

## Carnival in the Curriculum Article Summary

### Steve Herne, Celia Burgess-Macey and Maggie Rogers

This article looks at project done by elementary teachers in Great Britain which sought to bring students, classrooms, teachers and different members of the community together across many different subjects, but using visual arts as key component. Also a teacher this sounded like a very rewarding experience and fun experience to be a part of. This program is a great example of how as teachers we can incorporate an arts based assignment and involve other curricular aspects as well. Not only this program provided students with a great opportunity to work as team and connect with people of their community. Although prior knowledge would have been useful in activity such as this the entire project is a learning experience where teachers and students share in the ongoing learning process together. I also think a project such as this could be useful for both the elementary and the secondary divisions. Many hands on experiences were explored during this program and guest speakers, students and teachers provided support to individuals who needed the extra support during the process. Formal and informal evaluation was used on students, and students also provided feedback to each other, about the project and the process itself through its entirety/

#### **Background of the Program**

The program is called HEARTS it was a national project that was conceived to revitalize the arts in experience of students preparing to become primary teachers. The focus of this project was on Caribbean-Style carnivals, also containing a fusion of west African and European and east Amerindian traditions

#### **Subject and learning styles that were explored and incorporated with the Visual Arts Curriculum:**

Visual Arts- Students made masks, costumes, etc and explored various mediums. They used wire, plaster, paint, to create, sculpt etc traditional pieces that would be worn or used in a carnival setting. Students learned from guests of various backgrounds who volunteered to share their knowledge and experiences with students.

#### **Historical and Cultural Curriculum.**

Students were exposed to guest speakers who shared complex cultural practices with deep historical and social roots, they shared their personal, political and as well their cultural meanings behind carnivals.

These learning experiences also provided minority perspectives

- Issues around education for a culturally diverse society, possible effects on self esteem and self expression on individuals were explored.

Dance- Students were given proper dance lessons again by Caribbean decent guests.

**Music-** Students explored calypso, chutney, rapso and steel band music.

**Creativity-** the important pedagogical approaches to creativity included

- Adequate space and time
- Fostering self esteem and self worth
- Offering learns mentors in creative approaches
- Involving young people at a higher level of thinking
- Encouraging the expression of ideas through wide variety of expressive and symbolic media.
- Encouraging the integration of subject areas through topics holding meaning and relevance to the lives of young people.

**Cooperative learning:** Costumes, masks were designed together as classes. Children were motivated and engaged enthusiastically in a joint enterprise and developed shared ways of doing things. They worked as team but teachers lead, and provided scaffolding and steered the class.

**Quote form a student:**

Everything Ive done has been cross-curricular. In literacy my objective is to crate poetic rhyming. I am listening to calypso music. Tomorrow is geography we will be looking at different carnivals around the world and costumes around the world. Artistically we are to change the colours of the costumes in one of the paint box programs. (Herne, Burgess-Macey, Rogers, pg 275)