



## A Message from the Editorial Team

Welcome to the Summer 2023 edition of Queen's Faculty of Education newsletter! In this issue, we feature the research of three of our new faculty members, Dr. Tiina Kukkonen, Dr. Nenad Radakovic and Dr. Patty Douglas. Dr. Kukkonen discusses strategies for nurturing creative development in K-12 arts education, Dr. Radakovic investigates how educators can encourage transdisciplinary literacy and Dr. Douglas explains how story-making can help neuro-diverse students thrive in the classroom. We hope you enjoy learning about their work!

Sincerely, Paisley Worthington, Roxolana Marmash, Uvini Colonne Appuhamilage and Ikeoluwapo Baruwa

### How can teachers nurture student creativity in the visual arts classroom?

**Dr. Tiina Kukkonen, Ph.D., M.A., B.F.A.**

#### Why is this important?

- Creative development is typically implied in K-12 visual arts education, but curriculum documents often fail to provide clear guidance on how to teach and evaluate creative skills.

#### What did this research uncover?

- The K-12 visual art teachers we interviewed used a variety of creativity-nurturing teaching strategies (e.g., connecting to student interests, offering enabling project parameters, encouraging peer-to-peer modeling, and adopting flexible plans).
- The strategies align with the core components of Theresa Amabile's *Componential Theory of Creativity* (i.e., task motivation, domain-specific skills, and creativity-relevant processes).

#### Why does this matter?

- Amabile's theory offers a practical conceptualization that demonstrates how teachers can support student creativity.
- Visual art teachers can recognize and intentionally leverage specific teaching strategies, as identified in this study, to nurture creative development by focusing on the areas of task motivation, domain-specific skills, and creativity-relevant processes.

Kukkonen, T., & Bolden, B. (2022). Nurturing creativity in the visual arts classroom: Understanding teacher strategies through Amabile's componential theory. *Canadian Review of Art Education*, 49(1), 46-62.

### How can educators shift their focus from content to transdisciplinary literacies?

**Dr. Nenad Radakovic, Ph.D., OCT**

#### Why is this important?

- Many, if not all, societal problems are *wicked*; they are complex and require multi-layered and transdisciplinary approaches. In contrast, most contemporary literacy approaches are disciplinary
- The research explores how elementary pre-service teachers (PSTs) perceive and incorporate transdisciplinary literacies when planning a mathematics and music lesson

#### What did this research uncover?

- We documented evidence of how the lesson progressed from disciplinary thinking to interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and transdisciplinary thinking throughout the planning process.
- We also documented how the process of planning, teaching, coaching, and reflecting provided PSTs with an opportunity to make a connection between transdisciplinarity and pedagogy.

#### Why does this matter?

- The findings demonstrate the feasibility of transitioning from disciplinary and content literacies to transdisciplinary literacies.
- The study will encourage literacy practitioners and researchers to delve deeper into this shift and explore its implications further.

Radakovic, N., O'Byrne, W. I., Negreiros, M., Hunter-Doniger, T., Pears, E., & Littlejohn, T. C. (2022). Towards transdisciplinarity: constructing meaning where disciplines intersect, combine, and transcend. *Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice*.

# How can story-making through the arts help educators imagine and create inclusive futures where autistic and all neurodiverse students thrive?

**Dr. Patty Douglas, Ph.D., M.A., B.Ed.**

## Why is this important?

- Despite inclusive policies and practices such as UDL, autistic students still frequently report experiences of bullying, school violence, and exclusion (Bartlett & Ellis, 2022).
- Autistic students often feel they must *mask* their way of being at school. This impacts students' well-being (Price, 2022).

## What did this research uncover?

- During COVID-19, 16 autistic creators gathered online with the [Re•Storying Autism Collective](#) to reimagine inclusion through art by making zines (pronounced ZEENS).
- For these creators, reimagining inclusion meant creating *radical access*, which involves valuing different social and communication styles, offering online options, and providing *relaxed* learning spaces (see [LaMarre, A., Rice, C., & K. Besse, 2019](#)).
- The global health pandemic opened an opportunity to creatively reimagine inclusion and incorporate lessons about disability justice in schools (see [Rice et al., 2022](#)).

## Why does this matter?

- Inclusion is a right affirmed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- Centering autistic leadership and participation in educational research is key to ending exclusion and bullying (see Fletcher-Watson et al., 2018).
- The arts and stories help us imagine a life together at school where differences are included, appreciated, and even desired.

Re•Storying Autism Collective (Singer, K., Gillespie, E., Liska, S., Peters, S. & P. Douglas). (2022). Autistic, surviving and thriving under COVID-19: Imagining Inclusive autistic futures. *Lateral: Journal of the Cultural Studies Association*, 11 (2). <https://csalateral.org/section/crip-pandemic-life/autistic-surviving-thriving-covid-autistic-futures-zine-restoring-collective-liska-singer-gillespie-peters-douglas/>

## Contributing Researchers



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