

# Compulsory Education Art Curriculum from the Perspective of Aesthetic Education Infiltration Unit-based Teaching Design and Implementation

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## ABSTRACT

In the context of contemporary education reform, the design of large unit teaching has become an important teaching trend. Through sorting out relevant educational theories and analyzing the current teaching situation, this study integrates teaching content guided by aesthetic education, optimizes the teaching process, aims to enhance students' aesthetic, innovative, and practical abilities, and explores its significance in promoting the development of aesthetic education.

**Keywords:** *Aesthetic education infiltration, Large unit, Art curriculum.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The “Notice of the Ministry of Education on the Comprehensive Implementation of the School Aesthetic Education Infiltration Action” in December 2023 pointed out that “aesthetic education should fully play the main channel role of art courses in school aesthetic education, further strengthen the educational function of school aesthetic education, and promote the formation of a fully covered, diversified, and high-quality modern school aesthetic education system with Chinese characteristics”, which has pointed out the direction for the development of school aesthetic education. It is necessary to break through the limitations of simple class hours and knowledge points in large unit teaching, integrate related content, and construct complete teaching units around major concepts, tasks, etc. starting from the curriculum standards. Combining art education with modular teaching aims to build an efficient art classroom and assist students in their comprehensive development.

## 2. AESTHETIC EDUCATION AND ART EDUCATION

### 2.1 *The Connotation and Relationship Between Aesthetic Education and Art Education*

“Aesthetic education is the education of aesthetics, sentiment, and spirit, as well as the education of enriching imagination and cultivating innovative consciousness. It can enhance aesthetic literacy, cultivate sentiment, warm the soul, and stimulate innovation and creativity.” [1] The aesthetic education in the compulsory education stage proposes to adhere to the cultivation of moral character, follow the characteristics of aesthetic education, and subtly influence and guide students to establish a correct outlook on life and values through incentives and guidance in the process of aesthetic education. Compared to art education, it is a form of education that primarily aims to cultivate aesthetic ability, creativity, and artistic literacy. Schiller said, “Beauty is an object to us, because contemplation is the condition for us to feel beauty. However, beauty is also a state of our subjectivity, and emotions are the conditions for us to acquire the concept of beauty. Beauty is form, we can take care of it, and at the same time, beauty is life, because we can perceive it.” [2] Aesthetic

education and art education support each other in the field of education, and they are closely intertwined in terms of educational goals, content, and methods, jointly constructing a complete system aimed at cultivating students' aesthetic ability and artistic cultivation. Aesthetic education tends to comprehensively enhance students' overall quality and aesthetic emotions through extensive art and cultural education, while art education focuses more specifically on cultivating students' aesthetic concepts and creative abilities through various art forms and contents. The two mutually promote and complement each other, and communication promotes the comprehensive development of students.

For example, analyzing Dong Xiwen's "The Birth of New China", teachers can guide students to feel the spiritual elements of national peace and national unity when appreciating the work. Therefore, in the process of implementing education, teachers should establish the guiding role of aesthetic thinking, select art works with the characteristics of the spirit of the times in a targeted manner, help students obtain aesthetic experiences from multiple perspectives and dimensions, and promote the development of their aesthetic literacy and artistic perception. "Regardless of the approach taken by family, society, or school, art education is the most important content and fundamental way to implement aesthetic education, and a consensus has been reached." [3] Therefore, when schools carry out aesthetic education, art education should be the core and main channel.

### **3. THE CURRENT SITUATION AND ANALYSIS OF ART TEACHING IN COMPULSORY EDUCATION STAGE**

#### ***3.1 Investigation on the Current Situation of Art Education and Teaching***

In the preliminary investigation, it is found that there is a significant shortage of art teachers at this stage, including a lack of excellent art teachers, insufficient number of full-time teachers, a shortage of highly educated art talents, inadequate hardware facilities, and insufficient development of art classes. Secondly, even professional art teachers have misconceptions about their training objectives. Some teachers still use the most primitive teaching methods in the teaching process, that is, teachers give explanations and demonstrations, students listen and practice, and acquire artistic and creative

skills through repeated practice. However, art teachers usually do not attach importance to aspects such as the art teaching process, art teaching interaction, aesthetic education, and educating people through art education.

#### ***3.2 Analysis of the Current Situation of Art Teaching in Compulsory Education***

##### ***3.2.1 Insufficient Excellent Art Education Teachers***

There is a significant shortage of art teachers in compulsory education, especially those with a background in art related majors. Some teachers have outdated teaching concepts and single teaching methods, and are accustomed to traditional indoctrination teaching in the classroom, which has caused the art classroom to lose its vitality and charm. During class, students follow the textbook without combining abstract art knowledge with innovative teaching methods, resulting in the current art education being hollow and obscure. In course assessment, only symbolic assignments are assigned without a scientific evaluation system. Some teachers regard teaching evaluation as an auxiliary part of teaching design and implementation, only providing simple comments on students' works at the end of the course, lacking depth and systematicity, and without detailed evaluation criteria and feedback information.

##### ***3.2.2 Inadequate Hardware Supporting Facilities for Art Education***

The allocation rate of art specific classrooms in compulsory education is insufficient, and there is a lack of hardware facilities. Art specific classrooms generally have many art teaching tools to meet students' needs for various art activities such as painting, sculpture, and handicrafts. But most of these classrooms have been abandoned and turned into utility rooms, which cannot be used properly, resulting in a waste of resources. Moreover, the library resources and multimedia support related to art are not satisfactory, and the painting tools required for students' classes are not fully equipped. Over time, students also lose interest in learning, which brings great difficulties to teachers in the actual teaching process.

### *3.2.3 Unsatisfactory Implementation of Extracurricular Art Education in Schools*

Extracurricular art education mainly refers to art related educational activities that break through the limitations of school classrooms and are carried out during spare time, such as, art interest groups, traditional Chinese painting clubs, clay carving clubs, as well as various creative handicraft courses, pottery, animation design competitions, and other art related cultural activities. Due to the influence of traditional educational ideas and exam-oriented education, art education in compulsory education generally does not pay enough attention to the development of extracurricular art education activities, mainly relying on completing them in the classroom and books, and the form of art education is relatively single. Upon investigation, most schools believe that only offering art classes is sufficient, without considering the quality of teaching.

### *3.3 Conclusion and Suggestions on the Current Situation of Art Teaching in Compulsory Education*

For most schools, they may have to be immersed in this temporarily unchangeable environment in the short term. The whole society is concerned about the enrollment rate of schools, and society uses this standard to measure the quality of a school. In such a social context, few schools will invest a lot of funds and energy in art education. Therefore, schools in compulsory education are more willing to invest their time and energy in subjects that affect further education, and will not focus on the quality of art teaching. Due to these inherent biases, schools neglect the investment of art education resources, resulting in numerous obstacles to the development of art education in compulsory education.

Of course, the status of art teachers in this environment can be imagined. In daily teaching, art classes often have to make way for other subjects, and over time, teachers lose their enthusiasm for teaching, adding insult to injury to the already poor art education. Although China has long proposed quality education, some parents are still limited by their own actual situation and the influence of the overall environment. Their ultimate goal in educating their children is to obtain better teaching resources, which makes every step of the plan look

very successful, and they will not spend too much energy on the development of secondary subjects.

In order to achieve high-quality development in art education during the compulsory education stage, it is necessary to strengthen the construction of teaching staff and attract outstanding talents to participate in art education. At the same time, schools should increase investment in art education resources, improve art teaching equipment, optimize curriculum resources, and establish a diversified art teaching evaluation system. Only by constantly discovering and solving problems in actual teaching can schools more effectively promote the development of art curriculum in compulsory education.

## **4. RESEARCH ON THE V-DKU CURRICULUM DESIGN MODEL FOR ART TEACHING IN COMPULSORY EDUCATION**

### *4.1 Theoretical Explanation of V-DKU Curriculum Design Pattern*

The curriculum model is a curriculum paradigm with specific curriculum structure and functions, which should have typicality and simplicity, serve as a bridge between the past and the future, carry forward the implementation of new educational concepts upwards, and unify the curriculum objectives of each course downwards. It is the core link of curriculum reform.[4] The V-DKU curriculum design model is a value-based learning by doing teaching model, proposed by the Asian Art Education Research and Development Center of Capital Normal University in combination with Erikson's KUD learning model and Dewey's "learning by doing" educational philosophy. Among them, V represents values, D represents doing, and KU represents knowledge understanding and consolidation. This model emphasizes placing the guidance of values first in teaching, encouraging students to actively try and participate in art practice activities, and providing students with different types of practical fields. The learning process and results of students are closely related, and through a series of learning activities, students can understand, transfer, consolidate, and apply art knowledge.

In general, in the V-DKU curriculum design model, teachers use task-driven and project-based learning to first set large homework (task) requirements, and then break them down into more

specific small tasks, in order to design activities for completing small tasks and provide necessary knowledge of art subjects.

#### **4.2 The Current Application Status of V-DKU Curriculum Design Model in Art Plus**

Professor Yin Shaochun introduced the art teaching method based on core literacy in his special speech on "Teaching Methods Based on Core Literacy", and pointed out that "the art teaching method based on core literacy is a cluster", which is a project-based learning, problem-based learning, deep learning, thematic unit teaching, understanding based curriculum and teaching method. Although the direction may be different, there are extensive intersections. Specifically, art teaching based on core literacy includes teaching methods such as concept-oriented teaching, thematic unit learning teaching, task-driven teaching, V-DKU teaching, and interdisciplinary learning teaching.

At present, the V-DKU curriculum design model has been applied and explored in some art teaching practices. For example, in the "Dandelion in Action" - Guizhou Rural Revitalization Children's Art Education Craft Project, the latest educational concept of V-DKU has been applied to develop art courses based on local culture and natural resources. The project aims to create local cultural landmarks, cultivate teacher seeds, help local children gradually develop basic artistic literacy, and cultivate their sense of national cultural identity and pride. In some schools' art teaching, teachers also adopt the V-DKU model for curriculum design. For example, the course of "Interactive Interface Design" aims to cultivate talents with the goal of "why design" for value guidance. It relies on subject interaction to enhance design power, cooperates with teaching tools to achieve technological innovation, and implements design in the industry to continue classroom effectiveness. During the learning process, students can not only understand the importance of the design process, but also gain a certain understanding of new concepts and technologies.

Of course, the application of the V-DKU curriculum design model in art classroom teaching still faces some challenges and limitations. Therefore, different regions and schools need to adjust and innovate according to specific situations when applying the V-DKU curriculum design model. In addition, more time and effort should be

invested in the design and implementation of relevant courses in order to play a more active role in cultivating students' subject art literacy and key abilities.

#### **4.3 The V-DKU Curriculum Design Model from the Perspective of Aesthetic Education Infiltration**

Socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era, and school aesthetic education has received high attention from the Party and the state in China. On September 10, 2018, General Secretary Xi Jinping proposed the educational policy of "developing five educations simultaneously" at the National Education Conference, pointing out that "it is necessary to comprehensively strengthen and improve school aesthetic education, fully equip aesthetic education teachers, adhere to the principle of using aesthetic and cultural talents, and improve students' aesthetic and humanistic literacy." [5] In order to implement General Secretary Xi Jinping's important discourse on aesthetic education, the Ministry of Education recently issued a "Notice on the Comprehensive Implementation of the School Aesthetic Education Infiltration Action". In the relevant curriculum design, "aesthetic education infiltration" emphasizes the comprehensive and in-depth integration of aesthetic education concepts into all aspects of curriculum design. Therefore, in this context, the V-DKU curriculum design from the perspective of aesthetic education infiltration can be designed from the following aspects. For example, "visualization", teachers can use modern information technology, such as virtual reality (VR), in the teaching process to allow students to experience art works in person, allowing students to more intuitively feel the charm of art works. Or when teachers demonstrate painting or handmade crafts in the classroom, they can use high-definition equipment to clearly display every step and detail, making it easier for students to understand and imitate. Alternatively, "diversification" can be achieved by incorporating art works from different regions and cultural backgrounds into the classroom, inviting local folk artists to participate and understand the production process of various art forms.

Therefore, the V-DKU curriculum design model from the perspective of aesthetic education infiltration should consider the cultivation of key abilities in the art discipline while students learn and master art knowledge. When implementing the

V-DKU model, teachers should flexibly adjust and innovate based on the actual situation and teaching objectives of the entire class, allowing students to continuously improve their artistic literacy and comprehensive abilities through practice.

## 5. RESEARCH ON ART TEACHING PRACTICE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF AESTHETIC EDUCATION INFILTRATION

Under the guidance of the "Notice of the Ministry of Education on the Comprehensive Implementation of the School Aesthetic Education Infiltration Action", this chapter designs a large unit teaching "Traditional Chinese Painting" for junior high school art, which comes from the Renmei edition of the seventh grade of junior high school art. The teaching design of this unit is divided into

three units, including "art originates from life, higher than life", "the ink and brush charm of Chinese painting", and "landscape painting". There is a hierarchical and progressive unit structure relationship among each subunit, pointing to the big concept from different perspectives. The teaching content covers the knowledge of the emergence, classification, painting techniques, development, and innovation of Chinese painting, and implements the design ideas of large unit teaching based on the perspective of aesthetic education infiltration into specific art classrooms.

### 5.1 Art Design for the Large Unit of "Traditional Chinese Painting"

The teaching design of "Traditional Chinese Painting" is shown in "Table 1".

Table 1. Teaching design

Unit topic	"Traditional Chinese Painting"	Learning objects	First year of junior high school	Course type	Appreciation class
Situation	The unit teaching model guided by the "big concept" not only provides students with a more systematic and comprehensive knowledge learning experience. With the continuous development of curriculum reform, the art curriculum in the basic education stage needs to be more diversified. The introduction of the concept of large unit teaching has also opened up new ideas for teachers, gradually forming an integration of art knowledge.				
Big concept	The creative perspective based on the profound humanistic values embodied in Chinese painting and humanistic painting.				
Basic problems	How does traditional Chinese painting express emotions and aspirations?				
Concepts and terminology	Freehand brushwork, landscape painting, traditional art.				
Students will know					
Key knowledge	The origin of freehand Chinese painting Traditional Chinese freehand painting expression techniques The categories and characteristics of traditional Chinese painting The formal beauty of traditional Chinese painting				
Key skills	Information collection ability: Collect relevant information on traditional Chinese painting through various channels Art appreciation ability: Appreciate and evaluate traditional Chinese painting by applying knowledge of art appreciation Artistic empathy ability: Be able to comprehend the connotation and significance of traditional Chinese painting Artistic innovation ability: Creatively recreate traditional Chinese painting and have unique insights and perceptions on its inheritance and innovation				
Overview of large unit design	Curriculum design and characteristics: In the history of Chinese art, traditional Chinese painting occupies an important position, carrying the historical, philosophical, cultural, and spiritual connotations of the Chinese nation. Therefore, in course design, it is not only necessary to teach students painting skills, but also to convey the values, thinking patterns, and aesthetic concepts of traditional Chinese culture, so that students can understand and inherit Chinese traditional culture in their studies, enhance their national pride and cultural identity. Teaching focus: Understand the cultural connotation and important aesthetic value of traditional Chinese painting works in China, and enhance students' appreciation ability for traditional Chinese painting art works. Teaching difficulty: Understand the basic forms of expression and artistic features of traditional Chinese painting.				
Unit design Thinking	Unit 1: Collect relevant works of traditional Chinese painting in China and complete a survey report on representative works before class. Traditional Chinese painting emphasizes the use of artistic language such as brush and ink, lines, and colors, rather than being confined to precise depictions of the appearance of objective things. It expresses emotions and inner spiritual world through "writing". Unit 2: Analyze the stylistic characteristics of traditional Chinese painting works, guide students to create a poetic and infectious artistic atmosphere through observation and perception of natural scenery and character images, using techniques such as brushwork and color. Unit 3: Analyze the brush and ink techniques of traditional Chinese painting and their application, unleash one's personality and creativity, design and draw "freehand flower" art works, and discuss how people should inherit, learn from, and develop traditional Chinese painting as a group under the theme of "enriching innovative inheritance methods and promoting the development of folk art". Write a report.				

Unit design General objective	Be able to identify the classification of freehand Chinese painting in the collection and organization of materials, and be able to appreciate it as a whole in a connected and comparative way, understand the diverse expressive characteristics of traditional Chinese painting works; Combine different historical periods and the creator's own experiences, and appreciate the connotation and significance of traditional Chinese painting. (Image recognition, cultural understanding) Be able to appreciate and understand the unique modeling elements and formal principles of traditional Chinese painting; And apply appreciation knowledge to comprehensively perceive, describe, analyze, and interpret the work, and connect personal experience to express one's own aesthetic feelings and understanding, and be able to put forward unique opinions based on one's own experience. (Aesthetic judgement, artistic expression, creative practice) Establish a learning concept of appreciating and understanding art works from a cultural and historical perspective, deeply appreciate the unique artistic characteristics and charm of traditional Chinese painting, and strengthen national cultural confidence. (Cultural understanding)
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## 5.2 Large-unit Teaching Evaluation of Art in V-DKU Curriculum Design Model

Art is a discipline full of humanistic spirit, and the evaluation object is students, not cold data. The personality of students makes their artistic works unique. Therefore, teachers cannot simply judge the quality of students' works based on their aesthetic preferences.[6] The teaching activities of art appreciation should not only focus on the core literacy of art, but also comprehensively evaluate students' performance. In the teaching design of this

unit, the overall concept of "the national spirit connotation contained in traditional Chinese painting" is taken as the guiding principle, and the three units comprehensively integrate the relevant content of traditional Chinese painting. The course is conducted under the guidance of the basic issues of the overall concept. Therefore, in terms of teaching evaluation, teachers should rely on basic questions to test students' learning outcomes, and evaluate students' learning effectiveness from two different dimensions: each sub-unit and the overall large unit. ("Table 2", "Table 3")

Table 2. Evaluation scheme

Evaluation scheme					
Link	Knowledge collection	Appreciation	Technique	Creation	Exhibition review
Evaluation object (Homework)	Study sheet	Appreciation report	Copy or practice	Completing the work	Summary and exhibition evaluation
Weight	20%	30%	10%	20%	20%
Learning portfolio	Study sheets, appreciation reports, classroom exercises, copying or practicing, completing works				

Table 3. Evaluation criteria for large unit learning

Evaluation criteria for large unit learning			
	A	B	C
Pre-class preparation	Actively collect materials related to traditional Chinese painting works before class, and the preparation work is thorough and complete.	Pay attention to traditional Chinese painting before class, but not actively collect relevant information.	Do not pay much attention to traditional Chinese painting before class, and do not collect any relevant materials.
Learning attitude	Focus in class and actively participate in teacher-student interaction. Be able to actively think and explore in learning, and actively communicate one's learning experiences. Be skilled in discovering and questioning, dare to ask and answer, be able to actively explore and solve problems.	Listen attentively in class and actively participate in learning, but won't last long and attention won't be focused. Be skilled at discovering and asking questions, but be afraid to question.	Not actively answering questions in class, and be afraid to ask questions proactively. Lack concentration in learning and low participation in learning activities, but able to complete tasks as required.
Group collaboration	Be highly involved in group discussions and learning. Have clear thinking, and logic, be able to express one's own opinions boldly, and have accurate answers, and personal insights.	Can participate in group discussions and learning, but lack depth of thinking Not speak actively enough, and can roughly express one's own opinions.	Occasionally participate in group discussions, but not very proactive or proactive in thinking about problems, and rarely express one's own opinions.
Academic level	Learning to transfer	Understanding the meaning	Mastering knowledge
	1. Be able to select art works from different periods, conduct comparative analysis, and explore	1. Understand the commonly used images and their meanings in traditional	1. Be able to feel and recognize the natural and aesthetic views contained in

	the characteristics of their different works and the relationship between the author's personal experiences and historical culture. 2. Be able to apply the relevant knowledge learned to propose unique perspectives on the inheritance and development of traditional Chinese painting in today's era, and communicate with classmates.	Chinese painting works, and interpret the connotation and significance of traditional Chinese art. 2. Gradually form a cultural and historical perspective to interpret traditional Chinese painting and appreciate the wisdom of traditional art.	traditional Chinese paintings, enhance aesthetic taste, and feel the humanistic spirit in the works. 2. Be able to observe, analyze, and interpret Chinese painting works from the perspective of visual structure and expression, and express aesthetic feelings.
Self-evaluation			
Mutual evaluation			
Teachers' evaluation			

## 6. CONCLUSION

Against the background of aesthetic education infiltration, implementing the large unit teaching model in compulsory education is in line with the requirements of the times and the concept of modern education. The infiltration of aesthetic education has injected new vitality and connotation into large unit teaching, making it no longer limited to imparting knowledge, but more focused on cultivating students' innovative spirit and core subject literacy. Large unit teaching provides a more systematic and comprehensive framework and carrier for the implementation of aesthetic education ethics, which can enable aesthetic education to be more deeply and effectively integrated into daily teaching. Undoubtedly, this study hopes that all sectors of society can pay more attention to aesthetic education, and that educators can continuously explore and innovate teaching methods and means to promote the deeper development of aesthetic education.

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