied from eighteen to twenty-five years old. Some participants were born in the United States but others originally came from countries such as Somalia, Burma, Bhutan, Ethiopia, and Sudan. Table 2 displays the number of participants from each country as well as the percentage. All participants from any place other than the United States were students that left their home country and came to the United States as refugees. Phoenix Job Corps has a large international population. Eight of the participants were international students, and all were refugees from their home country. This was sixty two percent, a much larger percentage than reflected in the overall Job Corps student population. Table 3 displays the number

and percentages of refugee participants to United States participants. The participant race and ethnicity also varied. Participants' racial and ethnic data, based on the United States' standard classification categories (Federal Register, 1995), consisted of Asian or Pacific Islander, White not of Hispanic origin, Black not of Hispanic origin, and Hispanic. Table 4 displays the different ethnicities and races of my participants. Lastly, table 5 displays the gender break up of my participants. Out of my thirteen participants, seven were male and six were female.

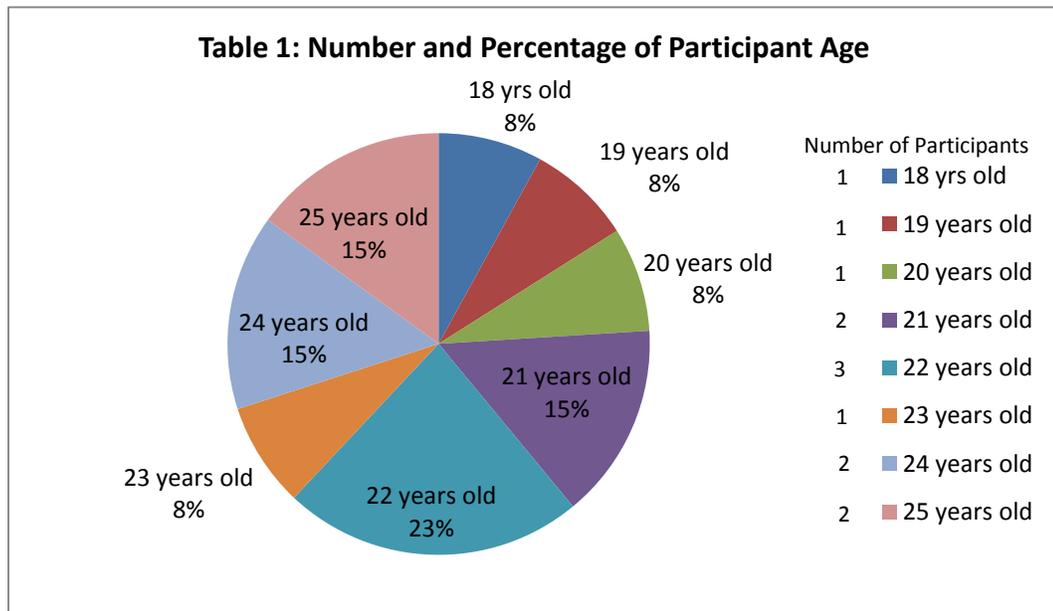


Table 2: Number and Percentage of Participant Country of Origin

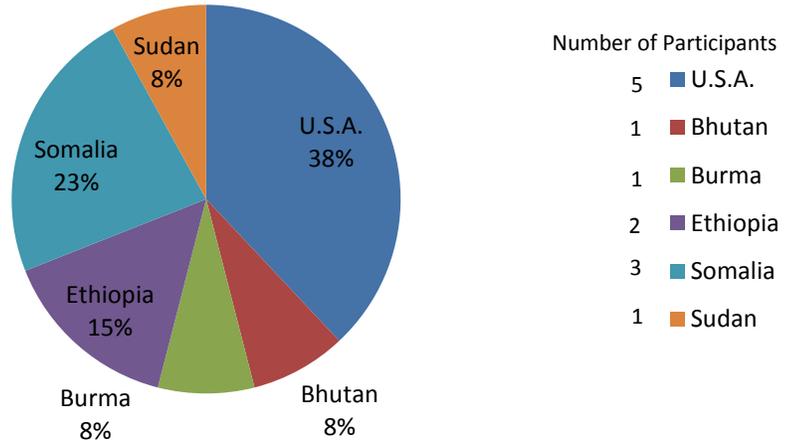


Table 3: Number and Percentage of Refugee Participants

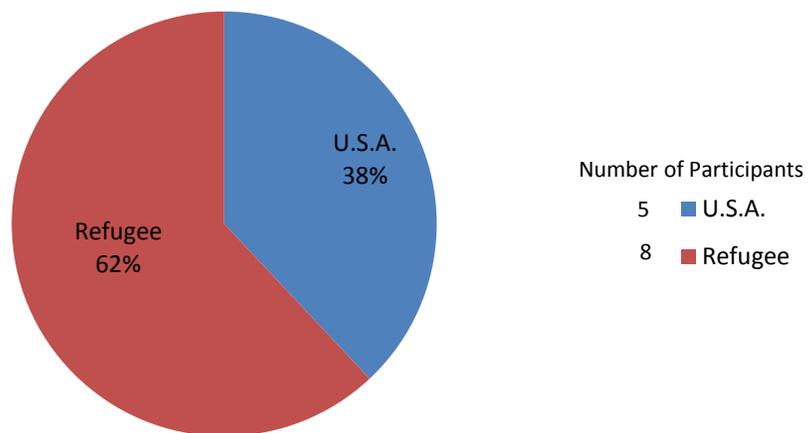


Table 4: Number and Percentage of Participant Race and Ethnicity

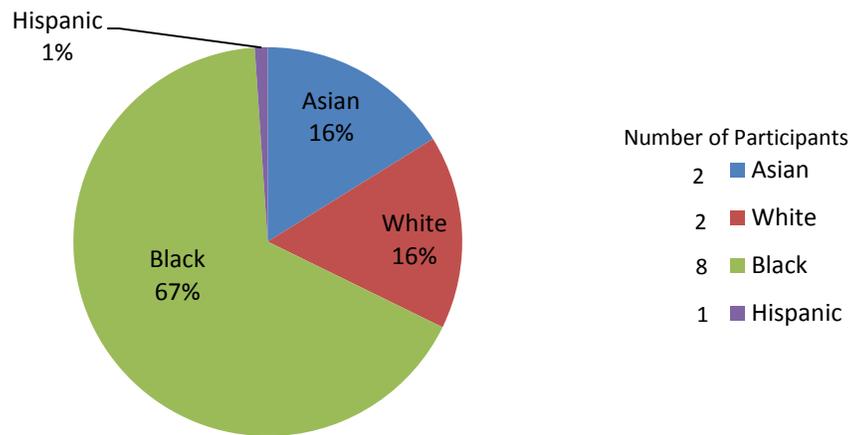
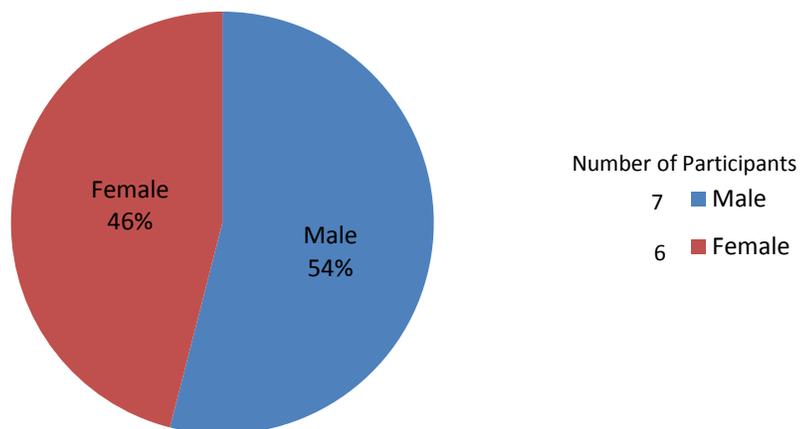


Table 5: Number and Percentage of Participant Gender



Individual Participants

As a qualitative researcher I made it a priority to get to know all of my participants as well as possible under the time constraints of this study. I interviewed all participants before the study began to learn about each individual, including their background, experiences with art, families, culture, education, and any other details they would share with me. As their teacher, I was also able to get to know each of them throughout the week. When participants discussed their narrative paintings I learned even more about each one of them. The following will give you the data I collected on each participant.

Paw

Paw is twenty four years old and comes from a country she calls Burma. Burma is more often referred to as Myanmar, since their independence in 1948, but the names are often used interchangeably (Dittmer, 2008). Because Paw and many of the other students at Job Corps refer to their country as Burma, I will also refer to it as Burma throughout my study. Although Paw comes from Burma, she does not consider herself Burmese, nor does she like it when people call her Burmese. She is Karen, coming from the state of Kayin. The Burmese are at war with ethnic minority groups such as the Karen people. According to Bowels (1998) the war in Burma is one of the longest running civil wars in the world. Because of the war and oppression of the Karen people, Paw was forced to leave her home and flee to a refugee camp called Nu Po, in bordering Thailand, when she was only eight years old. This was particularly difficult for Paw because her parents did not go with her. Her father died while she was very young, fighting in

the war, and her mother stayed behind. Paw also faced greater challenges because at the age of two, she contracted polio and lost all movement in her legs. Paw was, and still is, confined to a wheel chair.

Paw went to school in Burma for three years and then continued her education in the refugee camp. In the camp, she went to a small school separated by grades. Paw entered the fourth grade when she moved to Nu Po and she continued to go to school until she received a high school diploma from Thailand. She preferred the schools in the camp to the schools in Burma because many more school supplies were available; everything the students needed was provided to them. When she moved to the United States, Paw decided to come to Job Corps to further her education, improve her English, and to receive help finding a job. Paw described her overall experiences with school as ‘good’.

Paw has both formal and informal experiences in art. “I’m not good for drawing but I love to do that and then when my idea come I want to draw everything but I’m not good for that but I have a lot of ideas but I cannot draw them” (personal communication, July 1, 2011). I took this to mean that she does not think she can draw well but she enjoys it but also struggles to put her ideas on paper. When I asked her about previous formal experience with art, she recalled an art class that was offered at her school in Thailand; it was an elective drawing class. Paw took drawing for one year. I asked Paw what she recalled about that year. She remembered having homework in her drawing class and practicing her drawing at home. When asked about her art teacher, she said he was great and that he drew very well. She specifically remembered a picture her art teacher drew of

his daughter and tried to describe it to me. I wondered if she still had any of her old drawings from that class, so I asked her. She said that she did not have any but thinks her mom may still have some back home in Burma. I asked Paw if she had ever been to a museum and she said she had not but she likes to look at art online. When asked, “What is art,” she said “art is when people drawing. We know they are talking about a story.” (personal communication, July 1, 2011). I learned all these details about Paw before class even began. Throughout the class and through her painting I learned even more.

The following is a summary of what Paw explained to the class when describing her painting (Figure 1). Her painting depicts her father’s rice farm in Burma, before the Burmese forced her family to leave. She described the farm as a paradise having many green trees and beautiful mountains. Paw explained to the class that her mother and father would work on this farm every day. The ducks were her mother’s and the hut was a place her father could get out of the hot sun when he worked in the fields. Next to the hut is a bucket where her father would wash his feet before he entered the hut. She said that it represented a very happy time in her life. Looking back, I assume that because the farm was in Burma, and she moved away from Burma when she was two, that most of her memories of that farm come from stories and pictures other family members have shared with her, although I did not have the opportunity to ask her if this was true.

Based on the answers from the questionnaires I asked when the course was over, Paw said that her favorite part of the entire experience was painting and looking at other student artwork. When looking at her completed painting, Paw

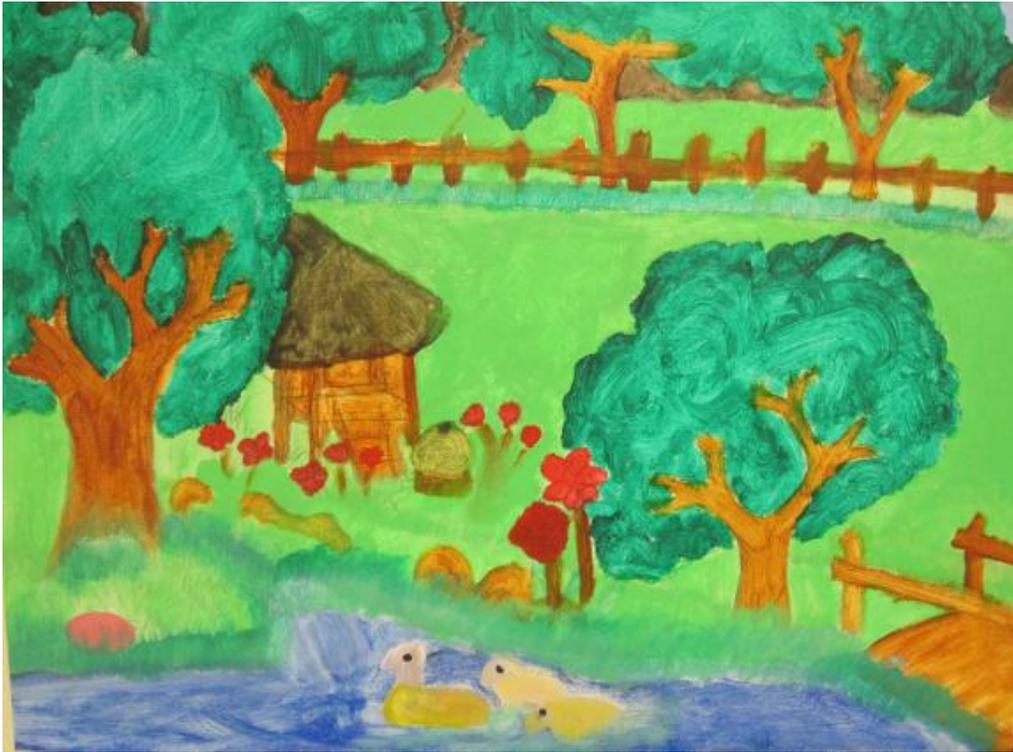


Figure 1: Paw's Narrative Painting

said that it makes her miss her family and it reminds her of Burma. She also said that she liked that it is her own true story and she also enjoyed talking about her painting because she wants to share her story with others.

When conducting my research, Paw stayed as late as she could to work on her painting; many days I stayed later than planned for students who wanted more time. Paw is very talkative and by spending a lot of time with her, I learned a lot more about her than some of my other participants. She appeared to be very proud of her completed painting. When I saw Paw months later, I asked her if she still had her painting and she told me she did, and planned to hang it in her new apartment as soon as she moved.

Bontu

Bontu, another participant in this study, is a member of the Oromo Tribe, Ethiopia's largest ethnic group (Strandberg, 2001). The Oromo people fled Ethiopia because they feared political persecution (Cultural Survival Quarterly, 2010). Bontu is a refugee from Ethiopia. She lived in Ethiopia until she was seventeen years old. Because the Ethiopian government oppressed her tribe and the situation in Ethiopia worsened, her family was in danger and moved to Kenya as refugees. Bontu lived in a refugee camp in Kenya for two years and then moved to the United States as soon the US government gave her the opportunity. She enrolled in Job Corps one year after moving to the United States.

While living in Ethiopia, Bontu went to school and completed the seventh grade. When she moved to the refugee camp in Kenya, she was enrolled in the fourth grade because there was an education gap between countries. She quit going to school nine months later because of a medical problem and stayed home to help her mother with her siblings. When she moved to the United States, she enrolled in Job Corps to get an education and learn English. Bontu had no experience with art previous to the summer art course I taught. None of her schools, in neither Ethiopia nor Kenya, offered art classes. Bontu was very quiet and gave shorter answers than the more talkative Paw, and as a result I did not get to know her as well. Her quiet demeanor could be for various reasons, but I think Bontu is a shy person, and her English vocabulary is limited making it harder for her to articulate.

Bontu's painting (Figure 2), as she described it to the other participants, depicts her family's farm in Ethiopia before they had to leave their home. When sketching, it was very important for her to get all the animals represented accurately. Bontu was very concerned with how each animal looked. She printed out pictures from the internet of each animal and traced them onto her sketch paper; from there she transferred them to her canvas board.

After many attempts at drawing the people, she asked to take her canvas board home with her to work on it. She returned the next day with all the people drawn and when I told her how good they looked she told me that she received help from her roommate. While painting, she was very concerned with the colors she had to work with and asked for help mixing colors to try and make the



Figure 2: Bontu's Narrative Painting

animals, sky, and grass as realistic as possible. I helped her mix colors. She painted the sheep three different times trying to get the color to her liking. When she was finished with her painting, she said that the part she liked least was how the sheep looked in the end. She then asked for a marker to outline the animals, house, and people. She told the class a little about the characters in her picture. The woman milking the cow represents her mother, the shepherd, her brother, and the two girls, her sister and herself. She told me the men, in her culture, were always in charge of watching the animals. She described the building in the middle as her hut. Her favorite part about her painting was the way her hut turned out when she completed. When asked what emotion she felt looking at her painting, she replied, “happy” (personal communications, July 1, 2011). Bontu was very shy and only shared a limited amount of information about her life and her painting, but she stated in the post questionnaire that she enjoyed sharing her artwork and story with the class, though she did not explain why.

Dawit

Dawit is from Ethiopia. He is also Bontu’s older brother. He and his sister have a very similar background. He was born in Ethiopia and went to school there. School in Ethiopia was free. When Dawit’s family fled to Kenya as refugees, he was eighteen years old. In Kenya, he went to school for one year, but was not able to afford school after that. He told me that in Kenya students had to pay to go to school. Dawit lived in Kenya for two years and then moved to the United States with his family. Dawit’s English is extremely limited. Although he is older, he deferred to his younger sister on many occasions to translate. The

struggle with this was that Bontu's English was also limited. Their limited English vocabulary made it difficult for both of them to tell their narrative stories to the class. I wonder if some of the information Dawit gave me was lost in the translation between him and Bontu and then from Bontu to me.

Dawit gave me very short answers when I interviewed him. I tried to ask more questions to get him talking but every answer he gave was short and direct. On the questionnaires he left many questions blank and then asked his sister for help with the ones he did answer. Afterwards when comparing their answers on the questionnaires, they were almost identical. I believe Dawit was looking at Bontu's answers because she completed first. When Dawit spoke about his painting (Figure 3) to the class he was very brief. Like his sister, he painted his



Figure 3: Dawit's Narrative Painting

farm in Ethiopia. He told the class in very broken English that he would take care of the cows and would sleep outside with them under the trees. The hut is his family's from Ethiopia; it looks similar in style to the hut Bontu painted. They explained to me that the house they lived in is called a hut and it did not have rooms like we are accustomed to in the United States. To the right of his house, Dawit painted a cow under a tree. He explained that he would sleep under the tree with the cows at night to keep watch.

Maria

Maria is a United States (U.S.) student, of Hispanic descent, studying computers and taking high school classes at Phoenix Job Corps. Maria dropped out of high school at sixteen years old during her sophomore year. She left school to work full time after her mother kicked her out of the house. Maria told me during the interview that her relationship with her mother was and still is not good. Maria worked a full time job for a couple years and decided she should try and go back to school. Maria has always been interested in the arts. She wanted to go to an art school in Phoenix, called Metro Arts, but found out she would have to repeat her entire sophomore year and was discouraged. She later then decided to go to Glendale Community College, to work on passing her G.E.D. and after taking some classes realized she was so behind that she needed to go back to high school to receive the education she missed. She found out about Job Corps at age 21, enrolled, passed her G.E.D. and was working on receiving her high school diploma. Her main reason for attending Job Corps was to get an education. Maria described her educational experiences as, "Overall, pretty good." (personal

communication, July 4, 2011). She told me that she has a learning disability so it has always been harder for her to learn but despite that she still enjoyed school.

Maria told me that she enjoys art. She took advantage of any art opportunities offered in school. Both her elementary school and middle school had art classes. In high school she took drawing and ceramics and still has some of the work she produced in those classes. She remembered winning competitions and being successful in art. She still enjoys making art. She is interested in blowing glass and took private lessons and also took a class at the Mesa Arts Center. She has purchased many of her own supplies to blow glass on her own, but says it's very expensive and she has to buy a piece at a time because she cannot afford it all at once. She intends to make her own glasswork and sell it when she has all the necessary equipment.

Before the painting class began, Maria described art as “an expression of emotions put into an image” (personal communication, July 4, 2011). When asked why she chose to participate in the painting course she responded, “For me art is my life, and when I heard [about] an opportunity to paint, I jumped on it” (personal communication, July 4, 2011). Maria was one of the few participants who had prior painting experience before and it is apparent in her work. Maria is of Mexican descent and she portrays this in her painting. Her painting, shown in Figure 4, is of two beans and as explained on her questionnaire she chose beans because, “people call Mexicans beaners.” She laughed and was amused by her own idea. I thought it was clever that she used satire in her painting. Maria used a

term, usually intended for derogatory purposes, in her painting, to depict a very serious topic, immigration, which was also very personal.

The following is a summary of what Maria told the class her painting expressed. One bean represents her father and the other, her father's friend. The bean representing her father is wearing a Mexican sombrero. He was born in Mexico. He was born in Mexico. Maria's painting depicts a story her father told her about crossing the Mexico-America boarder. Her father illegally crossed the border to get to the United States with a friend of his when he was younger. After making their way across the border, into Arizona, there was still much desert to cross. Her father's friend nearly died of dehydration and her father carried him to safety. Both ended up in America and both survived their horrendous trek through

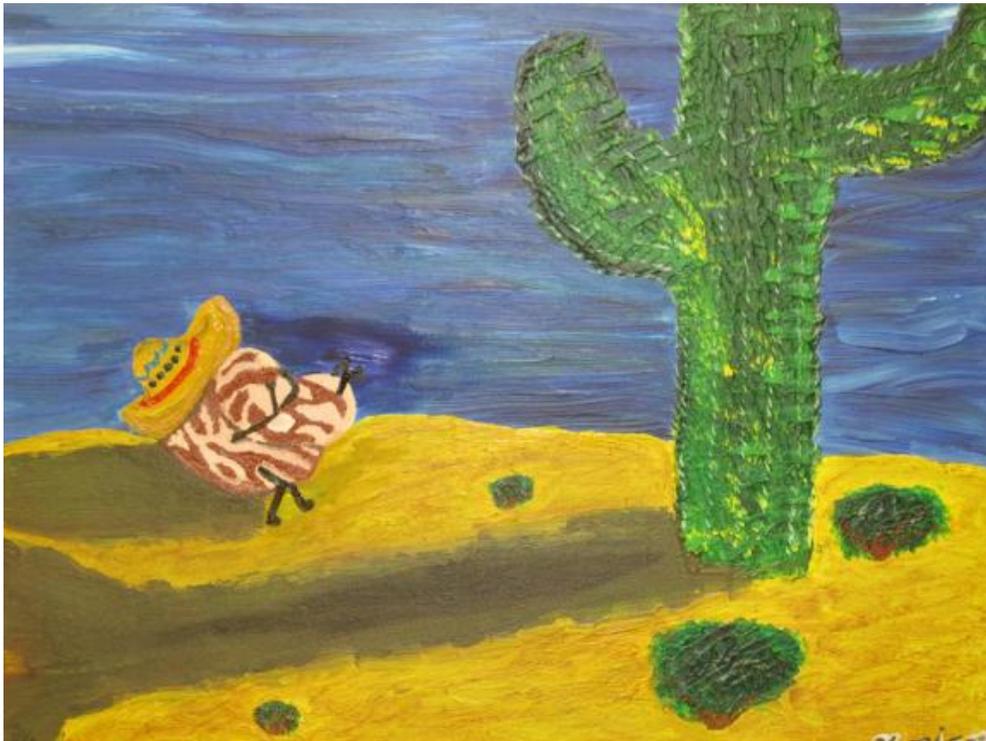


Figure 4: Maria's Narrative Painting

the desert. When asked what feelings come to mind when looking at her painting she answered, “Funny and sad”. If her father had not made it past the border, he would have never met Maria’s mother and Maria would not exist. This is why she feels her painting is a story not just about her father, but about her as well.

Nadifa

Nadifa is from Somalia but only lived there until she was six years old. She left Somalia because of the civil war between Islamist militants and African peacekeeping forces, which began in 1991. Nadifa and her family moved to Kenya as refugees for safety. Nadifa first lived in Dedaab refugee camp and later moved to Kakuma refugee camp. Nadifa attended schools in both camps. She attended her first school ever in Dedaab refugee camp; she did not attend school in Somalia because it was too dangerous. Nadifa completed her eighth year in school before she moved to the United States. When she came to the United States she was eighteen years old and despite the gap in her education, enrolled in high school. She dropped out after two years, telling me that the commute to school was too far from where she was living. After she dropped out, it would be another two years before enrolling in Job Corps to finish her education. Nadifa enjoyed and still does enjoy school. In Kenya, Nadifa did not have art classes of any kind but she did take a drawing class during her first year in school in the United States. Nadifa told me she enjoyed her drawing class.



Figure 5: Nadifa's Narrative Painting

Nadifa was also very quiet and did not share a lot of information about her narrative painting, in comparison to other participants. Therefore the information I have about her narrative is limited. The house she painted (Figure 5) was actually a combination of two houses she combined together; one from Kakuma and one from Dedaab, the refugee camps where Nadifa grew up. She says she remembers the houses well because she lived in them for so long. Nadifa said that the camps were too hot, and the schools and food were bad, but despite all of this she said that she feels happy when she looks at her painting. Although I did not have a chance to ask her, I believe this is because her life was better in Kenya than in Somalia. I think she associates the camps with her family, and not all of her family was able to move to the United States with her.

Amina

Amina, like Nadifa, is Somalian. Amina was born in a refugee camp in Kenya. Her family moved away from Somalia to escape the war before she was born. However, two years later, her family decided to return to Somalia because they wanted to be near their extended family. She lived in Somalia for about six years. She had not attended any school while living in Somalia because it was too dangerous. When Amina was twelve, her immediate family moved to the United States. School was difficult for Amina. She was never educated in her first language and in the States she was trying to learn English as well as the content. Amina made it through middle school but dropped out of high school. She said part of this was due to fighting. As her teacher at Job Corps, I have seen how abrasive her personality can be to others and have witnessed verbal altercations between her and other students.

The language barrier with Amina was difficult. Amina struggles with reading and writing, and the language barrier between her and me made it difficult for me to understand her. After reading her answers on the questionnaire, I believe that she did not fully understand my questions. For example, when asked if she was willing to share her artwork with the class she answered, "Pictures." Clearly she did not understand what I was asking her.

Amina and Nadifa were friends from school and sat next to each other in my art class. During the classes, they often talked only to each other. On the last day of class, when students were sharing their narrative paintings to the group, they continued to talk and not pay attention. I even had to politely ask them to be



Figure 6: Amina's Narrative Painting

quiet, on multiple occasions, while other students were presenting. Amina's painting, (Figure 6) turned out very much like Nadifa's painting. On the first day of class, Amina's original idea was to paint a roller coaster. She did not explain why. The second day, she looked at Nadifa's sketch and decided she also wanted to paint a house. When I asked her what she was painting, she said it was her house at the refugee camp, however according to what Amina told me earlier, she only lived in the refugee camp for the two years after she was born. Nadifa was always one step ahead of Amina with her painting and Amina would mimic Nadifa's painting. They ended up looking very similar. Based on my observations, Amina tried to create what Nadifa created.

Although Amina came every day, I do not think she enjoyed the experience as much as the other students. She talked a lot while others were

speaking. She also came in late two of the four days. She chose not to share her painting with the class nor did she write about or explain it on the questionnaire. I was very surprised by this because Amina is very outgoing and is extremely talkative. She also asked me to throw her painting away, instead I asked her if I could keep it.

Sarah

Sarah is an American student who moved a lot as a child. She was born in California, but also lived in Colorado, Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, and Arizona. She has lived in Arizona for about nine years now. She did not tell me why she moved so often but said it was because of different circumstances. She described her experiences in school as that of the “perpetual new kid.” Sarah was one of the most talkative participants. She graduated high school in Arizona and attended community college but stopped when she could no longer afford it. When she heard about Job Corps from a family friend, she decided to enroll and learn a trade with hopes of continuing college after her trade completion.

Sarah had art class in elementary school and says she has very fond memories of her art class, however high school was different. Sarah had one art class in high school but said that it was really boring. She said the instructor did not take an active role in teaching and in Sarah’s opinion, the teacher spent all her time with the talented students and ignored the others. Sarah felt as if she did not learn anything in that class. Outside of school, Sarah is very interested in costume design and sewing, which she described as her informal experience with art. Her

sewing machine is very important to her; she has even given it a name, Elizabeth. She also enjoys looking at art online and studying the history behind art.

Sarah's painting was very symbolic to her. She described her painting (Figure 7) as her coming of age. The bird in the cage represents her and she is caught in a violent tornado. On the right side of the tornado is Oz, she describes this as a surreal fairyland. On the left is Arizona, which she describes as dark, and foreboding but strangely beautiful. She says her painting represents her transition from a child to a woman. This was a chaotic, dark, and frightening time, but at the same time was also promising, lovely, and exciting. She said the feelings that come to mind when looking at her painting are nostalgia, sadness (to leave Oz), excitement (to become a woman) and pride. She was surprised at how well her



Figure 7: Sarah's Narrative Painting

painting turned out because she was not sure how well she would do. Sarah thinks it is important for others to see her painting because they will hopefully learn that there is more to her than they see on the outside. After the experience, Sarah says she enjoyed the experience so much that she plans on pursuing painting as a hobby in her spare time.

Steven

Steven was born in Arizona and has lived in Arizona his whole life. Growing up, he loved school and always found it easy. However, he had horrible attendance in high school and was kicked out because of this. Steven attributes his poor attendance to his boredom with school. He found high school to be easy, he wasn't challenged enough, so he stopped going. He had the same problem at two other schools he transferred to, but finally completed at a charter school and received his high school diploma.

From what he can remember, he liked his art class. Steven is married, and his wife really enjoys art. Steven and his wife have gone to the Phoenix Art Museum twice and he enjoyed it both times. He also remembers going to the art museum with school when he was younger. Steven described art as something that brings out thoughts or emotions.

Steven's narrative painting (Figure 8) was very symbolic. When he described his painting to the class, he started at the bottom left corner. The dark colors and snake represent his dark past, although he did not elaborate on his past. Moving left in his painting, the black turns into red which represents fire. The red then turns to yellow which represents his bright future. He explained to the class



Figure 8: Steven's Narrative Painting

that he is the character in the middle and he is on fire. His hands are raised because he is looking towards the rose for power. The rose symbolizes his wife as well as the sun. He calls his wife Rosie. He went on to tell us that he intentionally made the fire and the rose the same color, which he mixed himself. He thinks his painting is important for others to see because he hopes it will inspire people to find someone who will offer them power like his wife Rosie does for him. His wife gave him the strength to turn his life around for the better, leaving his dark past behind him. It was interesting watching Steven paint because it was obvious he was thinking a lot about color. He spent a lot of time, and went through a lot of paint, trying to get his colors right. He was most happy with the way the rose turned out. He also told me later that he planned to hang his painting up in his apartment.

Mohamed

Mohamed is from a small village in Sudan near the city of Gadarif. Mohamed does not know exactly how old he really is because he does not have a birth certificate and in his village families do not celebrate birthdays. In the village where Mohamed grew up, there were no schools. His family never stayed in one place for very long. They moved about every ten days or so following their animals wherever they went. Their animals were their livelihood.

At the time Mohamed was living in Sudan there was a civil war between the North and South. The South wanted its independence from the North for many reasons, but Mohamed highlighted the main reason being oil. According to *Petroleum Intelligence Weekly* (2008, April 29), Southern Sudan accounts for seventy percent of oil production and exploration for the once united country of Sudan. This was a huge factor for voters, in a 2011 election, when deciding whether Southern and Northern Sudan should become separate states. On July 9, 2011, long after Mohamed had left his country, Southern Sudan declared independence becoming the fifty-fourth state in Africa (CBC News, 2011).

Because of the violence, Mohamed left his village and moved to Egypt. In Egypt he lived in an apartment with five other people. School was free in Egypt, but Mohamed could not afford the bus money to get to school; the school was very far away. Mohamed has not had a lot of experience with art because he was a cattle herder most of his life. However, a friend of his, in Egypt, made a living painting people. He would paint near the border of Egypt and Jerusalem when

people were crossing back and forth. Mohamed said his friend was a great painter. Mohamed had the opportunity to watch him many times. Mohamed applied with the United Nations to come to the United States and after two years and four months, he was able to move to America. When Mohamed first moved to the United States, he attended a school where he did most of the work on a computer. He commuted two hours, each way, every day, by bus for two years. Mohamed then got really ill and had to drop out of school. Mohamed did not elaborate on his illness but he is physically handicapped, and uses a cane to walk. I thought he may possibly have been referring to his handicap. When his health improved, a friend of his told him about Phoenix Job Corps and he enrolled.

When I asked Mohamed why he chose to participate in the art class his response was very interesting. He answered, “Art is very important. It might be my career in my future. I have a lot of sad and good memories, I might paint them in the future if I learn how to”. (personal communication, July 1, 2011).

Mohamed went to the Phoenix Art Museum with a friend of his shortly after he moved to the United States. He did not know what art was at that time. He did not like it at first because it did not make sense to him, but now that he understands more about art, he looks forward to going back again someday. When I asked Mohamed to define art as he understands it, he told me that, “art can be emotional. It can be sad and good at the same time.”



Figure 9: Mohamed's Narrative Painting

Mohamed really seemed to enjoy the painting class. He painted a cow (Figure 9) because his family members were cattle herders and farmers. He said that the ground in Africa is brown and that is why it is brown in his painting. Mohamed said it was very common for his cows to be black and white. He told the class he put the sun there because Africa is really hot and ended by telling us cows are very important to his people. His painting also depicts one of the many benefits his family received from cows, milk. The aspect he liked best about his painting was the person and said that it represented someone back home. The aspect he liked least about his painting was how the sun turned out. Mohamed had a really difficult time trying to draw the person from behind. He knew that the face should not be showing if the person was sitting facing the cow, but he really struggled with figuring it out. Overall, Mohamed was very proud of his painting

when he completed it. He also said that he enjoyed talking about his painting because he wants people to know about his culture in Sudan.

Ali

Like Nadifa and Amina, Ali is from Somalia. Ali lived in Somalia for six years before he moved to a refugee camp in Kenya, called Dagahaley, because of the violence in Somalia. He moved with his whole family and lived in the camp for twelve years. When Ali lived in Somalia he did not attend school. He told me that everyone had to stay home and his parents thought it was too dangerous to send him to school. When he moved to Kenya he completed first through eighth grade and it was free for him.

When Ali moved to United States he came and stayed with his uncle. Ali was immediately placed into a class for immigrant refugees to help him adjust to American culture and learn English. Then Ali began high school. Three months into the school year his uncle moved to Seattle and Ali chose to stay in Phoenix. Ali was lonely and did not have a job. He did not have the means to support himself so he had to choose, get a job or go to school. He chose work because he needed money to survive. Ali later enrolled in an adult education program and tried earning his G.E.D. He came close to completing the program when he heard about Job Corps. He decided he would rather be at Job Corps because he could receive a High School diploma, rather than a G.E.D. When I asked Ali why he decided to participate in the summer art program, he responded, "Because it's good to always have more experiences. Art is part of our life. It's good to know" (personal communication, July 1, 2011).

Ali has had some past experiences with art. In Kenya, he took a course about African culture and they studied some African art. He took the course in second, third, and fourth grade and even learned to draw a little. Ali's uncle also paints and went to art school. His uncle has even done some projects for an organization that works with and helps refugees. Ali had the opportunity to help his uncle with some paintings while living in Kenya. He told me he enjoyed the experience.

Ali was really happy with the way his painting (Figure 10) turned out. He explained to the class that his painting was a beach that his friend's family would bring him to occasionally. When he lived in Kenya, he could only leave the refugee camp with a pass on holiday weekends. His friend's family (who were not refugees) would pick Ali up and drive twelve hours to the beach. They would



Figure 10: Ali's Narrative Painting

usually stay for about four days. Ali told us he remembers it as a paradise. He would always look forward to the beach. The sky was always blue and the sun would shine. He could see beautiful mountains, palm trees, and lots of birds. He remembers making sand castles with his friend. He also painted a Somalian flag, in the bottom right corner, to represent where he is from. He said when looking at his painting he thinks of his friend and all the trips they made together. His favorite part about his painting is the sun, sky, and clouds. Ali also said that he enjoyed talking about his painting and listening to others talk about theirs because of the story they tell.

Justin

Justin was born and raised in Phoenix, Arizona. Justin loved school but admits that there were some classes he disliked. Justin graduated high school and planned to go to college. Unfortunately, he could not afford it, so he decided to attend Job Corps to get some job training skills in computers. Justin has had art classes in school before. His elementary school offered art, and they would have class about once a week. He also took a drawing and painting class in high school but failed the class. He told me that part of the reason he thinks he failed is because the other students in class misbehaved so much. The teacher did not have enough time to help him because she was always dealing with the misbehaving students. He remembers two trips he took to the art museum in elementary school but has not been back since. Justin described art as, “an expression of people’s emotions and what they are going through.” In class, he was looking forward to seeing other student’s expressions on paper.

Justin's painting (Figure 11) represents the death of his father and all the people his father left behind. His father is depicted by the rocket ship. The people he left behind are all depicted as stars. The biggest star represents him. The purple monster represents his mother, whom he said he does not like at all. He referred to her as a monster and then decided to depict her that way. When Justin looks at his own painting he said the words pain and beauty come to mind. The emotions he feels when looking at it are hurt, sadness, and love.

Justin liked his finished painting because he felt that he got his feeling out onto the canvas. His favorite part about his painting was the purple monster, but not because of how it looked. He painted the monster three different times, each time covering it up with black paint and repainting it. Justin said it was his



Figure 11: Justin's Narrative Painting

favorite part because it shows how he can get through things without giving up. He did not think his painting was important for others to see because he did it for himself. Then he contradicted himself and said he enjoyed sharing his narrative because other students can see what he represents.

William

William is originally from Omaha, Nebraska. He moved to Phoenix after his freshman year in high school. He was excited but it was also really hard to leave his friends behind. Generally, William enjoyed school. He described his overall experiences in school as positive. When William graduated high school, his two choices were junior college or Job Corps. He knew he wanted to do something with computers and since Job Corps had a computers program and it was quicker, he decided to go to Job Corps.

William enjoys art. In elementary school, he had art class every day and in high school he took one year of drawing and painting and said he loved it and learned a lot. He has been to an art museum twice in his life. Both times were over ten years ago. The first trip was a school field trip and second time he went with his family. He told me his family also enjoys art, but none of them make art on a regular basis. William used to draw often but finds he does not have the patience for it any longer, and one of the things he hoped to learn in the class was patience. William defined art as “an expression of emotions, whether it be in music, photography, drawing, etc. Art can be expressed in many ways.”

William was the only student to make his narrative painting (Figure 12) a representative self-portrait. He was the only student to turn his canvas board

vertically and he was also the only student who did not have enough time to complete his painting. William was the most descriptive in his explanation of his painting. Below is the way William described his painting on the post questionnaire...

First we will start with the background on the left which shows tears to represent pain. On the right where I didn't [finish] shows a tree showing



Figure 12: William's Narrative Painting

that you can grow from your past (roots) and become a better person than life has chosen for you. Now on my self-portrait is a clock on my face to represent past generations. Then there is a gunshot in the middle of [my] head then coins blasting from it showing that I paid for others' mistakes.

The aspect he liked most about his painting was the story behind it and the part he liked least was that he did not finish it. He also said that he enjoyed talking to others about his painting. I emailed William a few months later to see if he ever finished his painting, but I never heard back from him.

Ganesh

Ganesh is Bhutanese. Bhutan is a country located in South Asia, with many political problems. These problems go back hundreds of years but more recently, in 1989, King Singhe Wangchuk, of Bhutan, issued a decree, called Driglam Namzha, that makes it mandatory for everyone, regardless of their religion, ethnicity, or culture, to behave the way the ruling Drukpas do (Adhikari, 2006). This included regulating the language people spoke, the clothes they wore, and how they behaved in public. When people protested, they were tortured and jailed. "In 1990, more than 100,000 Nepali-speaking Bhutanese, comprising almost one-third of the country's population of nearly half a million, were forcefully evicted from the country on the pretext that they were illegal immigrants" (Adhikari, 2006). Because of this Ganesh, his family, and many others were forced to leave Bhutan and live in refugee camps in Nepal. Ganesh was only five at the time he left Bhutan. The way Ganesh described it to me was that his country did not want him there anymore.

Ganesh lived in Goldhap refugee camp in Jhapa, Nepal for eighteen years before he was able to move to the United States. He never went to school in Bhutan, he was too young, but he did go to school at the refugee camp. He finished tenth grade but could not pass the required exams to move on to the next grade. Ganesh told me he always enjoyed school but found it difficult. He had never taken an art class in school before. However, his brother did teach him a little about drawing. His brother learned how to draw using a grid over a picture and then creating the same grid on paper. Ganesh called this graph art and said when he was younger his brother showed him how to draw using this method.

Ganesh's painting (Figure 13) tells the story of his eighteen years in Goldhap refugee camp. He said in camp that the huts were very close together and it was very dangerous to leave. He labeled the hut he lived in, section C2 hut #71, and a close up of that can be seen in Figure 14. All the huts were numbered; similar to addresses on a street, and this was Ganesh's address while living in the camp. Ganesh also labeled a sign on the tree with the name of the refugee camp (Figure 15). Ganesh described his narrative painting as "the story of 1990, Bhutanese refugee camp in Nepal. This is the living of poor, [un]sanitary, huts." Ganesh said his favorite part of the entire experience was discussion and looking at artwork. He also said he enjoyed telling others about his painting because they seemed interested and wanted to know more about the refugee camp where he lived. Ganesh was difficult for some students to understand but he was very talkative and students asked questions and asked for clarification when needed.



Figure 13: Ganesh's Narrative Painting

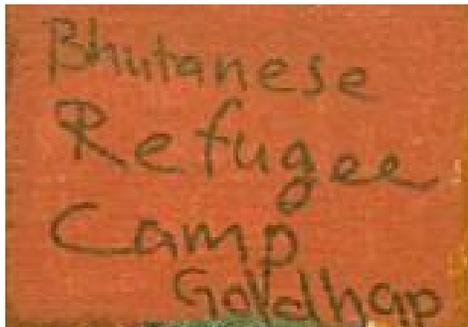


Figure 15: Close Up of Sign in Ganesh's Painting



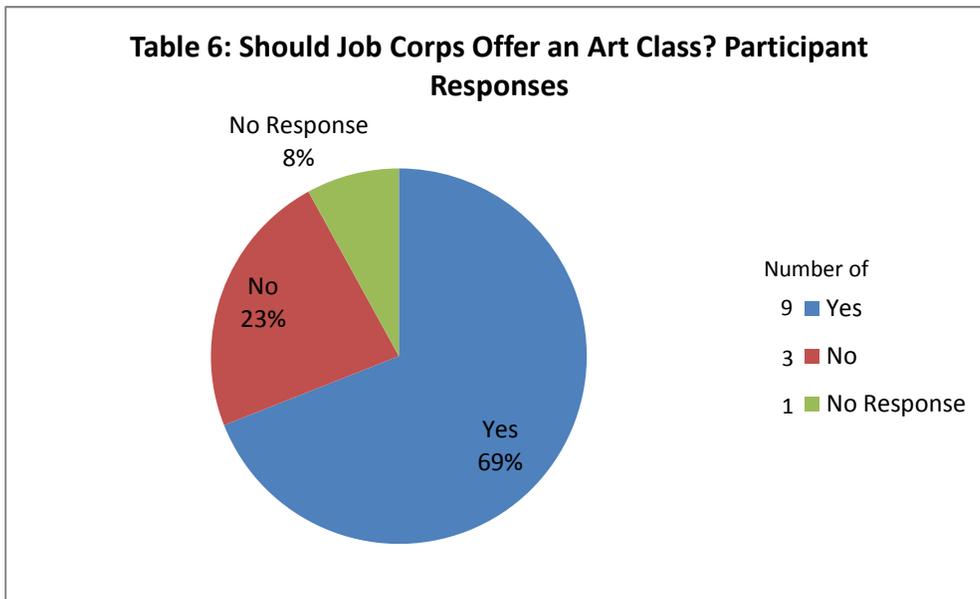
Figure 14: Close Up of Hut Number in Ganesh's Narrative Painting

Research Questions Revisited

I based the answers to my first research question on the answers to the students' post-questionnaires. The question asked participants whether they thought Job Corps should offer an art class to students and why. Nine of the thirteen participants thought that Job Corps should offer an elective art class. Three did not think that an art class should be taught at Job Corps and one answer was blank. Table 6 depicts this information in a pie chart. Some of the responses as to why participants thought Job Corps should teach an art class were:

- “Some students really love to go to art”
- “Instead of writing on desks and walls you can write on paper”
- “... it will help grades, behavior, and bring students together”
- “It’s good to have a variety”
- “art is a[n] excellent way to release emotions that will take the focus off of your work”
- “...art is important for the soul and helps some people sustain healthier emotional levels”
- “...everyone could find these kinds of skills useful even in other applications”

Of the nine participants who thought Job Corps should offer an art class, six of them thought it should be offered during regular school hours, two thought it should be offered after school, and one participant said, “Both.”



One of the three participants who said he did not think art should be offered simply wrote, “No” without an explanation. Another student said, “Not.” The last student to say no may have misunderstood the question. The student answered the first part of the question, (Do you think Job Corps should offer an art class to all students?), “I don’t think Job Corps should have art class. This is my first time to see art class be Job Corps.” She answered the following question (If you answered yes, do you think it should be during the regular school day or after school?), “I think this is only school day. Not after school and because is good be arts.” Unfortunately the last action I had participants do before leaving was fill out these questionnaires and I did not give myself the opportunity to talk to this participant about her answers.

What personal narrative themes do at-risk students, attending a voluntary art class at Job Corps, portray in their art work? This was my second research question. For this study I define a theme as the overall idea and meaning of the

painting. I determined the ideas and meanings in the paintings by what the participants told me in the questionnaires and/or verbally, not by my own interpretation. I coded themes that participants depicted in their paintings and looked for patterns and repetition. I discovered that some participants chose to represent one significant event that occurred at a specific time in their lives. Other participants' themes seemed to represent a longer time period in their lives. A narrative painting generally will be about past experiences, but another common theme I found was the idea of a future. Lastly, I found family was an overall common theme in many of the paintings. Table 7 charts the themes and number of paintings that included those themes. I include paintings in multiple categories if applicable.

Only three of the thirteen personal narrative paintings were specific to one particular event that occurred at a specific time. I was surprised by this because many of the examples (Appendix D) I showed the participants were event specific, however I had not intentionally planned it that way. I also made the assumption that personal narratives generally depict a particular event, and therefore my participants would do the same. I gave the participants an example on the brainstorming worksheet (Appendix B) of a memory to a specific event in my life. The paintings that were time and/or event specific included Justin's

Theme	Specific Memory or Event	Lengthier Time Period	Present and/or Future	Family
Number of Paintings	3	10	3	6
Percentage of Paintings	23%	77%	23%	46%

painting (Figure 11) about his father's death, Maria's painting (Figure 4) about her father illegally crossing the United States boarder, and Ali's painting (Figure 10) about his vacation to the beach. The other participant narratives had a lengthier time line attached to their narratives. For example, Paw's (Figure 1), Bontu's (Figure 2), Dawit's (Figure 3), Nadifa's (Figure5), Amina's (Figure 6), and Ganesh's paintings (Figure13) included images of their previous homes. These participants lived in these homes for several years and therefore depicted a longer time period in their lives. Sarah's narrative (Figure7) was also representative of a longer time period in her life, and in her words represented her transition from a child to a woman. William's painting (Figure12) included past generations before him and his not so predestined future. Lastly, Steven's painting (Figure8) was a narrative of his struggles in life and finding his strength through his wife.

Three of my participants depicted parts of their present and/or future lives in their paintings. I did not even consider the possibility that participants would do that. I assumed personal narrative paintings were of the past; however my participants showed me otherwise. Steven's painting (Figure8), from left to right, included his past and his future. He said that the yellow on the right side of the painting represents his bright future. William's painting (Figure12) explains how he wanted to grow from his past to become a better person. He used the word "become" which implies he is thinking about his future and how he will be a better person over time. Finally, Sarah's painting (Figure7) portrays the changes she personally went through to get to who she is now, present day.

Table 8: Refugee and U.S. Participant Themes Comparison

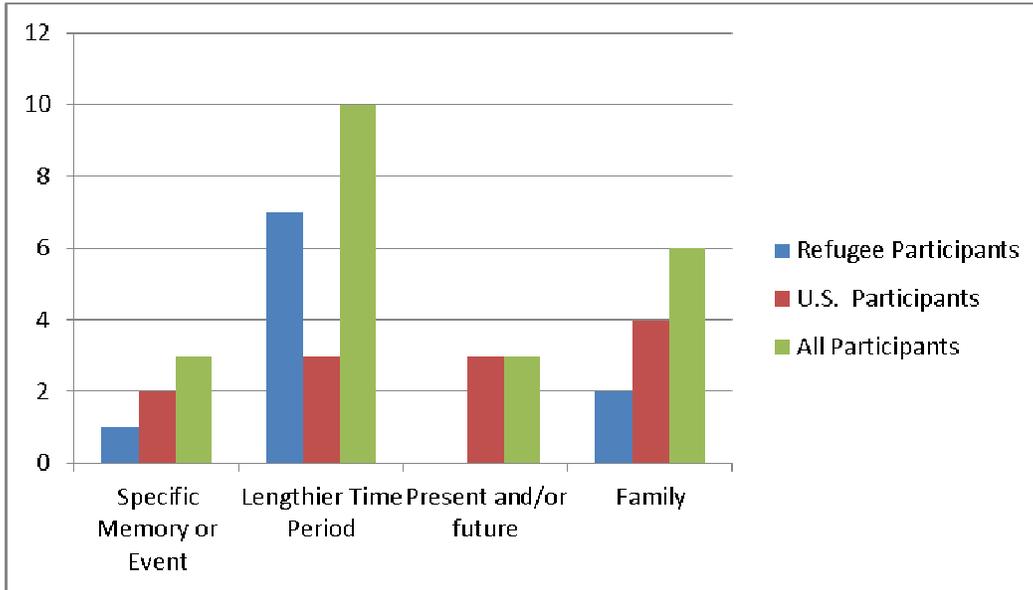


Table 8 graphs the themes in the narrative paintings but divides them into three groups: refugee participants, U.S. participants, and total participants. I am very interested in the differences between the U.S. participants and the refugee participants. I was surprised that none of the refugee participants depicted any part of their present lives because in the initial interviews most expressed how grateful they were to come to the United States. It was also very interesting that more refugee participants' narrative paintings portrayed a longer period of their lives as opposed to one specific event.

The second part of this research question was to determine how participants represented subject matter in their paintings. I define subject matter as the actual objects depicted in their paintings. There were a lot of different subjects represented in the thirteen paintings, however there were five subjects that I saw reoccurring in many of them. I determined this by charting and coding the subject matter of the paintings to find repetition in the subject matter represented. The

Subject Matter	Animals	Landscape	House/hut	People
number of paintings	6	11	6	5
percentage of paintings	46%	85%	46%	38%

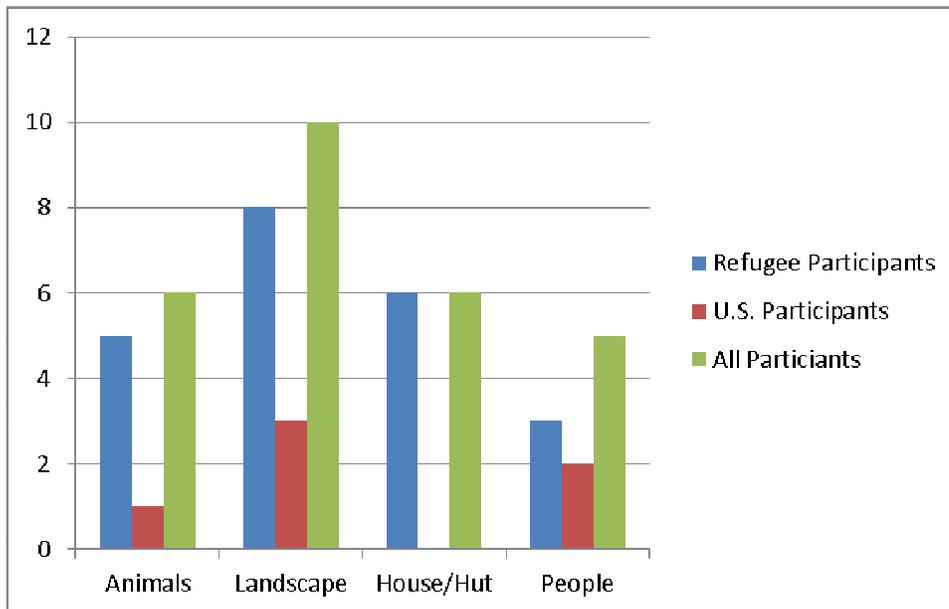
four most common subjects I saw in the paintings were animals, specific common subjects I saw in the paintings were animals, specific landscapes, houses/huts, and people. Table 9 shows the subject matter and the percentage of paintings that included that subject matter. Some paintings included more than one of these subjects. For example, Sarah’s painting had a bird, which would fall under the animal category, and she also depicted a specific landscape, one being Oz and the other Arizona. Sarah’s painting is included in the count for each of the two categories. Narratives that were specific to a landscape represented seventy seven percent of the paintings. I was surprised that this number was not higher because when telling a story, whether it is verbal or through art, the landscape in which a story takes place is usually relevant. Houses or huts were the second most common subject matter in participant paintings. Participants depicted a house or hut in forty six percent of the paintings.

When I broke the paintings into two groups, refugee participant paintings and U.S. participant paintings, I also noticed some interesting patterns. Table 10 compares the subject matter in the table above but divides the information into three groups: refugee participants, U.S. participants, and all participants. Although many of the refugee students have lived in the United States for at least a year,

none of them chose to paint a narrative of a time in their life in the U.S. Many painted images of other countries including three in Kenya, one in Nepal, one in Burma, two in Ethiopia, one in Sudan. The U.S. painting that included landscape was Maria's (Figure4), which is in the desert on the border of the United States and Mexico. The other large difference was the number of paintings that included animals. Sixty-three percent of refugee participants used animals in their paintings and only five percent of the U.S. participants did. This could be because many of the refugees lived in remote rural areas of their home countries.

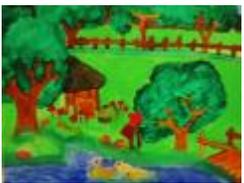
The third question I asked before my research began was, what student art work do at-risk students, attending a voluntary art class at Job Corps, like most and why? Participants liked Paw's painting best. Out of my thirteen participants, four said that Paw's painting (Figure1) was their favorite. One participant liked Paw's painting because "it was amazing," another because "her colors and

Table 10: Refugee and U.S. Participant Subject Matter Comparison



explanation was amazing” and another because, “it is very beautiful art.” Two participants said they liked Ali’s painting (Figure10) best. Maria, who has a small background of formal art education, liked Ali’s painting best, “because of the true story” the student told about it. It was very interesting that she evaluated her favorite work of art based on the story behind the piece, rather than the skill of the painter. One participant said she liked Maria’s and Steven’s painting (Figure8) best because there was lots of talent and meaning behind both. Another participant said she liked Sarah’s painting (Figure7) best because it is, “telling her true story,” similarly to what Maria said about Paw’s painting. When asked what student artwork he liked the most, Steven said he could not choose because he liked different paintings for different reasons, some for how they looked while he liked others because they showed great emotion. Participants focused their like for one another’s paintings on the stories told, the subject matter in the painting, and the skill level of the individual. Table 11 shows an image of a participant’s painting and the comments, as written on the post questionnaires (Appendix C) by other participants, on why they liked the painting best.

The fourth and final research question I asked was, do at-risk students, attending a voluntary art class at Job Corps, feel their personal narrative painting is important for others to see? Nine participants thought it was important for others to see their artwork. Two thought it was not important and one participant misunderstood the question and did not say whether she thought it was important for others to see her artwork. Table 12 shows this data in number of participants

Participant Paintings	Comments about Why Participants Liked the Painting Best			
	It was amazing	Because [it] is beautiful art	Because I like land and pictures	Colors and explanation was amazing
	Because of the story	Because it is about [the] seashore		
	Lots of talent and meaning			
	Lots of talent and meaning			
	It is telling her true story			
Did Not Specify a Participant's Painting they Liked Best	Yes I liked some of them because they are nice paintings	Everybody's	Sorry but I can't choose because there are different ones that are great for different reasons. Some looked nice while others had great emotion	I don't like student paintings

as well as the percentage of participants who said yes and no. One participant said that it was not important for others to see his work because, “it was more for me and not anyone else.” Another wrote, “No” but did not explain why. The third student who said that it was not important may have misunderstood the questions and wrote, “No is not very important to see other people.” She possibly thought I was asking her if it was important for her to see other participants’ work. Some reasons why students thought it was important for others to see their work said,

- “To see that I’m more than what they can see. My life was tough, but I’m better now”
- “Yes because painting can tell the story”
- “Yes it’s very important for me and to show other people my drawing”
- “Yes...because it is the story of refugee camp”

Is your artwork important for others to see?	Yes	No	No answer/or undecipherable
Number of Participants	9	3	1
Percentage of participants	69%	23%	8%

In summary, I found that the participants in this study do want an art class offered at their school. I also found that all but one participant was more than willing to share their story about their narrative painting with the other participants. Common themes in the participants’ paintings included family, a specific memory or event, and/or their present and future lives. The common subject matter in their paintings was animals, houses or huts, and/or people. I also

discovered a difference in subject matter and themes in the refugee students' paintings when compared to the United States participants' paintings. The findings also suggest that participants judged other work based on meaning more so than aesthetics.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

With a limited number of participants and the qualitative data collected, the experiences of these thirteen United States and Refugee participants are not representative of the experiences other students may have in a similar study. My conclusions do not generalize what would occur in similar studies and I cannot apply my results to a general population because the participants of this study were unique and specific to Phoenix Job Corps, the place where I conducted my research.

I originally thought that my research would give me insight as to how this summer art course affected the participants. Looking back, if I wanted this information, I would need to ask different questions and conduct interviews months after the program ended and continue to follow up with each of my participants. I did find out some valuable information with the questions I asked. What I found most interesting was discovering what themes and subject matter participants chose for their narrative paintings, information on participants' past, present, and future, and lastly what participants thought of themselves and in some cases, their families.

Researching themes and subject matter in paintings led me to an unexpected finding about the use of symbolism in narrative paintings. U.S. participants used symbolism in their paintings more than the refugee participants did in their paintings. All five of the American participants had a symbolic representation of some sort in their paintings. For example, in Justin's painting

(Figure 11), the spaceship represents his father and the monster his mother. In Maria's painting (Figure 4), the beans represent her father and her father's friend. In Steven's painting the rose is a symbol for his wife, in William's painting (Figure 12), the clock symbolizes the past, and in Sarah's painting (Figure 7), the bird symbolizes her. There was little symbolism used in the refugee paintings. The refugee paintings were more literal in their narrative and in most cases depicted their home before coming to the United States. Further research and interviews of my participants would tell me why this is. Based on the information I have, I would attribute this to language. Students whose first language is English will have a deeper understanding of narrative art and its definition. The refugee students all struggled, more than I anticipated, with understanding the questions I asked of them. Therefore, I would assume that many struggled with an understanding of the assignment and understanding narrative art. There is a great possibility that one student began painting her or his home country and all other participants followed suit.

Implications for Further Research

A future researcher must realize the limitations I had when conducting research and take these limitations into consideration when conducting a similar study. My study was limited to four days, conducting a similar study, a researcher may want to consider making her or his study longer. Beginning my study, I did not anticipate having so many refugee participants and this greatly impacted the direction my study took as well as my findings. It was not until I started looking at my coded data, that I saw a difference between the two groups. A future

researcher may want to consider this and ask different questions. I found that I continually compared refugee participants to U.S. participants, although originally, I did not even anticipate there being a big difference in the two groups. For future research, it would be helpful to translate questions into participants' first languages. If a researcher were to conduct a similar study, she or he should allow for another interview after the course ends. I feel the most valuable information I received from the participants was through the interview process. A lot of my unanswered questions about their paintings and why they chose the subject matter they did could be answered in follow up interviews. A similar study could discuss the artwork with the student one on one after class, with no time constraints. A translator would also be beneficial in these interviews to make sure I correctly interpret participant answers.

In a similar study, the researcher may want to locate all participants a year or two after the art course and find out what participants did with their paintings. It would also be interesting to study participants' reflections, after a significant amount of time has passed, on the art course and their work. This idea arose because I ran into one of my participants months after the study. She told me she had moved and her painting is hanging in her new apartment. This led me to believe that she was proud of her artwork and wanted other people to see her painting which is what my research also concluded, that the majority of participants found it important for others to see their work.

Looking back, and ahead, if another researcher were to conduct a similar study, I would suggest not using written questionnaires at all, especially if the

population is limited in their English abilities. I feel that much valuable information and findings were lost through translations and misinterpretations of incomprehensible questions. If a researcher were to ask more questions in an interview, I feel that the researcher would be more likely to tell if participants understand the questions or not. This would also give the researcher the opportunity to clarify participant's answers if the answer given did not make sense.

Further qualitative research is needed in schools without art classes. Also on what impact adding a summer art class would have on these schools and their students on a long term scale. Further research is needed on art programs for refugee students. In regards to the literature that is currently available, there are some similarities and ideas to consider for future research. Wallace DiGarbo and Hill (2006) who conducted an art based intervention program with at-risk students found that the program helped students with cooperative planning and meaningful engagement with staff and students. I feel that there were similar experiences, specifically in regards to meaningful engagement, within the group of participants in my study. All but one participant was comfortable with sharing their narrative stories, good and bad, with the other participants and me. Participants felt comfortable enough with each other to ask questions and elaborate on answers. To provide evidence of this, in a similar study, the researcher, would need to ask participants about their engagements with others. Wallace DiGardo and Hill's (2006) study lasted six weeks, as opposed to my four days. I would suggest a

similar study be longer if possible. I think more time would lead to more information and greater findings.

Also looking back to Rotas's (2004) article about refugee art, moving forward, a researcher would need to ask refugee participants about their personal feelings towards being considered a refugee artist. All my refugee participants painted a past home, but are these paintings about their experiences as refugees or about something different? Ganesh's painting of the refugee camp definitely was about refugee life; the other's may or may not have been. A future study could ask participants such questions. Lastly, Hafeli's (2002) study about determining origins of student themes in artwork had some similar results to this study. Both found some participants represented ideas through symbolism and culture.

Contribution to Art Education

This study may be beneficial to the field of art education. This study allowed the participants to be personally invested in their artwork. This motivated students intrinsically, which is the key to engaging students in genuine inquiry and creation (Hetland et al., 2007). Art educators may want to consider incorporating the exploration and reflection process in their art lessons. In some cases, school districts and principals may want art classes to take a more cross curricular approach. A narrative art lesson may help with this. When participants in this study, specifically refugees, shared their narratives, the participants were actively engaged by asking questions. By asking questions and listening to the stories the participants told, they learned not only about each other but also about geography, history, politics, and cultures around the world. This study also found

that students liked artwork because of the meaning behind a painting. If an art educator wants students to move away from looking at art only for its technical skill, a narrative art lesson may be a resolution to this. Another way this study may benefit art educators is by providing an example of an art lesson for classrooms with high ELL populations and the limitations I had because of the number ELL students. If art educators want their students to fully understand the lessons' objectives, it is necessary that teachers' lessons incorporate more group and discussion activities. Some of my participants may have misinterpreted parts of my lesson, but by allowing discussion and getting to know each participant I was able to clarify many misunderstandings. As an art educator myself, this study showed me the value in letting students discuss their work with each other more often. Students can learn quite a bit from each other. Lastly, this study will help inform art educators about voluntary art programs.

I believe participants in this study had many stories to share and the ones I saw through their narrative paintings are just a glimpse into their past and present experiences. There is so much to learn from these students. I hope I helped them put a voice to their pasts through art. I hope I taught these students to use art as a voice, and I truly hope that this study will continue to help other researchers interested in art education and the implementation of summer and after school art courses.

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APPENDIX A

PRE PARTICIPATION QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is art?

2. Can you name some types of art?

3. Do you have a favorite piece of art work? Explain (include any information you know about it and describe)

4. Do you think Job Corps should offer an art class to all students? Why or why not?

a) If you answered yes, do you think it should be during the regular school day or after school hours? Why?

5. Why did you choose to participate in the art class?

6. Do you have any formal experience in art? (Examples include art classes, art lessons, field trips to art museums, etc.)

7. Do you have any informal experience in art? (Examples include creating art on your own, attending art museums without a school group, reading or learning about art in your spare time, etc.)

8. In this class we will be creating artwork. Are you willing to show your artwork to the class and talk about it?

9. What do you want or hope to learn in this art class?

10. Additional Comments:

APPENDIX B
BRAINSTORMING WORKSHEET

Narrative Art Brainstorming Worksheet

Narrative Story Idea	Why is this important to you?	Key words or images that come to mind when you think about this story
<p>Example: As a kid, my sister and I would always play 'running bases' with the other neighborhood kids</p>	<p>I remember my friends, having no worries, being a kid and feeling safe in my neighborhood. I remember my friend Doug when he was alive and healthy. It was a happy memory in my life.</p>	<p>Hanover Park, neighborhood, Allen, Paul, Doug, Tracy, bases, street, plastic bat, ball, curb, cats, my house, yellow, innocence, fun,</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">1</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">2</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>		

APPENDIX C
POST PARTICIPATION QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is art?

2. Can you name some types of art?

3. Do you have a favorite piece of art work? Explain (include any information you know about it and describe)

4. Do you think Job Corps should offer an art class to all students? Why or why not?

a) If you answered yes, do you think it should be during the regular school day or after school hours?

5. What was your favorite part of this entire experience? (for example: discussion, painting, looking at artwork, etc.) Please explain in detail.

11. What do you like most about your painting? Why?

12. What do you like least about your painting? Why?

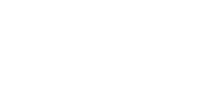
13. Do you think your painting is important for others to see? Why or why not?

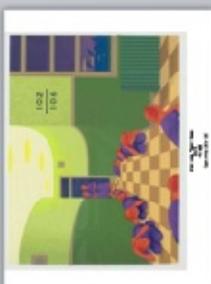
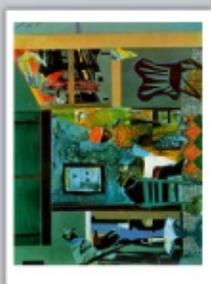
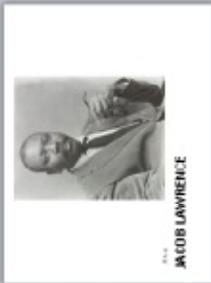
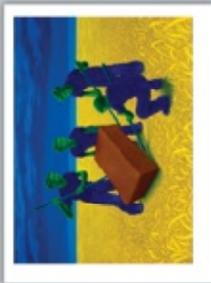
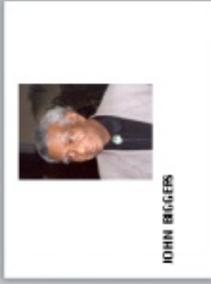
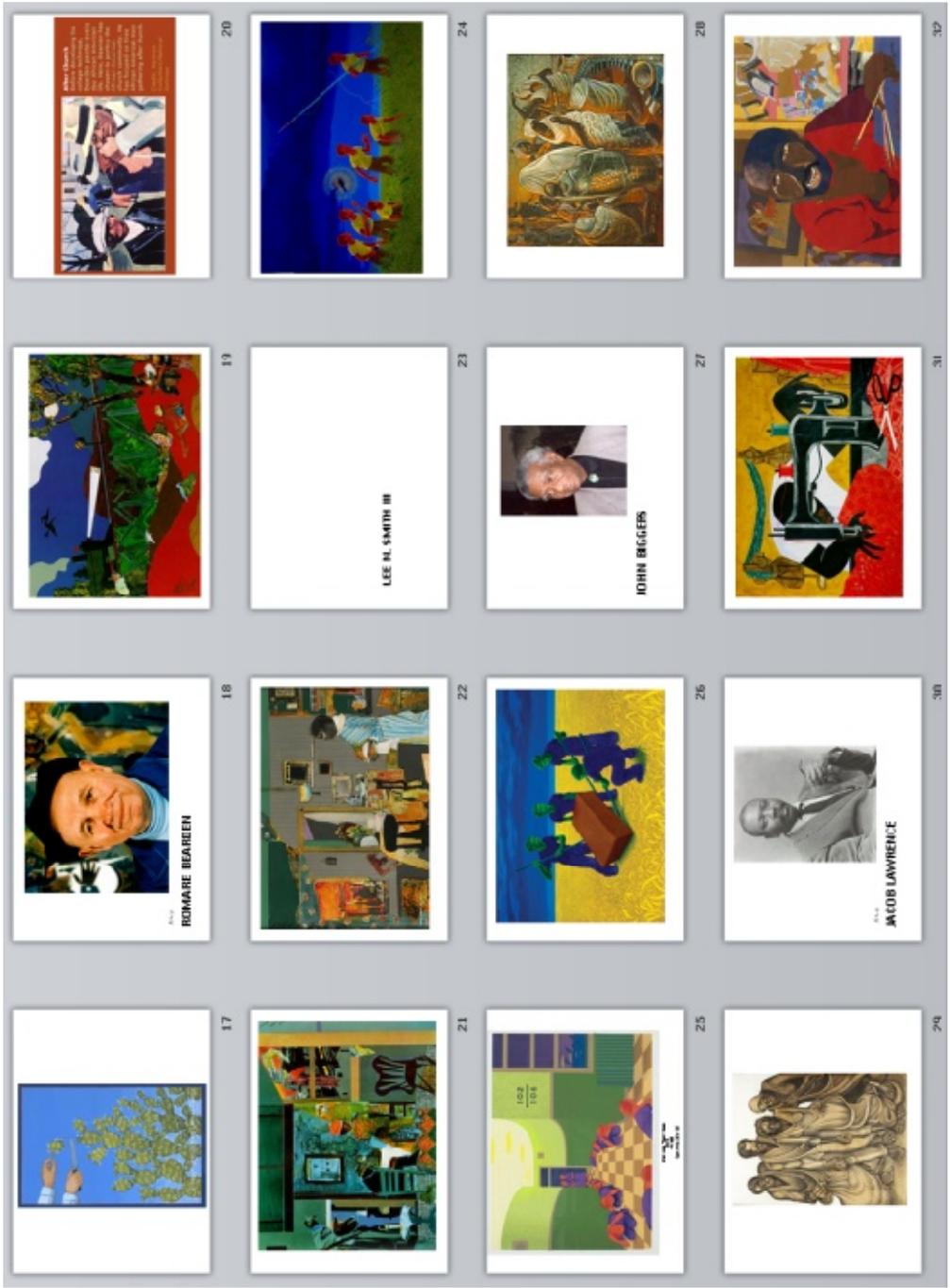
14. What student painting did you like best and why?

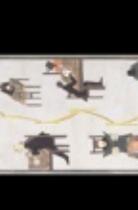
15. Additional Comments:

APPENDIX D

NARRATIVE ART POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

<p>Narrative Art</p>		 <p>Photo: CARMEN LOMAS GARZA</p>		
				
 <p>Photo: FRIDA KAHLO</p>	 <p>Photo: RUTH BINGGOLD</p>			
				
				
				
				



<p>33</p>  <p>The First Wave of the Great Migration (1915-1918) part 1 The African American community in Atlanta, Georgia, was a vibrant and growing one.</p> <p>Book 1, Lesson 1</p>	<p>34</p> <p>THE GREAT MIGRATION</p> <p>A GREAT MIGRATION OF AFRICAN AMERICANS</p>  <p>The Great Migration was a major movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North, Midwest, and West. It was driven by a combination of factors, including the search for better economic opportunities, escape from racial violence, and the desire for political freedom.</p> <p>Book 1, Lesson 1</p>	<p>35</p>  <p>The First Wave of the Great Migration (1915-1918) part 1 In the early 1900s, many African Americans fled the South to find better economic opportunities and escape racial violence.</p> <p>Book 1, Lesson 1</p>	<p>36</p>  <p>The First Wave of the Great Migration (1915-1918) part 1 The Great Migration was a major movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North, Midwest, and West.</p> <p>Book 1, Lesson 1</p>
<p>37</p>  <p>The First Wave of the Great Migration (1915-1918) part 1 The African American community in Atlanta, Georgia, was a vibrant and growing one.</p> <p>Book 1, Lesson 1</p>	<p>38</p>  <p>The First Wave of the Great Migration (1915-1918) part 1 The Great Migration was a major movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North, Midwest, and West.</p> <p>Book 1, Lesson 1</p>	<p>39</p>  <p>The First Wave of the Great Migration (1915-1918) part 1 The Great Migration was a major movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North, Midwest, and West.</p> <p>Book 1, Lesson 1</p>	<p>40</p>  <p>The First Wave of the Great Migration (1915-1918) part 1 The Great Migration was a major movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North, Midwest, and West.</p> <p>Book 1, Lesson 1</p>
<p>41</p>  <p>The First Wave of the Great Migration (1915-1918) part 1 The Great Migration was a major movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North, Midwest, and West.</p> <p>Book 1, Lesson 1</p>	<p>42</p>  <p>The First Wave of the Great Migration (1915-1918) part 1 The Great Migration was a major movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North, Midwest, and West.</p> <p>Book 1, Lesson 1</p>	<p>43</p>  <p>The First Wave of the Great Migration (1915-1918) part 1 The Great Migration was a major movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North, Midwest, and West.</p> <p>Book 1, Lesson 1</p>	<p>44</p>  <p>The First Wave of the Great Migration (1915-1918) part 1 The Great Migration was a major movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North, Midwest, and West.</p> <p>Book 1, Lesson 1</p>
<p>45</p>  <p>The First Wave of the Great Migration (1915-1918) part 1 The Great Migration was a major movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North, Midwest, and West.</p> <p>Book 1, Lesson 1</p>	<p>46</p>  <p>The First Wave of the Great Migration (1915-1918) part 1 The Great Migration was a major movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North, Midwest, and West.</p> <p>Book 1, Lesson 1</p>	<p>47</p>  <p>The First Wave of the Great Migration (1915-1918) part 1 The Great Migration was a major movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North, Midwest, and West.</p> <p>Book 1, Lesson 1</p>	<p>48</p>  <p>The First Wave of the Great Migration (1915-1918) part 1 The Great Migration was a major movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North, Midwest, and West.</p> <p>Book 1, Lesson 1</p>



The River Wives of the Great Migration (1914-1915) - part IV
"Which part of the work, with its children and women, went toward their parents and their home?"
Jacob Lawrence

49



The River Wives of the Great Migration (1914-1915) - part IV
"Like in the North through some challenges, but the women, when had thought for the home. The children were able to go to school, and their parents part of the families to see."
Jacob Lawrence

50



The River Wives of the Great Migration (1914-1915) - part IV
"And the women kept coming."
Jacob Lawrence

51

APPENDIX E
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

Office of Research Integrity and Assurance

To: Bernard Young
ART

fu From: Mark Roosa, Chair *SR*
Soc Beh IRB

Date: 07/01/2011

Committee Action: **Expedited Approval**

Approval Date: 07/01/2011

Review Type: Expedited, F7

IRB Protocol #: 1106006547

Study Title: A Voluntary Art Program and it's Affects on At-Risk Student at Job Corps

Expiration Date: 06/30/2012

The above-referenced protocol was approved following expedited review by the Institutional Review Board.

It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to obtain review and continued approval before the expiration date. You may not continue any research activity beyond the expiration date without approval by the Institutional Review Board.

Adverse Reactions: If any untoward incidents or severe reactions should develop as a result of this study, you are required to notify the Soc Beh IRB immediately. If necessary a member of the IRB will be assigned to look into the matter. If the problem is serious, approval may be withdrawn pending IRB review.

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of this study, such as the procedures, the consent forms, or the investigators, please communicate your requested changes to the Soc Beh IRB. The new procedure is not to be initiated until the IRB approval has been given.

Please retain a copy of this letter with your approved protocol.