

The background of the slide is a textured, aged, light beige paper. On the left side, there is a large, dark ink splatter that spreads outwards, with many smaller, scattered ink droplets and dots across the entire page. The text is centered on the right side of the page.

Who Art Thou?

ACE assignment overview

Task

- Create an artistic work that represents some aspect of your learning and growth as an arts educator.

- This assignment draws from the tradition of *arts based educational research*.
- Purpose: to engage you in an artistic exploration of your relationship with art, education, or both, thereby enhancing your understanding of who you are and/or want to be as an arts educator.



Why?

Some ideas

An art piece (e.g. poem, painting, performance piece, dance, musical composition, etc.) that represents...

- a significant experience you have had within the realms of art or education
- a particular understanding or knowledge that you have developed
- a significant individual (teacher, mentor) you have encountered
- possibilities you envision

Submission Requirements

- 1) A 'piece' that you create that involves significant artistic work
- 2) A prose explanation (500-1000 words) in which you describe...
 - what the piece represents, and why it is significant for you
 - your artistic process, and how (if at all) the experience of artistically working with the ideas helped you understand them better or differently
 - potential implications for your practice as an artist and/or educator—how the knowledge and understandings you explore in this work might enhance your teaching or art making

Assessment

Richness and Scope of Artistic Work (60%) Evidence thorough and thoughtful imagining, exploring, constructing, connecting and refining?

Analysis (20%) Describing artistic processes and delving into meanings you encounter and understandings you develop through your artistic work.

Implications for Teaching (20%) How can the knowledge and understandings you explore in this work enhance your teaching and/or art making?

Research Project: Teaching Lives

- Betty
 - Small village school in rural Kent
 - 4-7 year-old students
 - Teaching 1956-1984

- Lindy
 - Large inner city school in London
 - 5-10 year-old students
 - Teaching 1972-2010

Teaching Lives—goals

- to explore the knowledge of teaching that these teachers hold, embedded within the stories they tell
- to musically explore the nuances and complexity of their knowledge
- to artistically communicate findings in a way that is engaging and accessible

MENI Process




- Reading through transcripts to identify knowledge-rich stories
- Using audio editing software to create an audio telling of the story *in the participant's voice*
- Seeking and musically highlighting key phrases (*in vivo* codes) that represent larger themes
- Creating an artistic musical piece to combine the data and analysis in a compelling representation

Ben: I'm just wondering what you think *makes* a good teacher?

Betty: Well obviously somebody that enjoys being with the kids, you know. Being with them and *wanting to be with them*. That's the whole idea.

...I felt a bit kid-like, wanted to join in with them because it was so interesting what we were doing...*I was just as interested as they were* in whatever it was we were doing, whether it was wildflowers, or these things in the water, you know... It almost took me back to my own childhood, in a way. I mean I was an only one, and I had no experience of other kids. So I thoroughly enjoyed it once I became a teacher with kids, you know. *It was something I'd missed out, all my life.*

I suppose it was because I felt I was a bit of a kid myself and I felt, when I was with them, I was *back a kid again*.

- Imported audio narrative into *Logic* composing software
- Created musical motifs to represent themes in the text (musical coding)
 - *wanting to be with them* 
(enjoyment of the students)
 - *I was just as interested as they were* 
(learning *with* the students)
 - *back a kid again* 
(re-experiencing childhood amongst her students)

Then...

- divided the narrative into chunks, to allow breathing space between story segments
- re-introduced themes (*melodic motifs and words*) at various points to hearken back to the notions they represented
- composed a musical backdrop to frame it all

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Sweet Thames

Slightly different compositional process:

- although the musical motifs were again generated from the spoken words and designed to be representative of them, the musical motifs sound alone
- suggesting the words/notions rather than restating them

Themes in *Sweet Thames*



Theme	Instruments	Representing...
<i>Rather shy, and not much confidence</i>	Piano (midrange pitches, slow)	The boy and his need for special attention and care
<i>But he sang beautifully</i>	Piano, strings and recorder (lyrical)	Identifying and celebrating a way for the boy to shine
<i>David's class</i>	Cello (low pitches, heavily accented)	The place where it all fell apart—Betty's frustration, pain and powerlessness when the boy was removed from her care
<i>Fooling him about</i>	Piano (low pitches, fast and staccato)	The torture of a child being bullied
<i>Care</i>	Finger cymbal	Providing care
<i>He was perfectly all right</i>	Solo recorder	The—uncertain, more hopeful than factual—claim that the boy went on to be fine

Baking Buns for Mrs. Blinks



Theme	Instrument	Representing
<i>Whatever I wanted to do.</i>	clarinet	Teacher as curriculum maker
<i>we made cakes in school</i>	recorder	Defiance at traditional expectations of what one should do in school
<i>one of these poor old ladies</i>	guitar	Nurturing compassion
<i>how I worked that into a lesson—don't, don't ask me!</i>	plucked string bass	Healthy disregard for externally required curriculum
<i>round to Mrs. Blinks!</i>	clarinet swooping up	Connecting to local community
<i>he became a baker afterwards</i>	voice alone	Learning experiences that resonate outward and shape lives

At Sea

Slightly different process again:

- Collaborated with visual artist Tiina Kukkonen
- combined the audio narrative with Benjamin Britten's sea interlude *Moonlight*
- strategically stitched audio narrative chunks into the fabric of Britten's music, enabling the music to comment on or accentuate the words
- highlighted particular text phrases with corresponding motifs for digital woodwind instruments (*oboe, bassoon, clarinet, flute*)



*You were
absolutely
at sea*

*You have
to use your
common
sense*

*Ask every
child to
draw a
tree...*

*And then
see what
happens*



Understandings developed and (hopefully) communicated

- Betty's experience of teaching was a journey of unplanned adventures and discoveries
- She delighted in the personal expression and investment that the children were able to offer
- The teaching journey was enhanced by her openness to opportunities and possibilities, and her ability to recognize and find value within them

Magnified Pond Creatures

Background

- Betty taught in a small, 2-room school in rural Kent, England in the 1970s and 80s
- She taught the younger children (4-7) downstairs, while her colleague (and headmaster) taught the older children (7-11) upstairs

Themes in *Magnified Pond Creatures*



Theme	Representing...
And <i>discovering</i> things	Teacher and learners discovering together
Goodness knows	Exasperation at administrative decisions
And it was fantastic!	Shaping experiences as special, rendering them memorable
Whatever <i>I</i> wanted to do	Teacher-driven curriculum
And all the big ones were watching me	Heightened excitement when an experience is taken out of the realm of the ordinary