The arts are not usually considered to be an equal partner of the academics in the school curriculum or to be a fundamental part of American public education. The reason is not difficult to identify. Historically, one of the primary goals of public education in this country has been to enable young people to prepare themselves for economic security in the future. Most teachers have generally accepted this philosophy and seem to believe that the arts are desirable, but not critical to this or other functional instructional goals. Class schedules reflect this bias and usually give the "basic" courses a higher priority for inclusion than those with content based in the arts.

When asked, "Where are the arts?" educators usually refer to special courses in art and music, to school orchestra, to a few theatrical productions, and to dance activities (more like calisthenics) residing in physical education. Yet these programs involve relatively few students. Schuman estimates that 90 percent of the student body of the public high schools do not participate in performing groups. Eisner found what may be termed a general illiteracy about art in a national sample of 1488 students ranging from grade nine through the senior level in college. A survey conducted in the University City, Missouri, schools supports these findings. Only 12 percent of the student population in University City has any formal contact with courses in the arts after eighth grade.

Nevertheless, the arts as disciplines probably have the greatest potential for heightening perception and developing a general awareness of self and environment. The arts as working partners among the humanities offer immeasurable opportunities to integrate knowledge and to lead students to new insights and understandings of man's cultures.

The realization that the arts can contribute to the general education of students

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has become an increasingly important premise for strengthening the curriculum of the University City public schools. In American Studies, English and social studies teachers are teaming together to devise a humanities program of correlated themes from history and literature, simultaneously interweaving art, architecture, music, and philosophy.

The organization of the high school has been revamped to support interdisciplinary views. Three persons, titled “Instructional Associates,” are heading three broad groupings of subject fields to replace the conventional department chairman structure. Flexible scheduling and team teaching in the junior and senior high schools make possible new arrangements for integration of disciplines.

At the same time, a “new look at learning” has been developing for very young children in the schools. In this program, teachers are seeking ways to increase children’s perceptions in the visual, auditory, verbal, motor, cognitive, and affective areas beginning at age four. Various plans for non-grading and team teaching are operating in the elementary schools.

**An Intervention**

Now, a new impetus has been added. Introduced into this receptive climate is an “Arts in General Education Program” supported by the JDR 3rd Fund and designed to involve all students in the school system, kindergarten through 12th grade. Present units and topics in academic subjects are being rethought and reframed to provide for learnings that maintain the integrity of the disciplines but juxtapose or interrelate them with the arts when theoretically and substantively sound.

The Arts in General Education Program is based upon two premises. The first premise is that the arts can and should affect the total curriculum in such a way that they become an integral part of the general education of each student in the University City public schools. In order to realize this premise, it will be necessary to develop arts instructional “packages” or units which complement the non-arts disciplines making up the core of the general education program without distorting the arts or the other disciplines. Initial efforts to combine the arts and non-arts disciplines are presently focused on social studies, science, and English language arts. Extensions into other fields such as mathematics and foreign languages are planned for inclusion later.

The second premise of the program is that teachers should be involved in the curriculum building process. Because it is difficult to determine where the work of the theoretician ends and where the work of the teacher-curriculum builder begins, and because the range of teacher interests and skills varies considerably, the curriculum building system is very flexible and is based on a team concept.

**Objectives**

In order to conceptualize the Arts in General Education curriculum, it is necessary to clarify its relationship with the ongoing programs in the literary, visual, and performing arts. It is envisioned that the present special arts courses and offerings should not be altered to any large extent.

However, over the three-year period of the project, the Arts in General Education curriculum may become the mainstream for involving all students in arts education. The specialized programs in the arts disciplines may branch off at different levels of instruction. The program will, after three years, reach the total school population at every grade level and give each student a general education in the arts. Hopefully, this unified approach will extend the role of the arts specialist in the school beyond teaching the talented or interested students to that of arts consultant to the instructional staff in the school system.

General objectives of the Arts in General Education Program are:

1. To formulate an innovative, functional, interdisciplinary program of arts education for all instructional levels which will be student centered and will utilize the existing instructional media and materials.
The program will be designed to provide for social, economic, cultural, and intellectual differences which exist among students.

2. To develop instructional packages which relate directly to the student and provide a continuity of curricular content and a sequential arts learning experience which can be taught effectively by non-arts specialists.

3. To permeate the general education program with arts concepts in order to improve the level of arts instruction for each student in the school program and bring the student in closer contact with the artist-performer and art object-event.

4. To experiment with a behavioral curriculum model as a basis for structuring arts learnings and to use innovative and exemplary approaches to implement the model.

Learning will be related to each of three educational goals in the total sequence of K through 12 instructional activities. There will be varying degrees of emphasis on each of the educational goals. The students will move through the program with an initial concentration on goal one: aesthetic awareness. This is based on the student's understanding himself and becoming sensitized to his environment.

A second emphasis, reflected in goal two, will be on the arts objects-events and the artists. The student will develop visual and verbal tools for responding to the arts objects or events.

The third concentration will be to extend the student's percepts of the arts into a cultural context. The instructional sequence will be exemplified by his existing world, the community, and expanded to include the culture of his and other countries.

Practical Considerations

As a first step in implementing the overall objectives of the program, a workshop was held for 24 teachers (K-12) during the summer months of 1968. The participants in the workshop were reinforced in their general knowledge of music, theater, dance, and the visual arts, and were presented with an extensive experience in relating community re-

This young girl is working on a nature scroll that illustrates experiences with butterflies, a topic in which her whole class in the School District of University City, Missouri, is interested.
These two children have completed their observations on butterflies and are working on lady bugs, or "The Painted Lady," as they call them. This activity is part of the Arts in General Education Project, with which CEMREL's Aesthetic Education Curriculum Program is working cooperatively. (Photographs courtesy of Daniel T. Magidson, Chief of Graphic Services, CEMREL.)

sources in the arts to the existing school curriculum. A group of consultants, among them Dr. Asahel Woodruff, who were concerned with the matters of curriculum planning in general, worked with the participants.

Six packages were developed and are described in the latter part of this article. Directly related to the educational goals of the program are the kinds of life behaviors that students will be achieving. The packages are centered around what Woodruff terms "a carrier activity," which he defines as "an ongoing life activity, making acquisition of concepts and proficiencies possible and progressing from immature to mature levels in each competency and in a sequence in which every step is possible for every learner." 4

An example of a carrier activity for the primary grades is that of a student-produced circus. The circus itself is the focus of a series of sensory experiences which are stated in the form of behavioral objectives and fit within the context of the existing curriculum. Among the pupil activities are such things as illustrating graphically impressions of the circus; theater games using the circus as a take-off point; creating and interpreting through costume and movement the coloration of the circus; and introducing artists and composers who have used the circus as a referent for their works.

In the intermediate grades, an attempt will be made to put the arts into a cultural context. A series of three visits to the St. Louis Symphony at Powell Hall will be designed in a three-year rotation plan. The initial concert will emphasize 20th century art forms. An interrelated study will be made of St. Louis architecture, including Powell Hall, and of contemporary art and music as these relate to the culture. High school students will also visit the symphony in a study designed to contrast musical styles of the 20th century as expressions of the changing ideas of man.

The purpose of both concerts is to start where the students are and build from this

base through pre- and post-symphony activities toward integration of the arts into a broader curriculum context.

A significant innovation embodied in the packages will be an architectural tour which will provide an awareness of St. Louis architecture and observation of functional, as well as aesthetic, use of space in housing projects in the metropolitan area. The selection of a route will complement existing social studies offerings at the various grade levels.

In another unit, junior high school students will “redesign the community” as they make decisions about the aesthetic and cultural environment in which they live as an adjunct to a sociological-economic study. The students will define areas of the local community which have weak aesthetic characteristics and will try to redesign these sections. Architects, artists, designers, city planners, and city officials will be a part of the instructional staff, and the students will learn at firsthand of the problems which must be dealt with in trying to create an aesthetically pleasing environment in a metropolitan area.

A series of packages in senior high school English includes a film study program which treats film as an art form and involves the student in making visual statements with film. A series of film classics will be viewed in large group presentations and a list of films outside the context of the classroom will be recommended for students to choose from and view independently. An in-service program conducted by film makers in the St. Louis area will be an ongoing stimulus for teacher involvement in this program.

In the planning stage are elementary arts units or packages which reflect the areas of concern in social studies, such as “Africa Today,” “The Orient,” and “The River and St. Louis.” A series of arts-related packages for perceptual or sensory education for the primary grades, designed to sensitize the student to his environment and make him better able to function with it, are now in preparation.

Secondary teachers are working cooperatively with the St. Louis City Art Museum to develop models for student and teacher involvement in the museum and to relate museum collections to instructional programs. The majority of the museum correlates in the curriculum are in social studies and English.

An experimental program using Senior High American Studies and English students in University City seems successful in an initial field trial. A small group of students is given a tour of the museum and a lecture on a particular area of interest planned with teachers. The students report back to a larger group of peers using the information gathered at the museum. Each student assumes a role of “seminar leader” in small groups. Teaching kits are now being developed which will enable the student to have something to use in his presentation. These and other techniques are being documented and hopefully will become models for replication.

What About Evaluation?

One of the major problems facing the Arts in General Education Program is its means for evaluation. Learnings generic to a unified approach to the Arts in General Education are more within the affective domain than the cognitive, and assessing affective learnings is no easy task. Attitudinal and behavioral learnings would be appropriate, but the unavailability of suitable instruments poses a problem. Therefore, the development of measures is becoming an integral part of the project.

The design for the evaluation component will concentrate on determining the changes in behavior which take place in the student when he is exposed to arts concepts and content in his general education. Descriptive observations of changes in teaching patterns will be a corollary study. Teachers’ logs, teachers’ appraisals of units, video recordings, follow-up analyses and critiques will be utilized.

Can the arts become a part of general education? This will be the real test of the premise that a general education including the arts is the right of every student in a democratic society.