

# *Creative Insights: A Handbook for Assessing the Impacts of Arts and Learning*

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The Canadian Network for Arts and Learning / Le Réseau pour  
les arts et l'apprentissage



## **A Message from the Authors**

We created this handbook about assessment of arts and learning experiences through extensive research consultations with individuals and organizations providing learning *in, through, and about* the arts in Canada.

In the cumulative voices that we heard, there was almost unanimous agreement that individuals and organizations need more guidance when it comes to effective assessment of the arts and learning experiences that they provide: *why, when, and how* should we assess, and *whose* experiences should we include in that assessment? This handbook is presented in response to those questions.

The handbook was commissioned by the Canadian Network for Arts and Learning / Le Réseau pour les arts et l'apprentissage (CNAL/RCAA) and funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Our wish is that the handbook both promotes the assessment of arts and learning experiences and provides assistance in how to do it.

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## Table of Contents

<b>A Message from the Authors</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction to the Handbook</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Who is this handbook for? .....	6
In what way is the handbook a <i>living document</i> ? .....	6
What was the context for the creation of this handbook? .....	6
<i>About CNAL/RCAA</i> .....	6
<i>CNAL/RCAA’s Vision</i> .....	7
<i>Support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation</i> .....	7
What was the process for creating the handbook? .....	8
Why were certain terms chosen for this handbook? .....	8
<i>Assessment</i> .....	8
<i>In, through, and about the arts</i> .....	9
How is the handbook organized? .....	9
<b>What is assessment and why do we need it?</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>What are the key questions we should ask ourselves when planning assessments?</b> .....	<b>11</b>
1. Who is/are the target audience(s) for the assessment results? .....	11
2. What is/are the broad goal(s) of the assessment? .....	11
3. What is it that we need/want to know and show in order to meet our broad goal(s) for the assessment? .....	12
4. Whose experiences should be assessed and why? .....	12
5. At what stages in the learning process do we want to assess, and why? .....	12
<i>Baseline assessment</i> .....	13
<i>Ongoing assessment</i> .....	13
<i>End-point assessment</i> .....	13
<i>Future assessment</i> .....	13
<i>The teacher’s advantage</i> .....	13
6. What are the legal and ethical obligations in assessment? .....	13
<i>Informed consent</i> .....	14
7. What do artists and arts organizations need to know about conducting external assessments in schools? .....	14
8. What do we need to take into consideration about the contexts and needs of individuals whose experiences will be assessed? .....	15
<i>Working with Aboriginal Peoples</i> .....	15
<i>Considering gender</i> .....	16
<i>Working with individuals with disabilities</i> .....	17
<i>Working with culturally-diverse populations</i> .....	17
<i>Creating a better world through inclusive arts and learning</i> .....	18
9. Do we need qualitative, or quantitative information, or both? .....	19
<i>Qualitative information</i> .....	19
<i>Quantitative information</i> .....	19

10. What instruments can we use for the assessment? .....	19
<i>Tables of Assessment Instruments</i> .....	20
1. Questionnaires (often referred to as surveys).....	20
2. Interviews .....	20
3. Focus groups.....	21
4. Arts-informed assessments .....	21
5. Portfolios .....	22
6. Learner self-assessments.....	22
7. Reflective Journals.....	23
8. Peer assessment .....	24
9. Rubrics .....	24
10. Photo /video documentation.....	24
11. Performances and / or exhibits .....	25
12. Observations.....	25
13. On-line formats: websites, chat rooms, Facebook, email .....	26
14. Neurological Testing.....	26
12. Arts curricula and assessment documents for schools in Canada .....	27
Alberta .....	27
British Columbia .....	28
Manitoba.....	29
New Brunswick .....	29
Newfoundland and Labrador .....	30
Northwest Territories .....	31
Nova Scotia.....	31
Nunavut.....	32
Ontario .....	33
Prince Edward Island.....	34
Quebec.....	34
Saskatchewan.....	35
Yukon.....	36
11. Who will do the assessment? .....	37
<b>How do we analyse the assessment findings? .....</b>	<b>38</b>
How do we work with qualitative information? .....	38
How do we work with quantitative information? .....	39
Can we claim causality?.....	39
<b>How do we report about impacts?.....</b>	<b>41</b>
Who is the audience for the report/presentation?.....	41
What format should we use when writing a formal report? .....	41
1. Executive Summary .....	41
2. Table of Contents.....	41
3. Introduction .....	41
4. Context .....	41
5. Methodology .....	41
6. Findings .....	41
7. Recommendations for further assessments .....	42
8. Acknowledgements .....	42
9. List of references .....	42

10. Appendices .....	42
How do we include numbers when reporting? .....	42
<b>How do we form and assess partnerships in arts and learning? .....</b>	<b>43</b>
Why form partnerships in arts and learning? .....	43
What are some guidelines for assessing partnerships? .....	43
How do we assess the effectiveness of the partnership? .....	43
<b>What's next for assessment in the arts and learning sector and for this handbook? .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Words of Thanks .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>References and Resources .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Appendix A: Form for Planning Assessment .....</b>	<b>52</b>
Assessment Planning Form .....	53
<b>Appendix B: What are the guidelines for working with questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups? .....</b>	<b>56</b>
1. Guidelines for creating questionnaires .....	56
What is a questionnaire?.....	56
What can we use questionnaires for? .....	56
What are the advantages of using questionnaires in assessment? .....	56
What are the challenges of using questionnaires in assessment? .....	56
What makes a questionnaire effective?.....	56
How do we disseminate a questionnaire?.....	57
2. Guidelines for Interviews .....	58
What is an interview?.....	58
What are the advantages of using interviews in assessment? .....	58
What are the challenges of using interviews in assessment? .....	58
How long should an interview be? .....	58
Are there different kinds of interviews? .....	58
What are guidelines for conducting an effective interview?.....	59
Are there different means for conducting interviews?.....	59
3. Guidelines for Focus Groups .....	60
What is a focus group?.....	60
What are the advantages of using focus groups in assessment? .....	60
What are the challenges of using focus groups in assessment? .....	60
<b>Appendix C: What are some methods for measuring engagement? .....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Appendix D: How do we write a grant application?.....</b>	<b>62</b>

## **Introduction to the Handbook**

### **Who is this handbook for?**

This handbook was designed with three specific audiences in mind: artists, teachers, and arts organizations personnel. However, we imagine that the contents will also be of interest to others outside these three groups.

We believe that all encounters with the arts can be learning experiences. We have chosen the term **arts and learning** as a way of honouring equally the artistic activity and the learning that is derived from it, not giving primacy to one over the other.

We have endeavoured to provide guidance about assessment of arts and learning that is broad enough to apply to a wide range of experiences, contexts, and goals in arts and learning in Canada, while drawing attention to the fact that each assessment process requires sensitivity to specific circumstances and participant needs.

We aimed to create a handbook that is inclusive of the needs of the individual artist, educator, and program provider who may have limited experience in and/or means to conduct assessment in arts and learning. As well, the handbook is meant to accommodate organizations where experience and resources might allow them to carry out extensive assessments.

We acknowledge that this is not a comprehensive work. We often just scratch the surface of important approaches to assessment that are underpinned by complex and frequently shifting positions on such things as social and gender equity, the purposes of formal and informal education, how and what we learn from the arts, and the very nature and uses of assessment.

### **In what way is the handbook a living document?**

This handbook is just the first iteration of a *living document*. It will be posted on-line on the website of the Canadian Network for Arts and Learning/Le Réseau pour les arts et l'apprentissage (CNAL/RCAA) and become a forum to which the arts and learning sector can submit exemplary assessment experiences, practices, and reports: <http://www.eduarts.ca/>

The handbook will thus help to build an aggregate, up-to-date picture of the Canadian sector in a field that is rapidly changing, as well as to facilitate the process of sharing best practices.

### **What was the context for the creation of this handbook?**

This handbook was created in the midst of current national and international debates over the most effective ways to assess arts and learning experiences.

Aware of these debates and of the expressed need for guidance about assessment found in its own earlier studies, the Canadian Network for Arts and Learning / Le Réseau pour les arts et l'apprentissage (CNAL/RCAA) commissioned the handbook.

### **About CNAL/RCAA**

CNAL/RCAA is a national association of artists, arts organizations, educators, policy-makers, researchers, practitioners, and other advocates for arts and learning.

CNAL/RCAA believes that engagement with creative activity through involvement with the arts is fundamental to the education of the fully realized individual. The organization maintains close links with the international movement for arts and learning.

Canadians participated actively in the first *UNESCO World Conference on Arts Education* in

Lisbon, Portugal, in 2006, which emphasized the value of arts education and the important role it can play in building creative capacities for the 21st century. Wishing to share the gathering's international findings, Canadian delegates identified the need for a broad national voice for arts and learning which would build on existing initiatives and promote awareness of the benefits of the arts and creativity for all individuals living in Canada.

In 2008, the evolving group passed a *Framework for Action* at its symposium in Kingston, Ontario, and, at its 2009 symposium in Toronto, the Canadian Network for Arts and Learning was formally established. In 2012 the CNAL/RCAA achieved charitable status.

### **CNAL/RCAA's Vision**

CNAL/RCAA envisions a world in which the arts and creative activity are recognized as being integral to the learning process, not only at school but also throughout life. Members are dedicated to the construction of a new world, in which knowledge, wisdom, and imagination are fostered in a climate of generosity and collaboration, through arts and learning. At the core of the organization's vision is a belief in the value of arts and learning

1. As an intrinsic component of human culture that deserves formal recognition in schools;
2. As a means for achieving a wide range of essential learning goals, in both formal and informal settings, throughout life; and
3. As a means to resolving the social and cultural challenges facing the world today by building peace, cultural diversity, and intercultural understanding.

This vision of the future is shared by a growing worldwide movement that is calling for a transformation in education, a transformation

that will realize the full potential of high quality arts education, by using exemplary pedagogical programs to renew educational systems, to achieve crucial social and cultural objectives, and ultimately to benefit children, youth and life-long learners of all ages.

### **Support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation**

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) provided funding for the creation of this handbook, as well as for the three earlier, CNAL/RCAA studies. Those studies are below. They were designed to gain more insight into the nature and needs of the arts and learning sector in Canada:

#### **1. *Collaborative Partnership Models and Network Discussions, 2011***

This study identified potential roles for CNAL/RCAA to play in arts and learning in Canada. The report also explored how to develop a community of interest through a network. Interviewees highlighted the importance of research, collaboration, and sector cohesiveness.

#### **2. *Creative Collaborations: Lessons from Arts in Learning Partnerships, 2012***

This study identified and examined best practices in two national arts and learning organizations. As well, the report provided a literature review of collaborations in the arts and learning sector and an analysis and discussion by the researchers of the relevant learning and implications for the Canadian arts and learning sector as a whole.

#### **3. *Report on the Current State and Needs of the Arts-in-Learning Sector in Canada, 2013***

This report contained the findings and the researchers' commentary on the current state and needs of artists, educators, arts organizations, and funders involved in arts and learning in Canada. It also identified roles that CNAL/RCAA might play in meeting the needs of the sector.

The full texts of these three reports may be found on the CNAL/RCAA website:

<http://www.eduarts.ca>

## **What was the process for creating the handbook?**

This handbook was created through a research process that involved individuals and organizations providing arts and learning experiences in Canada. We made five key decisions as we began gathering information and working on this handbook:

**1. To adopt an emergent research design:** We used an emergent research design to collect and analyse the advice we gathered from individuals and organizations in preparation for the creation of this handbook.

In emergent design research, the data collection methods and approaches to analysis change in response to the data collected at each stage of the research. In our case, we began with a literature review about assessment of arts and learning in order to create broad questions for our research participants.

We then posed those broad questions in the first focus group we held. In analysis of the information that we gathered, we identified the central concerns of the participants.

We then created a more focussed set of questions based on our analysis of participant responses and applied them in the next focus group. We repeated this process through five rounds of focus groups, each round consisting of three or four separate groups of 10 to 20 individuals.

At the same time, we followed a similar process in interviews with individuals.

Through these iterative processes, we arrived at what we discerned as the primary concerns of our research participants.

The following additional decisions about the handbook were made based on the information we acquired during the consultation process:

**2. To create a practical, rather than a philosophical document about assessment:** Our research participants requested a handbook that provided information that could be applied in the field;

**3. To create a document that would provide guidance in assessment, and that could be adapted to all art forms in their many kinds of applications;**

**4. To develop a document that could be useful to school and community arts and learning activities.** Although the contexts differ within and between the types of activities, there are important commonalities and opportunities for sharing:

In the case of teachers, we are cognizant of the fact that some Canadian ministries of education and school boards stipulate assessment and evaluation practices that must be honoured. We do not consider this handbook to be a challenge to teachers' obligations to the curriculum and its assessment requirements. Instead, the material we provide might be adapted to their mandated assessment practices.

**5. To keep a Canadian focus in the work through the consultation process and, as much as possible, in the resources we cite.**

## **Why were certain terms chosen for this handbook?**

Here we provide information about how and why we use the terms *assessment* and *in, through and about* the arts.

### **Assessment**

We have purposely chosen to use the term *assessment* rather than *evaluation*. Generally speaking, assessment refers to an *on-going* process of determining the impact of a learning



experience on the participant(s). Therefore, assessment is more process-oriented than is evaluation, which typically is focussed on assigning a grade or another measurement of achievement at the end of the learning process, often in relation to the performance of others within the learning group.

Our use of the term *assessment* reflects the requests of those with whom we consulted as we prepared to write this handbook: we address the challenge of determining impact *throughout* the arts and learning process, including its end-point.

We believe that assessment offers opportunities for planning, acting, reflecting, and changing direction for the providers of arts and learning experiences, as well as for their participants. In short, effective assessment honours and reflects the creative process itself.

### **In, through, and about the arts**

This phrase, learning *in, through, and about the arts*, is often used when discussing the effects and purposes of arts and learning experiences. Here we take the opportunity to clarify how and why this phrase is used in the handbook.

When we speak about learning *in* the arts, we refer to activities that promote learning in an art form (for example, learning to play the piano in private lessons, or being part of a school band).

By learning *through* the arts, we mean activities where the arts are used to illuminate other, non-arts subjects or issues. For example, a student might be informed about history by studying and learning to sing the songs from a particular era or by composing their own songs.

By learning *about* the arts, we refer to learning about the history, social implications, impacts and other issues relating to the arts.

Our wish was to create a handbook that would assist assessment in all three kinds of arts and learning experiences.

## **How is the handbook organized?**

Many participants in our consultation process suggested that we organize the information in this handbook under the headings of questions that they themselves posed to us.

We have adopted that recommendation to reflect the concerns of those with whom we consulted, to provide easy access to questions pertinent to each reader through the table of contents for this handbook, and to prompt an attitude of active inquiry into issues that the reader may not have yet considered.

In the body of the handbook we present materials in an order that parallels the assessment process: from planning, to implementation, to analysis of findings, and, finally, to reporting.

In our consultations, we were also asked to provide direction to existing Canadian documents about assessment. Accordingly, we have included *Useful Resources* boxes following major sections in the handbook and, wherever possible, have provided the web address of those documents. In a few cases, we have augmented lists of Canadian documents with those from international sources.

## What is assessment and why do we need it?

Assessment is a learning process. Through assessment we gather:

**1. Information that is of use to participants in arts and learning:** Participants in arts and learning experiences have the right to benefit from and to see the results of an assessment. Increasingly, participants are considered partners in the assessment process and the findings are an important source of self-knowledge and a spur to reflection on the learning process.

It is our experience that participants also often want to know if and how their encounter with arts and learning is similar to and/or different from those of others in a group.

Many assessors ask for input from their participants before assessment results are otherwise disseminated. This practice gives the participants opportunities to provide clarification, expansion, and, sometimes, contradictions of the findings.

**2. Information about what worked and what can be improved in the arts and learning experience:** Assessment helps us determine if we have planned and are carrying out the arts and learning process in ways that meet the needs of participants, or if we need to consider different approaches. Through reflection and consolidation of knowledge, we can make informed decisions about how to better meet the goals of the program and the needs of the participants.

Participants themselves can use assessment results to modify their approach to a current or a future learning project.

**3. Information that can be used for reporting to the public, funders, school boards and schools, administrators, and parents:** These groups need to know the outcomes of their investments of

time, effort, and money. They will be interested in learning about outcomes such as the impacts on learning, creativity, personal growth, and social development of the participants.

Assessment results from arts and learning experiences can be used for reporting on the project at hand, as well as for making a case for future funding and timetabling support.

**4. Information that will contribute to a growing body of knowledge about arts and learning:** A robust, widely-disseminated body of knowledge about the benefits of arts and learning and how to make it effective can help insure the continuing presence of the arts in the school curriculum and in community life.

The body of knowledge about the effects of arts and learning experiences can also be useful for program planning, time-tabling, policy development, resource allocation, and advocacy.

## What are the key questions we should ask ourselves when planning assessments?

Assessment begins with planning. There are several key questions that you should be able to answer as you begin planning the assessment process:

1. Who is/are the target audience(s) for the report on the assessment?
2. What is/are the broad goal(s) of the assessment?
3. What is it that we need/want to know and show?
4. Whose experiences will be assessed and why?
5. What would be some indicators of success for the chosen participant group(s)?
6. At what stages in the arts and learning process do we want to assess and why?
7. What are the legal and ethical obligations we need to honour in our assessment?
8. What do we need to take into consideration about the context and needs of individuals whose experiences will be assessed?
9. Do we need qualitative, or quantitative information, or both?
10. What instruments should we use for the assessment?
11. Who will do the assessment?

In the following pages we discuss each of these questions and provide guidance for answering them.

### 1. Who is/are the target audience(s) for the assessment results?

The results of your assessment may be viewed by one audience or many.

Knowing who will use the results and for what purpose(s) helps you shape your assessment and the specific questions that you will ask.

In most cases, the results of assessment will be seen by and be useful to more than one audience. For example, you may want your assessment results to be useful to your participants, the artists, your organization, your funders, teachers and school administrators, parents, the public, and/ or other decision-maker.

It is, however, important not to try to meet the needs of everyone, but to identify your primary audiences: let their needs for specific kinds of information guide your assessment.

### 2. What is/are the broad goal(s) of the assessment?

You should be able to articulate the broad goal(s) of your assessment in a sentence or two. The following is an example of a broad goal statement for a community-based arts and learning project offered to youth experiencing homelessness:

*We want to know the impacts of the [name of arts and learning project] on the participants' feelings of personal empowerment.*

In a school setting, you might want to assess, for example, the impact of arts and learning on students' experiences of social studies. In that case, a broad goal might be the following:

*We want to know the impacts of the [name of arts and learning project] on*

*students' attitudes toward Social Studies.*

### **3. What is it that we need/want to know and show in order to meet our broad goal(s) for the assessment?**

It is usually impossible and undesirable to predict all of the findings of an assessment. We need to leave room for surprise and the emergence of information that we had not anticipated.

However, knowing the broad goals of your assessment will lead you to identify what might be indicators of success in meeting those goals, and help you form the questions that will be posed to your assessment participants.

If we continue with the example of the arts and learning project designed with the goal of engendering feelings of empowerment in youth experiencing homelessness, you would identify what you think might be indicators of an increased sense of empowerment.

For example, you might have a strong feeling that, based on past experience and a literature review, belonging to a community might enhance a person's sense of empowerment. You might then design questions such as the following:

- What does the word *community* mean to you?
- Do you or do you not have a sense of community with other participants in this project?

If the participant *has* developed a sense of community, further questions might be as follows:

- What specific parts or aspects of the project contribute(d) to that sense of community?

- What positive effects has being part of this community had on your life?
- What challenges (or negative effects) has being part of this community brought to your life?

### **4. Whose experiences should be assessed and why?**

In the example of youth experiencing homelessness, it is obvious that you will want to assess the experiences of the participating youth themselves.

However, there are other individuals whose perspectives might add to the understanding of the impacts of the programming. The artists, program partners, and/or social workers, among others who are involved in the project, might bring valuable observations, information, perspectives, and insights about the creation of community and its associated effects.

In the case of school-based assessments, the observations and opinions of the students, teachers, artists, educational assistants, parents, and school principals, among others, will probably all work together to create a detailed picture of program impacts. It may not be possible to include all of these groups of individuals in an assessment, but it is often useful to consider widening your assessment practices so that they embrace multiple sources of information.

### **5. At what stages in the learning process do we want to assess, and why?**

Assessment may be performed before, during, at the endpoint, and well beyond the endpoint of the specific arts and learning experience.

### **Baseline assessment**

The gathering of baseline information takes place before the program begins.

When assessment is done prior to the arts and learning experience, it affords an opportunity to determine the starting point for participants. In other words, pre-programming assessment provides a baseline against which to measure change that may occur later in the process.

Baseline assessment also provides the opportunity to explore the hopes and needs of the participant regarding the programming. Such information can be invaluable when planning arts and learning experiences that are tailored to specific participants.

### **Ongoing assessment**

When assessment is on-going or conducted at intervals during the arts and learning experience, the results can be used to make effective adjustments to the program offerings so as to meet the needs of the participants.

Ongoing assessment also helps the learner decide how to proceed with the learning process.

### **End-point assessment**

Assessments conducted at the end of an arts and learning experience can help determine the cumulative effects of a program.

In cases where the same questions are posed at baseline (pre-programming) *and* at end-point (post-programming), change experienced by the participants will likely be more obvious than when using end-point assessment alone.

### **Future assessment**

Assessment can take place several weeks, months, and even years beyond the arts and learning experience in order to determine the lasting effects on the lives of participants.

### **The teacher's advantage**

Teachers in schools are at an advantage when it comes to assessment: they help shape and can trace a learner's development over the 9-10 months a year of formal education provided to learners in Canada.

In our review of Canadian curriculum documents, we noted a current emphasis on *assessment for learning*, that is, assessment practices that encourage student feedback into at all stages of the learning process.

Later in the handbook, we list resources from the websites of ministries of education that have been designed to assist with the on-going assessments required of teachers.

## **6. What are the legal and ethical obligations in assessment?**

You are responsible for informing yourself about and following ethical and legal guidelines for assessments.

While this handbook identifies the necessity of following appropriate steps, it is essential that you familiarize yourself with the protocols of your partner organizations and the laws of the jurisdiction in which you are working.

Boards of education provide guidance and rules for the assessments teachers perform in their classrooms.

The following paragraphs about *informed consent* and *applications to conduct assessments* by individuals and organizations outside of the school system may apply mainly to artists and arts organizations.

However, we hope that the information will also help teachers be aware of the protocols that should be in place when assessments of arts and learning programs are being conducted by partnering artists and organizations.

## **Informed consent**

In all cases, participants whose arts and learning experiences are being assessed must be made aware of several aspects of the assessment procedure and purposes:

1. **Why** the assessment is being done/how the information gathered in the assessment will be used;

e.g., to assess student learning, in a report to a funder, by the organization for planning further arts and learning projects, etc.

2. **How** the information will be gathered;

e.g., through questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, and/or self-assessment, etc. Will the information be audio and/or video-taped?

3. **When** the information will be gathered;

e.g., after school or within school hours, at the beginning, during, or end of the arts and learning project, etc.

4. **Where** the information will be gathered;

e.g., in a private room in a school, in a coffee shop, in the participant's home, etc.

5. **How much time** will be required of the participant for the assessment; and

6. How the **privacy and anonymity** of the participant in the assessment will be protected. Individuals and/or their parent(s)/guardians(s) must be assured that no shared results of the assessment, whether conveyed in written and/or verbal form, will identify the participating individuals. The exception is, of course, teacher assessments where results are shared with students, parents, and the school board.

Any visual representations, such as photographs and video footage, must not

identify children or youth, nor should their names be present in any text unless permission has been specifically given by the participants or, in the case of minors, by the parent(s)/guardian(s).

Depending on the setting and capacities of the participants, all of this information can be delivered verbally, in a letter, or in online formats.

In the case of minors, this information must be provided to their parent(s)/guardian(s). It is customary to provide a letter of information (LOI) containing all of the above information to assessment participants and their parent(s)/guardians(s).

You may have to provide translated documents or give presentations in cases where potential participants or their parent(s)/guardian(s) are not proficient in the language you have used in your documents.

With all of this knowledge in hand, the participants or parent(s)/guardian(s) are in a position to sign a form indicating informed consent for participation in the assessment.

One copy of a consent form should be kept by the participant and another by the assessors. This is for the mutual protection of the participant and the assessor.

## **7. What do artists and arts organizations need to know about conducting external assessments in schools?**

While teachers and artists often work in teams to provide arts and learning experiences, the former are responsible for the assessment of each student's learning for the purposes of providing support, planning, and grading. However, with permission, external program providers may also assess the impacts of their programming.

It is a legal and ethical obligation to gain permission from a school board if you are not a teacher and wish to assess participants' experiences of any part of the arts and learning process.

Approval for external research and/or assessment is typically granted at scheduled meetings of committees from school boards' research departments. Those committees typically meet at set intervals during the school year.

Instructions about how and when to apply for assessment approval can be found on school board websites, usually under the title of *External Research*. Since school boards vary somewhat in their requirements for an application package, it is important to visit the appropriate website in order to insure that you have met all deadlines and requests.

Typically, you must provide multiple sets of the assessment documents in your application for external assessment. Some school boards require as many as ten or more sets of all of the assessment documents, so that each committee member can review them before their scheduled meetings.

The following are some of the documents that typically must be included in the application packages:

- All letters of Information
- All consent forms
- All instruments that will be used in the assessment (e.g., questionnaires, interview scripts, focus group scripts, self-reflection forms, etc.)

As well, you will be expected to provide information such as the purpose of the assessment, who will carry out the assessment, measures to insure informed consent and confidentiality, a literature review (not always requested), the educational importance of the

assessment, and the names of the schools in which you would like to do assessments.

Even though you may have identified schools to participate in the assessment, a school principal has the final say in whether or not an assessment can take place in a particular school.

Once an application has been approved, there can be no changes made to the assessment documents you submitted without seeking approval from the school board.

School boards expect to receive a copy of the final assessment report.

We urge you to think about in-school assessments as you begin your program planning, thus insuring that you have plenty of time to make your school board applications. You may not begin your assessment process until permission has been granted.

## **8. What do we need to take into consideration about the contexts and needs of individuals whose experiences will be assessed?**

As we mentioned earlier, the context and needs of the participant should always be prime considerations in any assessment.

There are further considerations to be taken into account when working with Aboriginal peoples, culturally and gender diverse populations, and disabled individuals. We strongly advocate for partnerships with individuals and/or organizations from these groups in order to make sure that assessments are sensitive and appropriate. We do, however, offer some guidance here.

### **Working with Aboriginal Peoples**

Aboriginal populations in Canada consist of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. Within each of these groups, there are nations, communities,

and/or regions with their own heritages that should influence and determine assessment practices.

We recommend that, if you and/or your organization are not Aboriginal, you be guided in your offerings of culturally appropriate programming and assessment processes by the members of the Aboriginal community with whom you are working.

We look forward to including contributions from First Nations, Métis, and Inuit individuals and organizations and their partners in this handbook.

**Useful resources:**

1. (2005) *Our words, our ways: Teaching First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners*. Edmonton AB: Alberta Ministry of Education, Aboriginal Services Branch and Learning and Teaching Resources Branch.

Available at:

<https://education.alberta.ca/teachers/resources/cross/ourwordsourways.aspx>

Provides information about the world views, cultural values, social circumstances, and learning predispositions of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Is a useful resource for those working with Aboriginal peoples in school and community settings.

2. *The State of Aboriginal Learning in Canada: A holistic approach to measuring success* (2009). & *Redefining how success is measured in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning* (2008).

These documents and others pertaining to Aboriginal learning and assessment are available on the website of the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL):

Available at:

<http://www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Reports/RedefiningSuccessInAboriginalLearning/index.html>

**Considering gender**

On a variety of forms it has been acceptable to ask participants if they are female or male. Such information has proven useful in a number of situations.

For example, distinguishing between genders has been very useful in determining the differences between girls' and boys' reading preferences, resulting in the creation of school-based reading interventions for boys in particular.

However, gender is a social construct, not an immutable fact. Current conceptions are challenging the idea of a two-gendered world and the immutability of fixed gender assignment throughout a lifespan.

What we are suggesting is sensitivity to the issue of gender and that any forms that require gender information might provide options beyond two gender choices.

**A useful resource:**

(2010). *Question and answers: Gender identity*. Public Health Agency of Canada.

Available at:

<http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/Q-and-A-gender-identity>

Discusses the nature of gender identity, the use of appropriate terminology, and how to protect the rights and dignity of what is described as *gender-variant* individuals.

Also contains information about how to access other resources in various media, including film and literature. Is an excellent starting point for those seeking to better understand gender diversity



## **Working with individuals with disabilities**

We have chosen the terms *disabled* and *disabilities* over *differently-abled* for this brief section of the handbook. The latter term has been much in use and has been the subject of debate and has widely been rejected as condescending: it has been seen to promote glibness about the real challenges faced by disabled persons, as well as ignoring the depth and richness that can characterize lives lived with disabilities. We acknowledge that others may not agree with our word choice.

We know of arts and learning programs for individuals living with dementia, cancer, acquired brain and body injuries, cognitive disabilities post-polio syndrome, learning disabilities, and PTSD, to name just a few. The prevalence of these arts and learning programs speaks to the power of the arts to engage, encourage, promote well-being, and develop life skills.

Assessing programming for disabled individuals and groups involves gaining a clear understanding of the disabilities of the individuals involved, the goals of the organizations hosting the arts and learning experiences, and appropriate accommodations for the disabilities.

Again, we suggest close partnering with, and guidance from, the hosting organization when designing assessment. Teachers will be guided by their school and school board protocols.

We look forward to including contributions from individuals living with disabilities and their partnering organizations in this handbook.

### **Useful resources:**

1. (2012). *Expanding the Arts, Deaf and Disability Arts, Access and Equality*. Strategy Equity Office, Council Secretariat and Strategic Initiatives, Canada Council for the Arts.

Available at:

<http://canadacouncil.ca/council/research/trends-and-issues/deaf-and-disability-arts>

The Canada Council for the Arts expresses its commitment to diversity and inclusive arts policies, outlines some of the barriers to engagement in the arts for individuals with disabilities, and explores appropriate use of terminology.

2. **The H'Art Centre** (Kingston, Ontario) is an organization that uses the arts to help adults with learning disabilities reach their highest potential. Director Katherine Porter has expressed her enthusiasm for sharing the organization's experience and knowledge and can be reached at 1-613-545-1392.

## **Working with culturally-diverse populations**

Cultural diversity enriches Canadian life on a daily basis. The term, like those used previously in this section, should not imply uniformity between diverse cultures and it does not necessarily imply conformity within cultural groups. Cultural diversity is a subject of extensive study and discussion, and in the limited space of this handbook we can only acknowledge the importance of the topic and provide some pointers.

This handbook is committed to equity and access to arts and learning opportunities for all Canadians. Assessment should recognize and respect cultural differences and values, and a range of voices should be heard and honoured in arts and learning. Here are some guidelines for artist, educators, and arts organizations:

1. **Be aware of and follow human rights legislation, and the policies and guidelines of relevant partner organizations, ministries, boards and schools, and community groups.** Many of these organizations support their policies with additional materials on implementing their policies.
2. **Be guided by the groups with whom you are working.** Engage culturally-diverse participants and/or community members in the planning, delivery, and assessment of arts and learning programs.
3. **Use a range of culturally sensitive tools.** However, be guided by the cultural group in the appropriate use of such tools and in who should apply them.
4. **Check for the presence of cultural biases.** These can creep into assessment instruments and the interpretation of information.
5. **Provide translated documents.** If the assessment instruments are exclusively language-based and in English or French, it may negatively impact the responses of participants who have other first languages.
6. **Be aware that artistic expression may reflect cultural contexts and values.** This should be recognized and valued in any assessment.

We look forward to including contributions about arts and learning experiences involving culturally diverse programming in school and communities in this handbook.

**A useful resource:**

Government of Ontario (2006) Checklist for an Inclusive Classroom Community. Adapted from *A Guide to Effective Literacy Instruction, Grades 4 to 6, Vol. 2*, pp. 5-8.

Available at:

[http://www.eworkshop.on.ca/edu/resources/guides/Guide\\_Lit\\_456\\_Vol\\_2\\_Assessemment.pdf](http://www.eworkshop.on.ca/edu/resources/guides/Guide_Lit_456_Vol_2_Assessemment.pdf)

Checklist for creating inclusive classrooms and inclusive assessments. Can act as a guide for inclusivity in both school and community settings.

***Creating a better world through inclusive arts and learning***

Although we have spoken about some of the considerations to take into account when working with specific populations, we also want to acknowledge that integrated arts and learning experiences can be powerful means for promoting knowledge and relationships among individuals and groups that might otherwise be isolated from one another.

We feel that the capacity to create a more equitable, inclusive, and compassionate world is one of the greatest potentials of the arts. In the future, we hope to provide more knowledge about how to create integrated arts and learning experiences, and knowledge of their effects in this handbook. We urge individuals and organizations to conduct and share assessments of inclusive programming in school and community settings.

## **9. Do we need qualitative, or quantitative information, or both?**

Both qualitative and quantitative information can be of use in the assessment of arts and learning experiences. Often the most powerful assessment reports combine qualitative and quantitative information.

### **Qualitative information**

Qualitative information provides insight into the experiences of individuals, the meanings they attach to those experiences, and why.

### **Quantitative information**

Quantitative information is numerical: it can be used to generate statistics. For example, the number of repeat attendees at a dance company's performances is a statistic.

We comment further on how to analyse qualitative and quantitative information later in the handbook.

## **10. What instruments can we use for the assessment?**

There are several instruments that you can use to gather the information needed for assessments. The following are some of the most commonly used:

- Questionnaires (often referred to as surveys)

- Interviews
- Focus group discussions
- Arts-informed assessments
- Portfolios
- Learner self-assessments
- Reflective Journals
- Peer assessments
- Rubrics
- Photo / video documentation
- Performances and / or exhibits
- Peer assessments
- Observations
- On-line formats

*And* *and a relatively new addition:*

- Neurological Testing

We hope that, in the future, readers will augment this list of assessment instruments, as well as provide direction to additional useful resources. For the present time, the tables on the following pages provide information about the advantages and challenges of using each of the instruments listed above, as well as providing information about useful resources concerning each instrument.

Some of these instruments will be more applicable to school settings than to community arts and learning, and vice versa.

The resources have been mostly drawn from various Canadian sources, including the websites of ministries of education.

**Tables of Assessment Instruments**

**1. Questionnaires (often referred to as surveys)**

Advantages	Challenges	Useful Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be disseminated to a small or large number of people and/or organizations</li> <li>• Provide an efficient way to gather a lot of information</li> <li>• Allow for creation of statistical data and analyses</li> <li>• May be used at any stage of assessment</li> <li>• Allow for multiple means of dissemination, including web-based</li> <li>• Provide information about what might be explored further using additional tools such as interviews, etc.</li> <li>• Can be completed in private</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No guarantee of high response rate in non-school environments</li> <li>• Language competencies may affect response rate</li> <li>• Few opportunities for gathering in-depth, qualitative information</li> <li>• No guarantee that questions will be read as intended</li> </ul>	<p>1. Appendix A of this handbook contains detailed instructions about how to construct an effective questionnaire.</p> <p>2. InfoPoll™: <i>Software for Surveys &amp; Polls - from questionnaire design to live reports.</i> (Dartmouth, NS) Available at: <a href="http://www.accesscable.net/~infopoll/tips.htm#top">http://www.accesscable.net/~infopoll/tips.htm#top</a></p> <p>3. Two excellent web-based questionnaire software packages that help with designing and disseminating questionnaires, as well as providing assistance with analysis of responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canadian: <b>Fluidsurveys</b> <a href="http://fluidsurveys.com">http://fluidsurveys.com</a></li> <li>• American: <b>SurveyMonkey</b> <a href="http://www.surveymonkey.com">www.surveymonkey.com</a></li> </ul>

**2. Interviews**

Advantages	Challenges	Useful Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be used to gather in-depth qualitative information about participants' experiences</li> <li>• Can be used to explore more deeply themes that have emerged from the analysis of information gathered through other instruments, e.g., questionnaires</li> <li>• Can be a great source for quotes and examples to be used in reporting results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are time-consuming and expensive, so you may not be able to conduct many</li> <li>• Take strong interpersonal skills</li> </ul>	<p>Appendix A of this handbook contains a document outlining the processes for creating and applying an interview script.</p>

### **3. Focus groups**

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be used to gather information from a number of individuals at once</li> <li>• Individual comments can spark deeper reflection and discussions among participants.</li> <li>• Good source of qualitative information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some participants may be shyer than others and less likely to contribute.</li> <li>• More confident participants may dominate the discussion.</li> <li>• Takes skill in navigating group dynamics</li> </ul>	<p>1. Appendix A of this handbook contains a document about conducting focus groups.</p> <p>2. Government of Ontario (2006) Checklist for an Inclusive Classroom Community. Adapted from <i>A Guide to Effective Literacy Instruction, Grades 4 to 6</i>, Vol. 2, pp. 5-8. Available at: <a href="http://www.eworkshop.on.ca/edu/resources/guides/Guide_Lit_456_Vol_2_Assessment.pdf">http://www.eworkshop.on.ca/edu/resources/guides/Guide_Lit_456_Vol_2_Assessment.pdf</a></p>

### **4. Arts-informed assessments**

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the arts themselves to inform assessment, therefore extend the creative process to reflection on effects of programming</li> <li>• Can capture the components of an experience that cannot be contained in words</li> <li>• Can be inclusive because not based on language proficiency</li> <li>• Can be used as a starting point for discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The meanings of the art work may be clear only to the participant unless paired with words.</li> </ul>	<p>1. Knowles, G., &amp; Cole, A. (eds.) (2003). <i>Handbook of the arts in qualitative research</i>. Sage Publications, Inc.</p> <p>A collection of essays by Canadian and international scholars concerning arts-informed research. Principles can be applied to assessment. Enlightens both community- and school-based arts and learning assessments</p> <p>2. Burns, L., &amp; Frost, J. (2010). <i>Arts informed evaluation: A creative approach to assessing community arts practices</i>. Bick Tancook Island, Nova Scotia: Backalong Books.</p> <p>Outlines traditional evaluation practices in community arts projects, explains what arts informed evaluation (AIE) can add, and indicates why AIE is important and effective. Also provides lesson plans for using AIE and brief case studies</p> <p>3. <i>Arts based evaluation 101</i>. Prepared by M. Charlton of Resonance Creative consulting for ArtReach, Toronto. Available at:</p>

		<p><a href="http://toolkits.artreachtoronto.ca/PDF/GOAL_ArtBasedEvaluation.pdf">http://toolkits.artreachtoronto.ca/PDF/GOAL_ArtBasedEvaluation.pdf</a></p> <p>Provides the rationale for using arts based assessments. Also provides activities and instructions on how to use them at various stages of the arts and learning experience</p>
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**5. Portfolios**

Advantages	Challenges	Useful Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an overview of learner’s progress</li> <li>• Help learner and others see patterns in student work</li> <li>• Demonstrate learner progress to parents, teachers, and learner</li> <li>• Facilitate learner self-reflection and goal-setting</li> <li>• Encourage learner to take ownership of learning</li> <li>• Provide a focus for discussions with learner</li> <li>• Provide opportunity to collaborate with learner about which works to select</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time is required to ensure learners are clear on the selection criteria.</li> <li>• Some art works/projects are difficult to capture and store, and might require technology (e.g., a musical performance).</li> <li>• Space to store projects, such as visual art works, can be limited.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assessment Handbook Series: Portfolio Assessment.</b> (Victoria, BC: Curriculum Development Branch, Ministry of Education). Available at: <a href="https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/classroomassessment/portfolio.pdf">https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/classroomassessment/portfolio.pdf</a></p> <p>Outlines various kinds of portfolios, ways of using them for communication with parents, student self-reflection, etc. Provides examples</p>

**6. Learner self-assessments**

Advantages	Challenges	Useful Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage learner to become more active participants in the assessment process</li> <li>• Encourage reflection on the part of the learner</li> <li>• Allow more learner ownership of learning and independence through greater self-awareness</li> <li>• Help learner set realistic goals</li> <li>• Provide information for the learner, parents, teachers, artists, etc. about how the learner is doing</li> <li>• Engender self-regulation skills and self-knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners may not initially take it seriously, or be comfortable with it.</li> <li>• Skills involved in self-assessment may require explicit instruction and practice, which takes time and patience.</li> </ul>	<p>1. Arts Education 10, 20, 30: A curriculum guide for the secondary level. (Saskatchewan Education) Available at: <a href="https://www.edonline.sk.ca/bbcswebdav/library/curricula/English/Arts_education/Arts_Education_10_20_30_1996.pdf">https://www.edonline.sk.ca/bbcswebdav/library/curricula/English/Arts_education/Arts_Education_10_20_30_1996.pdf</a></p> <p>Pages 107-109 of the curriculum guide have a self-evaluation form, student and teacher negotiation form, and student self-evaluation form for group work. Provides valuable information about opportunities for self-reflection; student/teacher negotiation form is an example of how to incorporate student marks and comments with those of the teacher</p>

<p>that are essential to life-long learning and success</p>		<p>2. <i>Assessment Handbook Series: Self-Assessment</i>. (Victoria, BC: Curriculum Development Branch, Ministry of Education). Available at: <a href="http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/classroom/assessment/self_assess.pdf">http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/classroom/assessment/self_assess.pdf</a></p> <p>Provides a variety of ways to implement self-assessment with helpful tips and formats. Provides forms that may be copied and adapted.</p> <p>3. Cornet, C., &amp; Smithrim, K. (2001). <i>The arts as meaning makers: Integrating literature and the arts throughout the curriculum</i>. (Canadian Edition). Toronto: Prentice Hall.</p> <p>Page 373 provides a model for student self-assessment. As well, the book provides other useful models of assessment tools.</p>
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### **7. Reflective Journals**

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can prompt reflection on experience</li> <li>• Can provide information about the processes and changes experienced by the participant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners need clear instructions about the format and contents of the journal.</li> <li>• Written journals are reliant on writing skills.</li> <li>• Some participants may be intimidated or may not express themselves fully if they know the journal will be viewed by others.</li> <li>• Some participants may consider their journals to be too personal to share.</li> </ul>	<p>O'Connell, T. &amp; Dymont, J. (2013). <i>Theory into practice: Unlocking the power and the potential of reflective journals</i>. USA: Information Age Publishing.</p> <p>Includes theoretical, historical, and practical information about reflective journaling. Written for a range of educators and settings, including secondary schools. Intended to be general enough to suit a wide range of audiences and settings, although the authors come from an outdoor/experiential education perspective</p>

### **8. Peer assessment**

Advantages	Challenges	Useful Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides opportunities for sharing</li> <li>• Helps develop capacity to provide constructive feedback</li> <li>• Helps develop understandings of different perspectives on experience and ranges in capabilities</li> <li>• Provides experience in giving and receiving constructive feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidelines for providing constructive feedback must be very clear.</li> <li>• Need to keep the learner’s feelings of vulnerability in mind</li> </ul>	<p>Schwartz, M. <i>Peer and self-assessment of student work</i>. Ryerson University: The Learning and teaching Office. Available at:  <a href="http://www.ryerson.ca/content/dam/lt/resources/handouts/StudentPeerAssesment.pdf">http://www.ryerson.ca/content/dam/lt/resources/handouts/StudentPeerAssesment.pdf</a></p> <p>Provides rationale for peer- and self-assessments, how to implement, advantages and challenges</p>

### **9. Rubrics**

Advantages	Challenges	Useful Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide clear guidelines for the assessor and for the participant/learner</li> <li>• When learners/participants help create rubrics for assessment, they can get a clear picture of what they value and the process is more learner-centred.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners may <i>work to the rubric</i> rather than exploring, taking risks, and finding own path</li> <li>• Typically pre-determine what outcomes will be important</li> </ul>	<p>Kenny, N. &amp; Desmarais, S. <i>A guide to developing and accessing learning outcomes at the University of Guelph</i>. Available at:  <a href="http://www.uoguelph.ca/vpacademic/vpa/pdf/LearningOutcomes.pdf">http://www.uoguelph.ca/vpacademic/vpa/pdf/LearningOutcomes.pdf</a></p> <p>Outlines the advantages of having desired learning outcomes in mind when developing a learning program</p>

### **10. Photo /video documentation**

Advantages	Challenges	Useful Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can “capture” moments in the creative process</li> <li>• Allows for sharing of information that may be non-verbal</li> <li>• Can be used as starting point for interviews and group discussions</li> <li>• Are very useful for inclusion in reports and presentations and for advocacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some participants may feel shy and intimidated.</li> <li>• Need to be aware of issues of privacy and confidentiality</li> </ul>	<p>1. Rosenstein, B. (2002). Video use in social science research and program evaluation. <i>International Journal of Qualitative Methods</i> 1 (3)                      Available at:  <a href="https://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/1_3Final/html/rosenstein.html">https://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/1_3Final/html/rosenstein.html</a></p> <p>Provides a literature review about uses of videography, as well as discussion of methods and ethical concerns</p>



		<p>2. Bates, C. (Ed) (2015). <i>Video methods: Social science research in motion</i>. New York, NY: Routledge.</p> <p>Explores the ways in which video can be used as a research method that engages the senses. Some examples from school settings are provided.</p> <p>3. Tinkler, P. (2013). <i>Using photographs in Social and Historic Research</i>. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Ltd.</p> <p>Explores the ways in which researchers work with photos, generate or have participants generate photos, and listen to people talking about photo-documentation. Can be adapted to assessment</p>
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**11. Performances and / or exhibits**

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be used to celebrate the project and its effects</li> <li>• Can evoke feelings of pride in accomplishment on the part of participants</li> <li>• Can enhance understanding of the participants' experiences on the part of audiences</li> <li>• Provide "evidence" of creativity and learning to funders, parents, participants, and other stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some participants may be intimidated and impeded by being asked to perform or show their work.</li> <li>• Usually require large spaces</li> <li>• Can be product-oriented, rather than process-oriented</li> </ul>	<p>We hope that readers will submit examples of their uses of performances and/or exhibitions in Canada.</p>

**12. Observations**

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can provide insight into the processes experienced by an individual or group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very time-consuming</li> <li>• Difficult to apply to large groups/most useful for small groups</li> <li>• Observer biases can easily creep in</li> </ul>	<p>Taylor-Powell, E., &amp; Steele, S. (1996). <i>Program development and evaluation, collecting evaluation data: Direct observation</i>. Cooperative expression: University of Wisconsin:</p> <p>Available at:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being observed may be intimidating or upsetting to some participants</li> <li>• Being observed can influence actions/responses of participants</li> </ul>	<p><a href="http://learningstore.uwex.edu/assets/pdfs/g3658-5.pdf">http://learningstore.uwex.edu/assets/pdfs/g3658-5.pdf</a></p> <p>Contains information on when, how, and why to do direct observation for gathering information</p>
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**13. On-line formats: websites, chat rooms, Facebook, email**

Advantages	Challenges	Useful Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Likely to appeal to youth</li> <li>• Can provide quick and frequent feedback from participants</li> <li>• Good for sharing and having conversations</li> <li>• Can reach a large number of individuals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional steps may be needed to insure privacy of participants.</li> <li>• May have to set rules about kinds of information shared</li> <li>• Not all participants will be comfortable with formats.</li> <li>• Some participants may not have access to computers and/or some programs.</li> </ul>	<p>Hooley, T., Marriott, J., Wellens, J. (2012). <i>What is online research? Using the internet for social science research</i>. Bloomsbury Academic.</p> <p>Available on-line at:  <a href="https://www.bloomsburycollections.com/book/what-is-online-research-using-the-internet-for-social-science-research/">https://www.bloomsburycollections.com/book/what-is-online-research-using-the-internet-for-social-science-research/</a></p>

**14. Neurological Testing**

Advantages	Challenges	Useful Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Useful for assessments that have a scientific, experimental design</li> <li>• Can be used to show causal links between arts and changes in cognition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expensive</li> <li>• Requires involvement of a neuroscientist and costly equipment and laboratories</li> </ul>	<p>1. <i>The benefits of music education: an overview of current neuroscience research</i>. (2014) Toronto: The Royal Conservatory of Music.</p> <p>Available at:  <a href="https://www.rcmusic.ca/sites/default/files/files/RCM_MusicEducationBenefits.pdf">https://www.rcmusic.ca/sites/default/files/files/RCM_MusicEducationBenefits.pdf</a></p> <p>Accessible information about neurological research and arts and learning</p>

Additional useful assessment resources are contained in the next section of this handbook, *Arts curricula and assessment documents for schools in Canada*

**12. Arts curricula and assessment documents for schools in Canada**

During our consultative process, we heard from teachers who were interested to know about arts curricula and assessment practices in territories and/or provinces in addition to their own. Accordingly, the following tables contain such information. We have chosen some useful assessment resources directly from ministry of education website or from other associated websites.

In future iterations of this handbook, we hope that teachers across Canada will be able to

augment and amend the information that we provide.

Readers other than teachers will likely find it interesting to know what arts education is being offered in Canada. In addition, the assessment resources we list can be applied to arts and learning both in and outside of schools.

We have chosen only some of the documents pertaining to assessment that are offered by the ministries and associated websites. We provide the homepage address of each ministry of education so that readers may do their own, targeted search for resources.

**Tables of Arts Curricula and Recommended Assessment Resources in Canadian Provinces and Territories**

<b><u>Alberta</u></b>	
<b>Arts Curricula</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<b>Music</b>	No specific assessment guides accompany curricula. Recommended include the following:  1. Bighead, R. (2009, draft). <i>K–12 Arts education: First Nations, Métis and Inuit focus groups—Themes and findings in arts education</i> . Government of Alberta, Education.  2. (2005) <i>Our words, our ways: Teaching First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners</i> . Edmonton AB: Alberta Ministry of Education, Aboriginal Services Branch and Learning and Teaching Resources Branch. Both 1 & 2 available at: <a href="http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/other.asp">www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/other.asp</a>  3. Robinson, S. (2008). <i>Promising practices and core learnings in arts education: Literature review of K–12 fine arts programs</i> . Edmonton, AB, Alberta Ministry of Education, Curriculum Branch. Available at: <a href="http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/finearts/programs.aspx">http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/finearts/programs.aspx</a>  Ministry website: <a href="https://education.alberta.ca/">https://education.alberta.ca/</a>
<i>Grades 1-6</i>	
<i>Grades 7-9</i>	
<i>Grades 10-12: Choral music</i>	
<i>Grades 10-12: General music</i>	
<i>Grades 10-12: Instrumental music</i>	
<b>Visual Art</b>	
<i>Grades 1-6</i>	
<i>Grades 7-9</i>	
<i>Grades 10-12: Art studies</i>	
<i>Grades 10-12: General art</i>	
<b>Drama</b>	
<i>Grades 1-6</i>	
<i>Grades 7-9</i>	
<i>Grades 10-12</i>	

<b><i>British Columbia</i></b>	
<b>Arts Curricula</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<b>Music</b>	<p>1. K-6 have “Suggested Achievement Indicators” which “describe what evidence to look for in determining whether or not the student has fully met the intent of the prescribed learning outcome” for the arts</p> <p>2. Documents for Grades 8-12, provide samples of checklists, rubrics, and strategies to prepare for assessment.</p> <p>3. (February 1994). <i>Assessment Handbook Series: Performance Assessment</i>. Victoria, BC: Curriculum Development Branch, Ministry of Education.</p> <p>4. (February 1994). <i>Assessment Handbook Series: Portfolio Assessment</i>. Victoria, BC: Curriculum Development Branch, Ministry of Education.</p> <p>5. (February 1994). <i>Assessment Handbook Series: Self-Assessment</i>. Victoria, BC: Curriculum Development Branch, Ministry of Education.</p> <p>6. (February 1994). <i>Assessment Handbook Series: Student-Centred Conferences</i>. Victoria, BC: Curriculum Development Branch, Ministry of Education.</p> <p>3-6 above: Series of handbooks developed in response to teacher survey identifying that teachers were looking to expand their evaluation strategies beyond traditional testing. (Student Self-Assessment, Student-Centred Conferences, Performance Assessment, and Portfolio Assessment). Available at: <a href="http://www.publications.gov.bc.ca/">http://www.publications.gov.bc.ca/</a></p> <p>7. (2006). <i>Rethinking classroom assessment with purpose in Mind: Assessment for learning, assessment as learning, assessment of learning</i>. Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for collaboration in education. Available at: <a href="https://www.wncp.ca/media/40539/rethink.pdf">https://www.wncp.ca/media/40539/rethink.pdf</a></p> <p>Government of British Columbia (2012). <i>Enabling Innovation: Transforming curriculum and assessment</i>. British Columbia Ministry of Education. Available at: <a href="https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/docs/ca_transformation.pdf">https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/docs/ca_transformation.pdf</a></p>
<i>Kindergarten-Grade 7</i>	
<i>Grades 8-10</i>	
<i>Grades 11-12: Composition &amp; Technology (one course)</i>	
<i>Grades 11-12: Choral music / Instrumental music (two courses)</i>	
<b>Visual Art</b>	
<i>Kindergarten-Grade 7</i>	
<i>Grades 8-10</i>	
<i>Grades 11-12: Media Arts</i>	
<i>Grades 11-12: Art foundations / Studio arts (two courses)</i>	
<b>Drama</b>	
<i>Kindergarten-Grade 7</i>	
<i>Grades 8-10</i>	
<i>Grades 11-12: Film &amp; TV</i>	
<i>Grades 11-12 Theatre Performance/ Theatre Production (two courses)</i>	
<b>Dance</b>	
<i>Kindergarten-Grade 7</i>	
<i>Grades 8-10</i>	
<i>Grades 11-12: Performance/ Choreography (two courses)</i>	
<b>Other</b>	
<i>Grade 11: Fine Arts</i>	

	<p>Provides recommendations from the Curriculum and Assessment Framework Advisory Group. Recommendations for assessment include a shift in language from “reporting” to “communicating student learning”, an emphasis on self-assessment and flexibility in how students demonstrate their learning (e.g., portfolios).</p> <p>Ministry website:  <a href="http://www.gov.bc.ca/bced/">http://www.gov.bc.ca/bced/</a></p>
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<b><u>Manitoba</u></b>	
<b>Arts Curricula</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<b>Music</b>	1. No assessment guide in curriculum documents (Secondary school curricula to be implemented in 2015-16)
<i>Kindergarten-Grade 8</i> <i>Grades 9-12 (draft)</i>	
<b>Drama</b>	2. Manitoba Education and Youth. (October 2003). <i>The Arts in education (draft statement)</i> .
<i>Kindergarten-Grade 8</i> <i>Grades 9-12 (draft)</i>	
<b>Visual Art</b>	First step in developing new curriculum; outlines purpose and goals of arts education along with strategies to teach with a constructivist education model.
<i>Kindergarten-Grade 8</i> <i>Grades 9-12 (draft)</i>	
<b>Dance</b>	Ministry website: <a href="http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/">http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/</a>
<i>Kindergarten-Grade 8</i> <i>Grades 9-12 (draft)</i>	

<b><u>New Brunswick</u></b>	
<b>Arts Curricula</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<b>Music</b>	1. The arts curriculum documents have a variety of assessment suggestions and templates, including rubrics. The French documents describe formative and summative assessment.
<i>Kindergarten-Grade 5</i> <i>Grades 6-8</i> <i>Grades 9-12</i> <i>Grade 11 (two classes to account for varying levels of ability)</i> <i>Grade 11 (instrumental)</i> <i>Grade 12 (more general)</i> <i>Grade 12 (high level of practice &amp; theory)</i> <i>Musique Maternelle-8e année</i> <i>Creation musicale 92421</i> <i>Musique 9e 91111</i> <i>Musique 12e 92411</i>	
	2. <i>High School Music Guidelines: Grades 9/10 Program and Grades 11/12 Electives</i> . Fredericton, NB: Educational Programs and Services, Department of Education.
	3. (February 2001). <i>Arts Education: Foundation</i> . Halifax, NS: Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation. Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Arts Education Curriculum.
<b>Visual Art</b>	4. (October 1995). <i>Visual Arts Curriculum Outcomes K-8</i> . Fredericton, NB: Department of Education, Educational Programs & Services Branch.
<i>Kindergarten-Grade 2</i> <i>Grade 3</i> <i>Grade 6</i> <i>Kindergarten-Grade 8: Curriculum</i>	

<p>outcomes  <i>Grades 9-10</i>  <i>Grade 11</i>  <i>Arts visuels Maternelle-8e année</i>  <i>Arts visuels 9e 91111</i>  <i>Arts visuels 12e 91411</i>  <i>Arts visuels et médiatique 12e 94411</i></p>	<p>Ministry website:  <a href="https://www.gnb.ca/0000/index-e.asp">https://www.gnb.ca/0000/index-e.asp</a></p>
<b>Drama</b>	
<p><i>Initiation à l'art dramatique 12e année</i></p>	

<b><u>Newfoundland and Labrador</u></b>	
<b>Arts Curricula</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<b>Music</b>	<p>1. Curriculum documents have assessment guidelines in curriculum documents and the French documents have group, peer, and self-assessment in the appendices.                      Available at:  <a href="http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/curriculum/guides/music/index.html#intermediate">http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/k12/curriculum/guides/music/index.html#intermediate</a></p> <p>Ministry website  <a href="http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/">http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/</a></p>
<p><i>Kindergarten</i>  <i>Kindergarten-Grade 6</i>  <i>Grades 7-9</i>  <i>Grades 10-12: Ensemble performance (1105, 2105, 3105)</i>  <i>Grade 11 (2200)</i>  <i>Grades 11-12: Applied music (2206, 3206)</i></p>	
<b>Visual Art</b>	
<p><i>Kindergarten</i>  <i>Kindergarten-Grade 3</i>  <i>Grades 4-6</i>  <i>Grade 7</i>  <i>Grade 8</i>  <i>Grade 9</i>  <i>Grade 10: Art Technologies (1201)</i>  <i>Grades 11-12: (2200 &amp; 2300)</i>  <i>Maternelle- 1e année</i>  <i>2e-3e année</i>  <i>4e année</i>  <i>5e année</i>  <i>6e année</i></p>	

<b><u>Northwest Territories</u></b>	
<b>Arts Curricula</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<b>Music</b>	<p>1. Aboriginal Language curriculum documents for Dene Kede and Inuuqatigiit. As well as drawing upon the arts curricula for Alberta and Saskatchewan, there are special curricula for Inuit and Dene students that rely highly upon experiential learning and real-life connections.</p> <p>Available at:  <a href="http://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/fr/early-childhood-and-school-services/school-services/curriculum-k-12/aboriginal-languages">http://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/fr/early-childhood-and-school-services/school-services/curriculum-k-12/aboriginal-languages</a></p> <p>2. Jafferty, J. (2010). <i>Educating all our children: Departmental directive on student assessment, evaluation and reporting</i>.</p> <p>Includes considerations for choosing which assessment method is best for a given situation and discusses external assessments (i.e., standardized testing).</p> <p>3. (2011). <i>Procedures, roles and responsibilities for student assessment, evaluation and reporting</i>. SAER Procedures Manual Department of Education, Culture &amp; Employment.</p> <p>Designed as a companion to #2 that can be revised without Ministry approval. Includes a chart of words to help determine which assessment method is most appropriate and a more specific break-down of each step involved in the assessment.</p> <p>Ministry website:  <a href="http://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/">http://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/</a></p>
<i>Grades 1-9: See Saskatchewan</i>	
<i>Grades 10-12: See Alberta</i>	
<b>Visual Art</b>	
<i>Grades 1-9: See Saskatchewan</i>	
<i>Grades 10-12: See Alberta</i>	
<b>Drama</b>	
<i>Grades 1-9: See Saskatchewan</i>	
<i>Grades 10-12: See Alberta</i>	
<b>Dance</b>	
<i>Grades 1-9: See Saskatchewan</i>	

<b><u>Nova Scotia</u></b>	
<b>Arts Curricula</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<b>Music</b>	<p>1. Curriculum documents each have a chapter on assessment that suggest including students in the process to encourage independence and the importance of addressing the needs of students with special needs. They include assessment templates (e.g., for journal entries, conducting concerts, and peer assessment) and worksheets. Some of the templates have been adapted from ones provided in the curriculum documents for British Columbia and Saskatchewan.</p> <p>Ministry website:  <a href="https://www.ednet.ns.ca/">https://www.ednet.ns.ca/</a></p>
<i>Primary -Grade 6</i>	
<i>Grades 11-12: Advanced music (draft)</i>	
<i>Musique Maternelle-3<sup>e</sup> année</i>	
<i>Musique 4-6</i>	
<i>Musique 7-9</i>	
<i>Musique 10-12</i>	
<b>Visual Art</b>	
<i>Primary -Grade 6</i>	
<b>Drama</b>	
<i>Grades 10-11</i>	

<b>Dance</b>	
<i>Grade 11</i>	
<b>Other</b>	
<i>Grade 11: Cultural industries (curriculum not available on-line, but can be ordered in hardcopy) Grade 12: Film and video production Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Arts Education Curricula</i>	

<u><i>Nunavut</i></u>	
<b>Arts Curricula</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<b>Music</b>	<p>1. <i>Ilitaunnikuliriniq: Foundation for dynamic assessment as learning in Nunavut schools</i> Available at: <a href="http://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/files/Ilitaunnikuliriniq-DynamicAssessment.pdf">http://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/files/Ilitaunnikuliriniq-DynamicAssessment.pdf</a></p> <p>Provides information for educators about the Nunavut philosophy of assessment from an Inuit perspective.</p> <p>Ministry website: <a href="http://www.gov.nu.ca/education/">http://www.gov.nu.ca/education/</a></p>
<i>See Saskatchewan &amp; Alberta curricula</i>	
<b>Visual Art</b>	
<i>See Saskatchewan &amp; Alberta curricula</i>	
<b>Drama</b>	
<i>See Saskatchewan &amp; Alberta curricula</i>	



<u>Ontario</u>	
<b>Arts Curricula</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<b>Music</b>	<p>1. Grades 1-12 curriculum documents have chapters on assessment &amp; evaluation with charts (rubrics) outlining levels of achievement. Thoroughly categorizes the different levels for each strand and references exemplars of student achievement</p> <p>2. (2010) Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools. Available at: <a href="https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growSuccess.pdf">https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growSuccess.pdf</a></p> <p>Outlines the policy for assessing, evaluating, and reporting on student achievement. Consolidates and updates the information previously found in multiple locations. Information about assessment in the arts curriculum documents are based on this document.</p> <p>3. Learning for All: A guide to effective assessment and instruction for all students, Kindergarten to Grade 12</p> <p>Focuses on differentiated instruction, multiple learning styles/intelligences, and assessment broadly within the context of creating a class/student profile. Available at: <a href="http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/LearningforAll2013.pdf">http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/LearningforAll2013.pdf</a></p> <p>4. A video series on self-assessment with a guide: Available at: <a href="http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/aer/aervideo/selfassessment.html">http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/aer/aervideo/selfassessment.html</a></p> <p>Ministry Website: <a href="http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/">http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/</a></p>
<i>Kindergarten</i> <i>Grades 1-8</i> <i>Grades 9-10</i> <i>Grade 11: Uni &amp; college prep / open (two courses)</i> <i>Grade 12: Uni &amp; college prep / workplace prep (two courses)</i>	
<b>Visual Art</b>	
<i>Kindergarten</i> <i>Grades 1-8</i> <i>Grades 9-10</i> <i>Grade 11: Uni &amp; college prep / open (two courses)</i> <i>Grade 12: Uni &amp; college prep / workplace prep (two courses)</i>	
<b>Drama</b>	
<i>Kindergarten -dance &amp; drama combined</i> <i>Grades 1-8</i> <i>Grades 9-10</i> <i>Grade 11: Uni &amp; college prep / open (two courses)</i> <i>Grade 12: Uni &amp; college prep / workplace prep (two courses)</i>	
<b>Dance</b>	
<i>Kindergarten -dance &amp; drama combined</i> <i>Grades 1-8</i> <i>Grades 9-10</i> <i>Grade 11: Uni &amp; college prep / open (two courses)</i> <i>Grade 12: Uni &amp; college prep / workplace prep (two courses)</i>	
<b>Other</b>	
<i>Grade 9-10: Integrated Arts</i> <i>Grade 10: Media Arts</i> <i>Grade 11-12: Exploring and creating in the arts</i> <i>Grade 11: Media Arts, Uni &amp; college prep / open (two courses)</i> <i>Grade 12: Media Arts, Uni &amp; college prep / workplace prep (two courses)</i>	

<b>Prince Edward Island</b>	
<b>Arts Curricula</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<b>Music</b>	<p>1. Music curriculum documents have a chapter on assessment using diagnostic/formative/summative assessment. They outline various assessment strategies with practical suggestions, such as observing a few students a day with a checklist, developing a standard of performance, and teacher self-assessment.</p> <p>Visual Art curriculum documents have a chapter on assessment using as/for/of language. They explain process versus product, describe various assessment strategies, and contain suggested assignments and assessment criteria within the outcomes.</p> <p>2. Beattie, D. (1997) <i>Assessment in art education</i>. Davis Publications. Available at: <a href="http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/pdf/abstract301fionablaikie.pdf">http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/pdf/abstract301fionablaikie.pdf</a></p> <p>Ministry web site : <a href="http://www.gov.pe.ca/education/">http://www.gov.pe.ca/education/</a></p>
<p><i>Grades 1-6</i> <i>Grades 7-12</i> <i>Grade 11/12: Styles of popular music</i></p>	
<b>Visual Art</b>	
<p><i>Grade 1</i> <i>Grades 7-9</i> <i>Grade 10</i> <i>Grade 11/12</i></p>	

<b>Quebec</b>	
<b>Arts Curricula</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<b>Music</b>	<p>Curriculum documents have evaluation criteria for each art form and competency</p> <p>Ministry of Education website also provides links to many assessment tools in French and/or English for each art form.</p> <p>Available at: <a href="http://www.learnquebec.ca/en/site_map.html">http://www.learnquebec.ca/en/site_map.html</a></p> <p>Ministry website: <a href="http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/home/">http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/home/</a></p>
<i>Grades 1-6 (elementary)</i>	
<i>Grades 7-8 (secondary cycle 1)</i>	
<i>Grades 9-11 (secondary cycle 2)</i>	
<b>Visual Art</b>	
<i>Grades 1-6 (elementary)</i>	
<i>Grades 7-8 (secondary cycle 1)</i>	
<i>Grades 9-11 (secondary cycle 2)</i>	
<b>Drama</b>	
<i>Grades 1-6 (elementary)</i>	
<i>Grades 7-8 (secondary cycle 1)</i>	
<i>Grades 9-11 (secondary cycle 2)</i>	
<b>Dance</b>	

<p>Grades 1-6 (elementary)                  Grades 7-8 (secondary cycle 1)                  Grades 9-11 (secondary cycle 2)</p>	
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<b><u>Saskatchewan</u></b>	
<b>Arts Curricula</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<b>Music</b>	<p>1. Each of the curriculum documents has a chapter on assessment. Select features of the documents are outlined below:</p> <p>Grades 6-9: outlines the importance of the artistic process (along with product). They explain different portfolio options (e.g., working, digital, etc.) and the reflective process of selecting works. They also describe how to develop a rubric with students and provide sample rubrics.</p> <p>Grades 10-12: Has have a chapter on assessment including the importance of teacher self-reflection; observations of students' perception, procedures, personal expression, conceptual understanding; assessing process as well as products including portfolio assessment and conferences; self-assessment, anecdotal record keeping form, etc.; and keeping student profiles.</p> <p>Band 10-12: addresses specific band issues such as the emphasis on performance and the importance of student assessment to show the benefits of a band program for arts education advocacy. It has blank observation checklists and student self-assessment templates.</p> <p>Choral 10-12: include a chart with examples of process versus product activities to assess.</p> <p>Dance 10-12: Contains specific dance assessment examples.</p> <p>Drama 10-12: Includes a lengthy section on student reflection including suggestions of when within a unit to use specific assessment methods. Also provides sample rating scales.</p> <p>2. (2009). <i>Children first: A resource for Kindergarten. Saskatchewan Curriculum: Children First</i>                      Available at:  <a href="https://www.edonline.sk.ca/bbcswebdav/xid-795842_1">https://www.edonline.sk.ca/bbcswebdav/xid-795842_1</a></p> <p>Has chapter on assessment with examples of observation.</p> <p>3. <i>Student evaluation: a teacher handbook:</i>                      Available at:</p>
<p>Kindergarten                      Grades 1-9                      Art Education Grade 10-12                      Band 10-12                      Choral 10-12                      Instrumental Jazz 10-12</p>	
<b>Visual Art</b>	
<p>Kindergarten-Grade 12                      Grades 1-9                      Visual Art 10-12</p>	
<b>Drama</b>	
<p>Kindergarten-Grade 12                      Grades 1-9                      Drama 10-12</p>	
<b>Dance</b>	
<p>Kindergarten-Grade 12                      Grades 1-9                      Dance 10-12</p>	

	<p><a href="http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/adx/asp/adxGetMedia.aspx%3FDocID%3D3890,88,Documents%26Medi">http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/adx/asp/adxGetMedia.aspx%3FDocID%3D3890,88,Documents%26Medi</a></p> <p>Has lengthy chapter describing and rating the pros and cons of a variety of assessment methods including group and self-assessment. It also includes assessment templates.</p> <p>Ministry website: <a href="http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/">http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/</a></p>
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<b><u>Yukon</u></b>	
<b>Arts Curricula</b>	<b>Useful Resources</b>
<b>Music</b>	<p>(December 2011), <i>Reporting on student progress in Yukon schools</i>. Yukon Education.</p> <p>Available at: <a href="http://www.yesnet.yk.ca/pdf/11-12/r_student_progress_dec_11.pdf">http://www.yesnet.yk.ca/pdf/11-12/r_student_progress_dec_11.pdf</a></p> <p>Ministry website: <a href="http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/">http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/</a></p>
See British Columbia curriculum	
<b>Visual Art</b>	
See British Columbia curriculum	
<b>Drama</b>	
See British Columbia curriculum	
<b>Dance</b>	
See British Columbia curriculum	

## **11. Who will do the assessment?**

We hope that this handbook will help foster the confidence among more artists and arts organizations to conduct some of their own assessments. Teachers will, of course, be guided by their school and school board assessment protocols and their own training, and will conduct their own assessments for planning and grading purposes.

However, there are situations in which it is advisable to engage the services of an expert. In the case of teachers, we recommend consulting with your school board's research/assessment department and/or your arts consultants who will be able to supply advice and assistance.

In the cases of artists and arts organizations, we suggest that, when needed, an external assessor be invited to join the early stages of assessment planning. Considerations of time and expense may influence your decision whether to call in external expertise or not.

## How do we analyse the assessment findings?

The following are some guidelines for working with the assessment information that you have collected.

### How do we work with qualitative information?

Qualitative analysis is time-consuming and complex, but can uncover a treasure trove of information.

Qualitative information is usually mined for dominant themes, examples, quotes, and, where photo-documentation is involved, images.

The program goals you identified early in the assessment planning process, along with your delineation of markers of success, can provide a starting place for identifying themes.

There may be subcategories in each theme. For example, a strong theme in the qualitative information gathered from a company's employees taking part in an after-work arts and learning workshop might be feelings of refreshment after a long day's work. Sub-themes under the larger theme of *feelings of refreshment* might identify the important components that contributed to those feelings.

For example, the information provided by the employees might yield insights into the influences of such things as socializing with colleagues, the engaging nature of the art work itself, the leadership of the artist, etc. on the reported sense of refreshment. Each of these influences could become a sub-theme, and the analyst would also examine the information to identify the frequency and examples of such findings.

However, we think it also important to consider, but not emphasize unduly, information about

participants' experiences that are not captured by the dominant themes detected in qualitative information. Such information may indicate learner perceptions that are more nuanced and sensitive than most, and also allow programmers to change approaches so that they are more inclusive.

It is extremely important to let the information tell you it's story, even if that story contradicts what you had hoped to find. New or contradictory information can be very instructive.

There are computer-based programs that can assist with the coding and organizing of large amounts of qualitative data. Two of the most-frequently used are *ATLAS.ti* and *NVivo*.

#### Useful resources:

1. *ATLAS.ti* [Computer software]. Scientific Software Development GmbH. Berlin, Germany.

Available at:

<http://www.atlasti.com/>

2. *NVivo*. [Computer software]. QSR International Pty Ltd.

Available at:

<http://www.qsrinternational.com/products/nvivo.aspx>

3. Kirby, S., and McKenna, K. (1989). *Experience, research, social change: Methods from the margins*. Toronto: Garamond Press

Provides information about how to make gathering, analysing, and reporting qualitative information equitable experiences

## How do we work with quantitative information?

Quantitative information may be something as simple and straightforward as attendance records and can be extremely useful for reporting and indicating success. However, there are many sophisticated statistical tests that can be applied to quantitative information if it has been collected properly.

For example, when determining the impact of an arts and learning program on a group's school academic achievement, a statistician can factor out the impact of socio-economic status (SES) in order to determine if particular effects are universal to the participant group despite economic background.

Conversely, statistical tests can be used to see if socio-economic factors are positively correlated with achievement.

The capacity to perform these types of analyses are dependent upon having collected information about family SES, as well as information about academic achievement in subjects to which the arts and learning have been applied.

*The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)* and *Excel* are the most commonly used computer-based programs for statistical analyses in arts and learning, although there are other programs available as well.

Again, we advise enlisting the services of an expert in quantitative analyses when planning to gather statistical information that involves complex statistical analyses. This will help insure that relevant information will be gathered.

Teachers are able to consult their school boards for assistance with quantitative analyses, while artists and arts organizations will need to consult with others in the sector for advice on

who might be a suitable option for assessing their programs.

### Useful resources:

#### 1. What statistical analysis should I use?

Statistical analyses using SPSS

Available at:

[http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/spss/whats\\_tat/whatstat.htm](http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/spss/whats_tat/whatstat.htm)

#### 2. Using Excel for statistical Analysis.

Available at:

[http://ire.org/media/uploads/car2013\\_tip\\_sheets/excel\\_stats\\_nicar2013.pdf](http://ire.org/media/uploads/car2013_tip_sheets/excel_stats_nicar2013.pdf)

## Can we claim causality?

Although it may be tempting to report that an arts and learning experience *caused* certain change to take place, it is dangerous to do so: there are just too many factors in human experience that can influence assessment results. Rather, it is safest to point to *correlation*, that is, positive or negative relationships between experiences and/or other contextual factors.

For example, it may be possible to point to a *positive correlation/relationship* between taking part in an arts and learning program and increased attendance at art exhibitions while in the program: the program participant attends more art exhibitions.

Or, it may be possible to reveal a *negative correlation/relationship* between, for example, participating in an arts and learning project and the number of hours spent daily watching television while participating in the project: the participant watches less television. (In the case of statistical analysis, the words *positive* and

*negative* refer to the nature of the correlations and do not denote value judgements.)

You cannot say with certainty that the arts and learning program *caused* the changes you observe. However, positive or negative correlation points to a possible effect of the program. At a certain point, enough similar findings in your own assessments and those of others will lead to a more confident speculation about causality. This accumulation of similar findings is only possible if assessment results are shared. We hope this handbook becomes a vehicle for sharing.

Even if you do not claim causality, evidence of correlation will be meaningful to the reader if you provide enough information about the circumstances surrounding the effects that you are seeing.

**A useful resource:**

Winner, E., & Cooper, M. (2000). Mute Those Claims: No Evidence (Yet) for a Causal Link between arts study and academic achievement. *Journal of Aesthetic Education* Vol. 34, No. 3/4, Special Issue: The Arts and Academic Achievement: What the Evidence Shows (Autumn - Winter, 2000), pp. 11-75

Available at:

[http://www.jstor.org/stable/3333637?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3333637?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)

Explains more fully the pitfalls of claiming causality in arts and learning assessment and research



## **How do we report about impacts?**

Here we offer guidelines for reporting the results of your assessments. We know that teachers will be required to follow school and school board protocols for reporting. Therefore these guidelines may be of more assistance to artists and arts organizations.

## **Who is the audience for the report/presentation?**

Knowing who the audience is for your assessment report will help you make decisions about a report's language, tone, and format: you need to write with your audience in mind.

There may be multiple audiences for your assessment, and this may require sharing different kinds of information with each audience. For example, you may have specific reporting obligations to funders as well as to other stakeholders such as participants, parents, artists, administrators, and/or schools.

Some funders provide forms for reporting assessment results, but some do not.

Writing a report that meets the needs of all can be challenging, so we suggest that the content of a report be reformatted for different audiences and purposes. For example, a newsletter may feature a few key findings, and perhaps some anecdotal illustrations, whereas a report to funders or to school boards will require more details and in-depth information. Consider multiple formats when you have multiple audiences.

## **What format should we use when writing a formal report?**

The following format and content are commonly used for formal reports, such as those to funders:

### **1. Executive Summary**

Contains all of the report sections and information in brief. While this section of the report appears first, it is written after the rest of the report has been written, so that you are able to pick out the highlights that you want to include. The executive summary should both summarize and entice the audience to read the report proper.

### **2. Table of Contents**

Indicates the contents of the report. The table of contents can be generated as the report is being written by using an option in *Microsoft Word* that allows the writer to mark the text for different levels of headings.

### **3. Introduction**

Contains explanations of the purpose of the report, the goals or objectives of the project/program and the assessment, and how the report is organized.

### **4. Context**

Provides both macro and micro information about the context for the arts and learning program or project: how it fits into the larger arts and learning field (information usually derived from a literature review and/or environmental scan), as well information about the cultural context, life experiences, needs and preferences of the participants in the particular projects.

### **5. Methodology**

Informs about what you measured and why, how you gathered information, your methods of analysis, and how you insured confidentiality.

### **6. Findings**

Includes the results of your analyses, your interpretation of those results, and the conclusions you reached (usually the longest section of a report).

### **7. Recommendations for further assessments**

Indicates what further assessments might be done by you or others in order to advance or corroborate your findings.

### **8. Acknowledgements**

Conveys thanks to participants, funders, and others who made the assessment possible, as well as individuals who assisted with such things as information-gathering and the production of the report.

### **9. List of references**

Provides comprehensive, alphabetized information about any sources (e.g., literature, websites) that you consulted in any part of your assessment and/or report-writing. The American Psychological Association (APA) format is most widely used in reference lists.

### **10. Appendices**

Contains copies of the letter of information and consent form, interview scripts, focus groups questions, etc. that support the report, but that would interrupt the flow or impact of the report if included in the body of the report.

#### **A useful resource:**

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition.* (2010). American Psychological Association. Information available at: <http://www.apastyle.org/>

This guide provides invaluable information on all aspects of report writing, from formatting to how to reduce bias in language.

## **How do we include numbers when reporting?**

Numbers are your friends. Any report should contain some essential numbers, for example, the number of participants, artists, and sessions, days, and, depending on the audience, the budget.

Key numbers can be located in different parts of the report, such as the Introduction, Context, Methodology, and Findings.

The results of quantitative analyses of information can be presented in text or in tables, charts, and graphs.

The results of qualitative analyses can sometimes be expressed in numerical terms. For example, if 18 out of 20 of your participants reported a renewed interest in the arts that they attributed to their program experience, then it is fair to present this finding as applying to 80% of your participants. However, when converting qualitative information to quantitative, it is essential to indicate the size of the group being assessed.

Most reports weave together qualitative information (e.g., themes, subthemes, anecdotes, photos, excerpt from journals, art work) and quantitative information (numbers) so that the two types of information support, illuminate, and enliven each other.

## How do we form and assess partnerships in arts and learning?

Many arts and learning experiences are offered through partnerships between organizations and/or individuals. For example, arts and learning organizations often partner with schools and school boards, health care facilities, social work agencies, and community organizations, to name a few, in order to offer programming.

### Why form partnerships in arts and learning?

Here are some of the reasons for forming partnerships:

- To share limited financial, physical, personnel, and knowledge resources
- To combine expertise
- To obtain funding
- To expand the reach of the program or project
- To increase partners' knowledge of the sector
- To enhance the individual profiles of the partners
- To communicate about the benefits of arts and learning

### What are some guidelines for assessing partnerships?

Here are some guidelines for creating effective partnerships:

- Identify and facilitate the achievement of the internal goals of each partner, and of the shared goals of the partners.
- Clearly define the roles of each partner.
- Designate individuals who will lead the partnership communications.
- Commit to assessment of both the arts and learning experiences being offered and of the partnership itself.
- Do the legal paperwork that is required of the partnership (e.g., contracts, letters of agreement).
- Consult frequently with partners.

#### A useful resource:

1. Patteson, A., & Campbell, S. (2012). *Creative Collaborations: Lessons from arts and learning partnerships*. A study paper submitted to CNAL / RCAA.

Available at:

<http://www.eduarts.ca/>

2. Teacher and Artist Resources [AIR(E)]

Available at:

<http://education.arts.on.ca/en/Resources/Pages/Teacher-and-Artist-Resources.aspx>

Contains information that is helpful to forming good working partnerships between teachers and artists.

### How do we assess the effectiveness of the partnership?

Some larger organizations have forms for assessing arts and learning partnerships, but in most cases you will have to create and apply your own assessment criteria and processes. We suggest using the foregoing guidelines as a starting point for headings under which to assess the partnership.

## **What's next for assessment in the arts and learning sector and for this handbook?**

The discussion and models for assessment of art and learning – the philosophies, values, purposes, tools and issues of who should do it – has been going on for decades, not just in Canada, but also internationally. The discussion and the work of assessing arts and learning will, no doubt, continue. There will be new research,

new tools, new practices, and new, as well as already familiar, issues.

Historically in Canada, the arts and learning sector has had some, but limited, successes in sharing its achievements with the public and others in the field. We hope that the consultative process we used to create this handbook and the fact that it is a living document will contribute to an ongoing process of dialogue, discussion, and contribution.

CNAL/RCAA is eager to receive further suggestions and contributions of readers to this handbook.

### **A note to readers:**

The four appendices that follow the list of references and resources below contain discussions of issues of concern that arose in our consultations, but which did not fit well into the body of this handbook. The appendices provide a form for planning assessments, as well as further information about interviews, focus groups, measuring engagement, and grant writing.

## **Words of Thanks**

We would like to thank everyone who participated in the focus group discussions and interviews we conducted in preparation for writing this handbook. Your guidance was essential, and we appreciate your insights, questions, integrity, and dedication to arts and learning. We attempted to reflect those qualities in this handbook.

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## **Appendix A: Form for Planning Assessment**

## Assessment Planning Form <sup>1</sup>

Keys Questions for the Beginning of the Assessment Process			
Project Name: _____			
<b><i>Who is/are the target audiences for the assessment results?</i></b>			
<b><i>What are the broad goals of the assessment?</i></b>			
1.			
2.			
<b><i>Whose experiences should be assessed in order to see if we have met our broad goal(s) and why? (Use a column for each group of participants.)</i></b>			

<sup>1</sup> © Ann Patteson and Steven Campbell (2015).

<b><i>What are some of the key stages in the process that we want to evaluate and why?</i></b>			
Before the learning process begins:	At intervals during the learning process:	At the end of the learning process:	In the future:
<b><i>What are the legal and ethical obligations we must keep in mind during the assessment? (Use a column for each group of participants.)</i></b>			
<b><i>What do we need to take into consideration about the context and needs of individuals whose experiences will be assessed? (Use a column for each group of participants.)</i></b>			

***What Instruments should we use in the assessment and why?***

***Who is best suited to do the assessment and why?***

***What timelines do we need to keep in mind?***

Organization Deadlines	Funder Deadlines	School Board Deadlines	Other Deadlines

## **Appendix B: What are the guidelines for working with questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups?**

### **1. Guidelines for creating questionnaires**

#### **What is a questionnaire?**

Questionnaires are often referred to as surveys by the general public. However, the term *survey* actually refers to a form of assessment or research that can involve a combination of information-gathering procedures which might *include* questionnaires.

In the context of this handbook, by *questionnaire* we are referring to a document containing several questions that is disseminated to a selected population in order to gather information about the experiences of the respondents. For example, a questionnaire might be sent to subscribers to a symphony orchestra's concert series in order to determine levels of satisfaction with such things as repertoire and/or performer choices.

#### **What can we use questionnaires for?**

Questionnaires can be used to gather information about facts, attitudes and preferences, beliefs, and behaviours.

#### **What are the advantages of using questionnaires in assessment?**

Questionnaires can be disseminated to a small or large number of people and/or organisations relatively easily, thereby increasing the likelihood of receiving substantial feedback.

The typical use of predominantly closed questions (i.e., those that provide multiple choices for responses) allows for the creation of statistical data and analyses of the gathered information.

The occasional open-ended question, where the respondent is not provided with answer options but invited to write a prose response, affords the opportunity to delve more deeply into a limited number of issues.

Questionnaires may constitute the totality of your assessment instruments or may be used as a first stage of assessment, followed by, for example, interviews or focus groups where trends and patterns discerned in the questionnaire responses may be explored more fully.

#### **What are the challenges of using questionnaires in assessment?**

You cannot guarantee that your questions will be read in the way you intended them.

There is also no way to guarantee a high response rate to a questionnaire. Reminders sent to questionnaire recipients may result in a higher rate of return; however, the reminder process may be time-consuming.

Questionnaires may not be useful for individuals who lack literacy skills. Also, depending on the recipient group, you may have to translate your questionnaire into one or more languages other than English or French.

The information gathered through a questionnaire will not be as in-depth as that gathered through other assessment instruments.

#### **What makes a questionnaire effective?**

The following guidelines will help you create effective questionnaires.



### **Design for the respondent group**

It is rare that one size fits all in the world of questionnaires. The best questionnaires are designed specifically with the target population in mind, taking into account sensitivities to language and context, and what kinds of information can be provided.

### **Compose an up-front message**

You will need an up-front message. In some situations, such as small groups or school classes, the message might be delivered verbally. However, no matter what the mode of delivery, there are several things you need to do:

1. Explain why the questionnaire is important and how the gathered information will be used.
2. Tell the recipients why *their* responses are important to you.
3. Assure the respondents that anonymity will be protected.
4. Indicate approximately how long it will take to complete the questionnaire.
5. Indicate a closing date for the questionnaire.
6. Tell the respondent that you are grateful for their help.

### **Create effective questions**

Here are some guidelines for creating the individual items in a questionnaire. These guidelines assume that you have already determined what it is that you most want to know from your respondents.

1. Most of the questions in the questionnaire should be closed-ended, that is, the respondent is provided with a number of options from which to choose an answer. Start the questionnaire with a few easy-to-answer, factual questions.

2. Use open-ended questions sparingly. They take time and effort on the part of the respondent. Open-ended questions are also difficult to analyze.
3. Avoid asking more than one question at a time in a questionnaire item.
4. Avoid leading the respondent. Word your questions carefully so that it is not obvious if you hoped for a particular answer.
5. Use plain language. Do not assume that respondents will be familiar with professional terms, acronyms, or jargon.
6. Limit the number of questions you ask.
7. Use a logical flow for your questions.
8. At the end of the questionnaire, invite the respondent to make further comments if so desired.
9. Aim to create a questionnaire that takes a maximum of between 10 and 15 minutes to complete.

### **Have a trial run**

Whenever possible, pilot your survey. You can do this by asking individuals or groups not involved in the survey-planning process to answer the survey questions. Invite them to explain to you what they found unclear, confusing, or inappropriate about the survey questions.

### **How do we disseminate a questionnaire?**

Questionnaires can be handed out manually to potential respondents, mailed, applied over the telephone, and/or disseminated online.

Online posting of questionnaires enables wide geographical distribution and multiple means for reaching your intended recipients at a relatively low cost. For example, an online questionnaire

can be posted on a website, Facebook page, and in other electronic formats.

## **2. Guidelines for Interviews**

### **What is an interview?**

An interview is a conversation with an individual for the purpose of (usually) gathering qualitative information about the participant's experiences, and the meaning and importance the individual attaches to those experiences.

### **What are the advantages of using interviews in assessment?**

Unstructured and semi-structured interviews are an excellent means for gathering in-depth, qualitative information. They can also provide direct quotes that can be used in the reporting findings.

Interviews may be used to explore more deeply the themes discerned in the information derived through other assessment tools such as questionnaires.

### **What are the challenges of using interviews in assessment?**

Interviewing can be a time-consuming and, therefore, expensive process.

It is unlikely that many individuals or organizations are able to afford the resources needed for conducting large numbers of interviews. Therefore, the information gathered may not be considered by some to be representative of the participant group.

The interviewer must work to maintain a neutral, but inviting stance, and avoid influencing the response of the interviewee.

### **How long should an interview be?**

An interview typically lasts from one half hour to one hour, and involves exploring seven to ten

questions. The interviewer should be on the lookout for signs of fatigue in the interviewee and in her/himself. Scheduling a follow-up interview is often better than proceeding under those circumstances.

### **Are there different kinds of interviews?**

There are three basic formats for interviews:

1. **Unstructured Interviews**, where the interviewer begins with a question such as, *Tell me about the [name of the project] learning project you just completed.* The interviewer then follows the lead of the interviewee(s) by asking questions related to the information provided.

This can be a challenging kind of interview to conduct because it calls for quick-thinking on the part of the interviewer to respond to the information provided.

2. **Semi-structured interviews**, where the interviewer approaches the interviewee(s) with a set number of questions created to guide the discussion, but with the intent to explore unexpected or unsolicited issues and information that may emerge.

We have recommend the use of semi-structured interviews for most arts and learning assessments because they provide some structure to the meeting; they offer the opportunity to gather information important to the interviewer but leave room for unexpected findings; and they acknowledge the importance of what the interviewee wishes to communicate.

The semi-structured interview is also very effective in situations where you are interviewing a number of individuals in order to collect the same type of information.

- 3. Structured interviews,** where divergence from the set of interview questions is not encouraged. This type of interview is typically used to gather quantitative information.

**What are guidelines for conducting an effective interview?**

There are several measures that you can take to make the interviewee feel comfortable:

- 1. Pick a suitable location:** An interview should take place in an environment where the participant feels comfortable. Often interviewers ask where the participant(s) would like to meet for the interview.

A quiet space is recommended, especially when the interview is to be recorded or involves gathering sensitive information.

- 2. Deliver important information before beginning the interview:** The interviewer should begin by introducing her/himself, and thanking the individual or group for their participation. The interviewer should then proceed by explaining the purpose of the interview, indicating why the participant has been chosen, providing assurances of confidentiality, and indicating approximately how long the interview will take.

Always ask permission to record an interview: some individuals find recording devices intimidating. In such cases, the interviewer may be accompanied by a note-taker. Be sure to introduce your note-taker to the interviewee. Having a note-taker leaves the interviewer free to maintain consistent eye contact with the interviewee.

- 3. Create rapport:** The interviewer should have the capacity to quickly create rapport. Some individuals are naturally better at this than others, but interviewing skills can be honed with practice.

- 4. Save the information:** Most interviewers take point-form notes during the interview. When taking direct quotes that might be used in reporting, interviewers write down the comments verbatim, surrounding them with quotation marks.

In addition to keeping notes, many interviewers use recording devices, and then have the recordings transcribed for analysis. Even when a recording device is used, the interviewer should keep notes or have a note-taker do so in case the recorder fails. Many interviewers use two recorders in case one fails.

**Are there different means for conducting interviews?**

Interviews may be conducted face-to-face, by telephone, or by using computer-based technologies such as Skype.

**A useful resource:**

Simon, M., & Goes, J. (2011). *Effective Practices for Research Interviews*.

Available at:

<http://dissertationrecipes.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Interviewingpractice sX.pdf>

Although this document discusses interviews for research purposes, the guidelines it offers can be applied to assessment interviews.

### **3. Guidelines for Focus Groups**

Most of the procedural guidelines for interviews apply to focus groups, with a few additional considerations.

#### **What is a focus group?**

A focus group is a group of individuals gathered together to discuss a designated topic. In order to allow for responses from the individuals in the group, participation is typically capped at between 7 and 10 participants.

#### **What are the advantages of using focus groups in assessment?**

Focus groups provide the opportunity to gather information from a number of people at once. Comments made by particular participants may spark thoughts in others, taking the conversation to deeper levels than what might otherwise be achieved.

#### **What are the challenges of using focus groups in assessment?**

Some individuals in a focus group may be more comfortable than others when it comes to

speaking up. The facilitator of the group will have to create an environment where all voices can be heard: one way to do this is to establish guidelines for speaking one at a time. The group also need to agree to keep the contents of the focus group discussion confidential, insuring that gathered information does not leave the room.

Since managing group dynamics can be tricky in focus groups, it is almost always useful to have a note-taker so that the facilitator can concentrate on asking questions and encouraging the flow of conversation.

#### **Useful resources:**

(2005). *Guidelines for conducting a focus group*. Copyright © Eliot & Associates.

Available at:

[https://assessment.trinity.duke.edu/documents/How\\_to\\_Conduct\\_a\\_Focus\\_Group.pdf](https://assessment.trinity.duke.edu/documents/How_to_Conduct_a_Focus_Group.pdf)

Explains how to organize and run a focus group, as well as providing guidance in the analysis of the information gathered.

## Appendix C: What are some methods for measuring engagement?

The issue of how to assess and convey the power of arts and learning experiences to promote engagement remains a topic of concern throughout the arts and learning sector, both within Canada and internationally.

In education in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a strong commitment to student engagement as a marker of involvement and success in learning. Engagement remains an important indicator of learning success in the minds of most artists, educators, administrators, and funders.

Some widely accepted indicators of engagement of the individual in arts and learning include:

- Voluntary attendance at events, programs, and in classrooms;
- Participation in the arts and learning activities;
- The posing of meaningful questions by the participant;
- Display of body language and facial expression that indicate immersion in the learning process;
- Successful interactions with others in group work;
- Successful interactions with the artist; and
- The creation of a finished work.

Each of the above can be a useful gauge of engagement. However, in recent years some of the complexities and nuances of engagement have been explored, our understanding of it expanded, and some of the assumptions we have made have been challenged. For example,

there are cultural groups where observing and listening are the precursors to action. In other cultures, learning by jumping into an activity is the preferred modus operandi. In the former case, apparent lack of action may be misconstrued as lack of engagement.

It is also important to realize that within any cultural group, there will be some individuals who are quieter and/or shyer than others. While the quiet individual may seem less overtly enthusiastic about an experience, it is not safe to conclude that this is due to a lack of engagement.

We also know that lack of engagement may not be due to an uninspiring learning experience, but rather to other factors such as hunger, lack of sleep, conflicts at home and school, etc.

We need to be aware that the experience and expression of engagement is multi-faceted.

### Useful resources:

1. Taylor, L., & Parsons, J. (2011). Improving Student Engagement. *Current Issues in Education*, 14(1).

Available at:

<http://cie.asu.edu/ojs/index.php/cieatasu/article/viewFile/745/162>

A review of the research on engagement: what it is and how to create an engaging learning environment.

2. Cain, S. (2013). *Quiet: The power of introverts in a world that can't stop talking*. New York: Broadway Books.

Explains how introverted, individuals are undervalued in North American society

despite the outstanding contributions they have made historically

## **Appendix D: How do we write a grant application?**

Given the wide availability of grant writing material, and the focus of this handbook on assessment, we do not delve deeply into grant writing. However, we do offer some guidance and reminders that it is crucial to think about assessment as one prepares grant applications.

Most grant applications require details of the intended outcome of the funded work, including an assessment or evaluation plan. Specifics can vary from funder to funder.

Most funders have extensive and detailed information available on grant writing: written guides, videos, and directions. Many also conduct regular workshops or webinars for potential applicants. In fact, some granting organizations require applicants to attend information sessions on grant writing and

applications to receive the most recent information on the organization's application, priorities, and grant conditions.

If a grant application is being submitted to a funder who does not specify the outcomes or impacts to be measured, we encourage grant applicants to include an assessment plan, even if it is a simple one. We hope that this handbook will be helpful in determining the nature, extent, timing, and contextual considerations for such an assessment.

Including an assessment plan in a grant application makes it stronger and provides an opportunity for both the applicant and the funder to make a thoughtful contribution to our existing knowledge of the impacts of arts and learning experiences.