



## Embedding the Framework for Arts Education and Social Emotional Learning

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### ✨ Academic Standards

When teachers first look at a set of standards some view it as a map to explore and deepen teaching practice; however, some see it as a daunting set of tasks to check off. The Arts Education and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Framework is no different. It can be intimidating to look at all of the intersections and crossroads, feeling pressure to teach it all.

### ✨ Relationships and Goals

SEL must be about relationships, always and intentionally embedding SEL into the arts classroom means taking ownership and agency of these standards in a culturally-relevant way. Interpretation, integration, and embodying this work in an organic way is necessary to furthering both artistic and SEL goals. If the Framework is seen as a set of boxes to check off, we are doing more harm than good and relegating our identity, belonging, and agency work as something to rush through to get to something else. SEL in our classrooms is not something that we must get through to get to the arts work, it must be the process and product embedded throughout.

### ✨ Connection to the Curriculum

Although we may start the process of intentionally embedding SEL into our arts classrooms through the work of revising our curriculum and lesson plans, this is not where it ends. This is just the beginning. It is no secret that many times, if not most, our curriculum lives as a document that we visit once when it is fresh and revised, but then falls by the wayside as time passes, only to return to our habits informed by how we were taught. By treating SEL as a sustained teaching and learning practice, we move away from checking the box that we completed our SEL lesson for the year. This then provides the opportunity to create authentic, natural connections with our students while promoting a positive and supportive classroom culture. The Arts Education and Social Emotional Learning Framework serves as a resource to gain practical ideas for embedding as well as to see the natural connections that exist between SEL and the arts. SEL through the arts not only assists in providing students with authentic experiences to practice the SEL competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness,

relationship skills, and responsible decision making, but also assists the teacher with classroom routines and adaptation of instruction. When intentionally embedding SEL into teaching processes, cultivating a positive classroom culture where ALL students feel supported, heard, and valued emerges.

### ✨ Being a Part of the Classroom

When SEL is a part of classroom culture it can take on many roles and look different depending on the intent as well as the moment. There are times when SEL instruction is intentionally planned out ahead of time. It is documented in a lesson plan and serves to help drive instruction making direct connections to the arts concept(s) being taught that day and the SEL Competencies through the Arts Education and SEL Framework. And, even though one may plan out SEL instruction it may, and probably will, evolve as it is taught. As professionals, teachers have an idea of how a lesson will play out in the classroom, but we can't always predict everything. Students come to the classroom bringing in outside experiences that may have occurred during a previous class or at home. Educators never

truly know what to expect! But, that's one of the joys of teaching! Sometimes those unplanned and unexpected moments bring about the best teaching and learning experiences in a classroom. Educators need to approach every class with flexibility and an openness to whatever may come their way. And sometimes all it takes is the third or fourth time teaching the same lesson for a light bulb to go off that sparks a new approach or connection to a topic or concept. Educators cannot be afraid to follow those teachable moments because one never knows where it might lead!

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Photo Credit: Shawna Longo, Music Teacher & Arts Integration Specialist, Hopatcong Borough Schools



## Embedding SEL Into the Arts Classroom

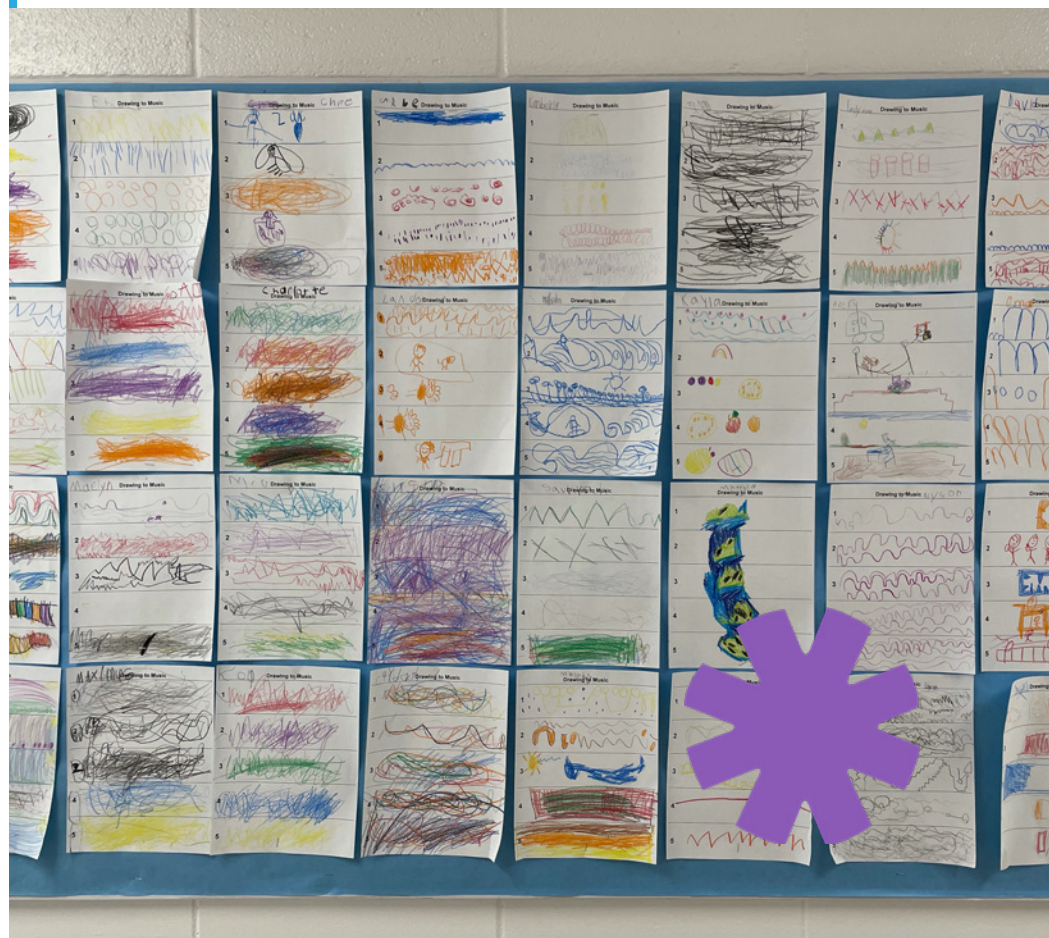
One example of an SEL lesson that was planned ahead of time and linked to the Arts Education and SEL Framework can be found in the following plan. This lesson was inspired by a TeachRock lesson and can be found in its original state at: <https://teachrock.org/lesson/drawing-music-hearing-colors-seeing-sounds/>

In this lesson, students created kinesthetic drawings based on five very different songs in terms of tempo, style, and emotional response. Seeing the students move with the music as they drew and made specific choices in the crayons they would use

tied to their emotional response was a powerful experience. And, it's not just about listening and drawing. The true connections between SEL, Music, and Visual Art in this lesson occurred when the students explained their choices (REFLECTION). Their discussions included various elements of music that they heard, the emotions that they felt, and various elements of visual art through the lines and colors they chose. This highly effective, authentic lesson can also be adapted for other arts disciplines. Students could show their emotional response through movement (dance) and/or improvisation (theatre).



## Student Examples of Kinesthetic Drawings





# Sample Lesson Plan Template Utilizing the Framework

## Lesson Outline: K-1, Music & Visual Art

### Arts Standard/Performance Expectations:

- **Music:** 1.3A.2.Cn11a. Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.
- **Music:** 1.3A.2.Pr4a. Demonstrate and explain personal interest in, knowledge about, and purpose of varied musical selections.
- **Visual Art:** 1.5.2.Cr1b. Engage in individual and collaborative art making through observation and investigation of the world, and in response to personal interests and curiosity.

### Grade-Band SEL Competency:

**Self-Awareness:** Recognize one's feelings and thoughts.

### Student Learning Objectives:

- Know how to use the senses as a tool for inspiration.
- Demonstrate the role of the senses in visual art & synthetic principles through drawing to music and critical analysis.
- Create 5 drawings focusing on how a piece of music makes them feel and what colors/lines/kinesthetic response are made through drawing.

### Assessments:

**Discussion and Analysis:** Students answers to discussion prompts connecting their emotional response to the music and how that inspires their visual art creations.

**AND**

**Performance Task:** Create kinesthetic drawings while actively listening to five pieces of music in contrasting styles and with 5 different emotional responses.



## Enduring Understandings:

**Music/Visual Art:** The creative ideas, concepts, and feelings that influence musicians'/artists' work emerge from a variety of sources.

**Arts & SEL:** Recognizing the impact of one's feelings and thoughts on the creative process.

## Essential Questions:

**Music/Visual Art:** How do musicians/artists generate creative ideas?

**Arts & SEL:** How does the awareness of one's strengths, challenges, feelings, and thoughts influence the generation of creative ideas?

## Resources:

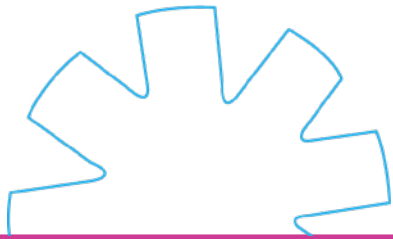
<https://teachrock.org/lesson/drawing-music-hearing-colors-seeing-sounds/> (original/inspiration lesson that was adapted for younger students)

## Adaptations:

This lesson could be easily adapted for Grades 2-12 in the choice of music (songs) played, art that is created (varied materials) and the discussion questions.

## Learning Experience Sequence:

- Introduce lesson: **Drawing to Music**
- Review elements of visual art: line, shape, space, color, texture by having students experiment with each element using crayons and paper.
- Discuss synesthesia (hearing colors, seeing sounds)
  - Occurs when a painter translates sound to color, or a musician who might hear sounds when they see color, or a chef might correlate smell with color
  - Watch example of synesthesia - *Symphony No. 5 from Fantasia 2000 (Disney)* - [YOUTUBE](#)
- How does the music go with the animation (visual)?



## Learning Experience Sequence (cont.):

- Discuss/Analyze - *Live Kinetic Painting to "The Sea" (Jura) by M.K. Ciurlionis, by Norman Perryman*
  - Ask students to focus on how the music and art interrelate in the clip.
  - In what ways do you think Perryman's painting might reflect elements of the music that is playing?
  - In what ways might some elements of music and visual art share properties?
- Do you think that there is a "right" way to paint music? How might you approach a painting if you were in Perryman's position?
- Listen & Draw: Exploring synesthesia as a way to use music for inspiration in visual arts and to express emotions.
  - Students will visually respond to 5 music genres through 5 song snippets of approximately 60 seconds each. Students will then have 30 seconds to draw after the song has finished playing.
  - Encourage students to "feel" each song quickly - use color, line, and rhythm to draw what comes to mind while listening.
- Compare Creations and Discuss Drawings:
  - Do you see any patterns between your drawings and those of others?
  - Are any of the drawings different in how the music was interpreted? What might make 2 artists respond to sound so differently?
- Summary Activity - Discussion of connections between music (sound) and visual art
  - Did you find it challenging to translate what you heard into color and line/form?
  - Did the emotions you felt from a song help you in choosing colors?

## Following Teachable Moments

Another way SEL can occur as a sustained practice is through following teachable moments. In order for these teachable moments to occur, the teacher needs to have developed a relationship with their students. This relationship has a direct connection to a positive classroom culture that fosters flexibility and student voice/choice. It will give the teacher and students space to ask tough questions, potentially changing the direction of the lesson, allowing the teacher to follow through with the teachable moment. Teachable moments can occur at any time. One example of following a teachable moment occurred during a Kdg/ Grade 1 General Music lesson on loud and soft. The class was playing a game using the song, *Impuku Nekati*. In the song, the lyrics state, “the cat and mouse are crying.” A student made an observation asking, “why does the song make me feel happy, but the lyrics talk about crying?” The teacher in turn immediately asked the class, “have you ever cried when you were happy?” Another student responded, “yes, happy tears!” and gave an example. A discussion then ensued about when and where we might experience tears of joys. This connection was not planned. It took flexibility to adapt and follow the teachable moment that opened up the way for an amazing

conversation and authentic SEL-driven moment. We, as teachers, can’t think of everything and our students have so much to offer us every single day if we are open to listening.

## Have Courage to Embed SEL in the Arts Classroom

Many arts classrooms strive to have artistic excellence; however, a “clean performance” or “technically accurate drawing” rarely captures the connection between the student artists’ lives and the artistic process. To elevate the arts education processes beyond traditional excellence requires courage to explore our students’ lives and facilitate this connection. This can be a new approach to teaching and thoughts of “taking time away from teaching the arts” arise. By embracing the connections between the National Core Arts Standards and the core competencies of SEL made explicit in the Arts Education and Social Emotional Learning Framework, it ceases to be an either/or scenario. The arts are enhanced through this process and students’ identity, sense of belonging, and agency are prioritized so the student is at the center of our work. Embracing the essential questions and enduring understandings is the first step to broadening arts education to embrace the lived experience of our students.



DURBAN AVENUE SCHOOL  
**DRAWING TO MUSIC**

SHAWNA LONGO, MUSIC TEACHER



## Mission Statement

The Center for Arts Education and Social Emotional Learning (ArtsEdSEL) is dedicated to illuminating the intersection between arts education and social emotional learning to facilitate the embedded, intentional, and sustained application of SEL-informed arts education.



ArtsEd**SEL**

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and Social Emotional Learning