

Measuring aesthetic development: A national dialogue

Aesthetic literacy can be understood as a mode of cognition or a way of knowing. However, the concept of aesthetics is often absent from conversations about learning and curriculum. The arts now have a place in the Australian national curriculum conversation, as they will form part of the second stage of the national curriculum development. This is therefore an opportune moment to consider the place of aesthetic and creative literacies in the curriculum. Aesthetic literacies have the capacity to be accessed across the curriculum in a range of discipline areas. Tools to assess aesthetic development are already being used in arts education and the dialogue can be assisted by an exploration of their experiences. This paper explores the importance of aesthetic education and the challenges that the assessment of aesthetic literacy brings.

Introduction

To begin this paper with a broad statement; *Education can be a powerful medium for the development of social and cultural action, self-expression, aesthetic awareness and interpersonal skills.* Some may be struck by the inclusion of ‘aesthetic awareness’ in the previous sentence. Aesthetic awareness is both a process and a product that involves learning to become aesthetically knowledgeable, or becoming open to engaging in aesthetic experiences. Both can be enhanced through carefully constructed learning experiences, which will be discussed in more detail later. However, the concepts of aesthetics in themselves are often absent in discussions of learning and curriculum, as rational and functional modes of thinking are more commonly privileged in western education systems. This was previously reflected in the Australian national curriculum debate that once crowded out elements of creativity and imagination with a debate centred on cultural heritage and adult needs (Sawyer, 2008). However, the inclusion of aesthetic learning is persistent in arts education and the recent inclusion of the Arts in the national curriculum has ensured that discussions of aestheticism in the curriculum will take place. It is timely to pause to reflect on what aesthetic education is and discuss possibilities for its place in the curriculum both within and outside the Arts key learning area. Like creativity, aesthetic education has the power to move across disciplines and should not be confined within a single area. A broad understanding of the nature of aesthetic education, and the ways it can be facilitated, evaluated and assessed will assist with the dialogue.

Arts educators and many others in the teaching and policy-making community recently applauded the inclusion of the arts in the national curriculum. Although the extent of its inclusion is yet to be discussed, the national curriculum has carefully avoided the situation that Eisner (1985) described in overseas examples where the aesthetic became “a casualty of American education” (p.32). The Arts, along with creativity and aesthetic awareness could have easily been forgotten in our current climate of economic uncertainty, as Eisner (1985) warned us some time ago, “aesthetic aspects of human experience are considered luxuries. And luxuries, as we all know, can be rather easily foregone in hard times” (p. 32). Rather than being dismissed or forgotten, aesthetic education should be embraced as an integral component of our curriculum and pedagogy as it forms part of the human experience. Aesthetic education accesses a mode of cognition, and a way of thinking and knowing which can be applied to elements that combine to promote a response that connects us to the human experience. This paper also discusses the concept of aesthetic literacy and argues that the development of that literacy should also be able to be accessed by all students. Having said this, the inclusion of aesthetic education in our curriculum presents unique challenges. These challenges range from engaging educators and teacher educators in a healthy respect for aesthetic awareness to assessing aesthetic development, both of which will be discussed in this paper.

Understanding aesthetics in education

It is timely to discuss here exactly what aesthetic education and aesthetic awareness entail. Unfortunately, the common perception of the nature of aesthetic awareness can often contribute to its diminished importance in dialogues of curriculum and learning. Aesthetic awareness carries common perceptions of highly ethereal qualities that are abstract in nature or often associated with high culture (Ross, Randor, Mitchell, & Bierton, 1993). The importance of aesthetic education in the curriculum is further diminished when aesthetics are perceived as private and feelingful (Petock, 1972) responses that can only be engaged on an individual level. Aesthetics are commonly seen as intangible, similar to the concept of ‘creativity’. Aesthetic awareness can be easily confused with artistic talent, which we are used to thinking about in romantic terms of a ‘talented’ individual working alone to produce groundbreaking work.

It is not the intention here to engage in a debate on the definition of aesthetics, as can be explored in numerous other literature (Donoghue, 2003; Sternberg, Kaufman, & Pretz, 2002; Greene 1999; to name a few). Rather an exploration of its importance in a curriculum context is of concern here. As with the concept of aesthetics, numerous conceptions of aesthetic education also exist (Broudy, 1994; Gale, 2005; Smith & Simpson, 1991). For the purposes of this paper, aesthetic education involves the explicit teaching of skills, knowledges and understandings that enhance the aesthetic experience. Aesthetic awareness can be heightened through aesthetic education, where students engage in expressive experiences where sentiment, interpretations and emotional responses are accessed. The dimension of sentiency are able to be communicated and realized through these processes (Greene, 1991).

Aesthetic literacy is another dimension of aesthetic education and it is deeply connected to aesthetic awareness. The literacy aspect implies a critical approach to aesthetic education whereby contextual knowledge and understanding have particular significance. This is not to say that aesthetic literacy involves being able to recite a canon of artists. Greene (1983) used the term to describe a kind of sensibility that can be arrived at, or a form of “conceptual awareness” that enables “diverse persons to break through the cotton wool of daily life and to live more consciously” (p. 185). Greene later reaffirmed this vision, saying “sometimes I think that what we want to make possible is the living of lyrical moments, moments at which human beings (freed to feel, to know, and to imagine) suddenly understand their own lives in relation to all that surrounds” (1999, p. 7). Gale (2005) further argues that this understanding, with a combination of imagination, knowledge and feeling, lies at the core of aesthetic literacy. It is a vision of learning that cuts across and through disciplines, presenting a core value that deserves more attention in contemporary curricula. Aesthetic literacy provides an important lens on experience, a way of seeing that transcends the instrumental and disciplinary approaches where we are able to “learn from aesthetically rendered lives what words, paradoxically, can never say” (Eisner, 1985, p. 35).

While recognising that these experiences deserve a valid place in the curriculum, the poetic and fanciful nature of the language used to describe them can be alienating for some. While aiming to create more understanding of the nature of aesthetic education, this language can intimidate those not immediately familiar with the field, thereby contributing to the chronic misunderstandings to which aesthetics suffer. Additionally, the conception of aesthetic literacy presented here can strike some as academically ‘soft’ or less rigorous than other

literacies. It is difficult to explain to teachers and policy writers that they should be concerned with “the living or lyrical moments”. It’s more productive to consider aesthetic awareness as a mode of cognition, process or way of knowing, as the learning processes can be more easily understood by educators, administrators and members of the general public.

Similarly, the distinction must be made between aesthetic literacy and artistic talent. Although artistic creation is a notable aim of most Arts syllabus documents, the ability to produce works of great beauty is not a requirement of aesthetic literacy. Aesthetic literacy may use a medium such as dance, photography or creative writing, but it has the capacity to transcend traditional discipline areas, which are often treated as separate and distinct in our current conception of curriculum. Gale (2005) illustrates the concept of aesthetic literacy in terms of outcomes, describing what we can hope to see from students who are engaging aesthetically. Some of these outcomes include: analysis of aesthetic elements; development of personal and critical response through judgement and evaluative tools; appreciation of different cultures, values and contexts; understanding of disciplinary perspectives that inform the aesthetic; and an active pursuit of aesthetic engagement and an ability to articulate aesthetic processes. These outcomes have clear learning processes embedded in them. Through these learning processes aesthetic literacy can be accessed in classrooms from the early childhood to senior years, developed alongside other literacies with their own distinct knowledge and pedagogies.

The term “literacy” is used intentionally as it refers to the functionality associated with spoken and written language proficiency (Gale, 2005). Aesthetic literacy moves beyond a basic skills inventory into development of knowledge and potential, more centred on imagination and growth, where the learner can be open to wider possibilities and “open windows in the ordinary and banal” (Greene, 1999, p. 70). Having said this, it is important not to set up a combat between the worlds of the critical and the creative, as though they are two distinct modes of cognition that cannot meet. Rather Sawyer (2008) and Woods & Homer (2005) argue strongly for a ‘creative-critical’ approach. Although referring to the study of texts, this approach allows the creative intentions to be intersected with theorising and knowing. It has similarities to contemporary understandings of ‘textual intervention’ in which involves using creative means to allow the learner to recognise themselves as active analysts and critics (Pope 1995).

This cross-disciplinary approach to aesthetic education ensures that it is not the sole responsibility of any one syllabus or curriculum area for it to be addressed. Gale (2005) argues that the aesthetic experience is not the exclusive province of the arts, and it can be found in all aspects of experience. Academia usually associates the aesthetic with the arts and humanities, but it can play a crucial role in other disciplines as well. As an example, mathematicians are able to find beauty in proof, numbers, equations and geometry. Students in schools can readily have an aesthetic appreciation of science through studies of nature, geology, life forms, oceanography, astronomy and the like. Many physical pursuits emphasise style as well as skill (for example, gymnastics or swimming). Even much of technology is devoted to artistic and creative pursuits, or the desire to make the human experience more communicative and enjoyable. In short, teachers and learners are able to ‘access the aesthetic’ in a range of contexts.

Assessing aesthetic literacies

As mentioned earlier the inclusion of aesthetic appreciation in the curriculum presents challenges, particularly in regards to assessment and evaluation. The contemporary demands of education deem that assessment and reporting procedures accompany all areas of study. How then, is accessing aesthetic literacy successfully reflected within assessment regimes? Questions of ‘How will we know?’ and ‘What kinds of evidence are acceptable?’ will always permeate the policy making in the area. Unsurprisingly, aesthetic processes do not lend themselves well to traditional measurement practices, which mostly conform to the reductive tendency of non-aesthetic engagement, whereby the knowledge that the student must demonstrate is pre-determined. Academia is notoriously left-brained, valuing the rational and logical which is easily subjected to measurement and analysis. Many will find it difficult to judge whether aesthetic processes, for example interpretation and emotional response as described earlier, have taken place. Still, proficiency in aesthetic education is not necessary to facilitate aesthetic assessment, but a willingness to engage in non-traditional assessment methods is.

Misson & Morgan (2006) suggest that we can tell that aesthetic learning has taken place if there is a sense that ‘composition’ has taken place. If the work has been purposefully constructed for the context of aesthetic consumption it is able to become a definable ‘aesthetic text’ (p. 36). Apart from this, there are several examples of the assessment of

aesthetic qualities already in existence. For example, arts education regularly evaluates creative, aesthetic and imaginative work using presentation, creative and synthesis tools. The judgments made in the Arts are frequently quantified using marks or grades. At senior levels grades are verified using moderation processes or external exams. While it must be reiterated that aesthetic development can occur in a range of disciplines, the examples in this paper have been largely drawn from the Arts. As the writer of this paper and an arts educator, I am more familiar with examples of aesthetic education in the arts than in other areas, but it is my hope that the principles and examples discussed here facilitate a cross curricular dialogue about the application of creative and aesthetic literacies in a range of disciplines.

Certainly, the formal assessment of aesthetic literacy is not unique to the Arts, but their experience allows us to discuss the principles of evaluating aesthetic achievement in light of their experience. As an example, Wright and Gerber (2004) argue that the aesthetic dimension of drama education makes the field more intricate, providing more difficulties for the tasks of assessment and certification. Quantifying achievement can be seen to be difficult because of the wide range of creative responses that may be given to a particular task. Divergent responses require the assessor to use judgment in relation to the execution of the task and assessment criteria. These concerns can be similarly applied to any task that involves creative aims, for example, the writing of poetry, the construction of a tessellation or any task involving design. Other examples present further challenges. Cockett (1998) argues that when performances are used the processes are highly dependent on a wide range of interrelated contributions which add to the challenge of aesthetic assessment. Assessment of other literacies often requires that the student selects responses from their experience in order to fit the function of the question that they are asked (Ross et al., 1993). In contrast, an assessment task that involves a students' own creation can be multi-faceted with many interlocking variables (Thomas & Millard, 2006) as the tasks emphasise originality, creativity and innovation. To use an example from Drama, performance tasks require students to not only replicate theatrical traditions before them, but synthesize their own ideas with theatrical conventions, while showcasing their performance skill, all while accessing the aesthetic as appropriate to the task. Attributes of flair, imagination and originality, as appropriate to the style concerned, feature strongly in criteria used to assess artistic works, as is evidenced for example in the HSC Drama Marking Guidelines (NSW Board of Studies) and the ACT's Performing Arts Framework (ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies, 2004).

The issue of why formal assessment of aesthetic skill must take place is a complex phenomenon in itself. It has previously been argued that the promotion of innovation, experimental ideas and autonomy can create incomparable measures of success. Macgregor, Lemerise, Potts and Roberts (1994) explain that “there is tension between the need to demonstrate skill mastery and the desire to embrace autonomy and incomparability.” (p. 3). It can also be argued that the formal and widespread assessment of aesthetics can lead to a stifling of individual expression, imagination, creativity and originality, while not allowing for the fresh pursuit of ideas (Hanley, 2003). One school of thought about the notion of aesthetics is that it is to do with taste and its cultivation (Sawyer, 2008) thereby limiting judgments on its qualities to being purely subjective. When assessing aesthetic merit a wide range of responses are plausible to a particular task, therefore the assessor is required to use judgment in relation to the task and criteria. The tasks used to assess these skills can also be intimidating for students that are less comfortable with non-traditional or negotiated learning pedagogies. Providing students with open options to create whatever they wish can be alienating for some, and may provoke only shallow engagement with aesthetic learning (Sawyer, 2008).

When students are assessed on their creative work we must also ponder what exactly has been created for the purposes of assessment. While the aims of aesthetic education may be realized in the process that leads to assessment, the assessable product will have been constructed for the purposes of assessment. This is where a conundrum can occur. We must ask ourselves if creative assessment tasks aim to produce art or assessable pieces of work and we must further enquire as to whether there is an intersection between the two. It would be fair to say that most students do not engage in aesthetic learning purely for the purposes of assessment. Having said this, some examples from the arts field show that students are generally able to perceive the broader aims of creative assessment and they can see the relationship to their ‘life skills’, as attested to in studies from Hatton (2004) and Smigiel and Barrett (2005). While this paper only reports a few studies on students’ perceptions of aesthetic work, we can note that these studies attest to students being able to acutely perceive the macro level of their learning, the bigger picture of the purpose of creativity in education.

Finally, there is a question of what it is that we are assessing. Do we assess the aesthetic process or the aesthetic product? Should we make judgments on the final product or should we simply be satisfied that the students have engaged with an aesthetic process to varying

degrees. In the Arts the syllabus documents try to make a distinct separation here, using 'creating' and 'presenting' outcomes or learnings. 'Creating' tasks may involve devised work, choreography or composition, and 'presenting' tasks focus on the public mastery of presentation skills. The two can certainly intersect in some cases, but achievements are judged using separate criteria. It is important that the two elements contribute to the aesthetic product or analysis. Also, the evaluation must not be dependent on individual talent or natural ability. The aim of assessment is to record a students' progress on a learning trajectory. As Sternberg, Kaufman, & Pretz (2002) argue, creativity is not an intrapersonal variable. A person's cognitive process cannot be characterised as more or less creative and we cannot fully judge that person's creativity independent of the context of which they are working.

While referring to the Arts, Hanley (2003) asserts that assessment of aesthetic skill is highly appropriate, as artistic creation involves the demonstration of skills and craftsmanship. Like other curriculum areas, there is a body of knowledge to be learned that includes classical and contemporary repertoire. Students are required to synthesise their knowledge of artistic works and techniques in order to create a product that can be successfully presented. There is much literature that supports this, pointing out the benefits of creative and aesthetic assessment and attests to creative work being able to be assessed with a high degree of integrity (Colwell, 2003; Hanley, 2003; Pistone, 2000; Willoughby, Feifs, Baenen, & Grimes, 1995). Hanley (2003) goes further to argue that system-wide assessment of creative expression is not only possible, but necessary to establish the credibility and generalised level of student achievement.

Role of the aesthetic creator and aesthetic assessor

In wider society artistic and aesthetically created work is frequently subject to judgment and criticism by professional critics and audiences alike. In short, creative pursuits are used to being 'judged'. However, a creative consumer and an assessor have significantly differing roles. The presence of the assessor changes the context of the art, as the assessor's judgement becomes the primary focus of the creative effort. The creative work has been created for the purposes of assessment and this can impact on the work that is produced. An exploration of these roles in a Drama context provides an example.

By engaging in performance-based tasks in Drama students learn of numerous theatre conventions, including that of the relationship between the performer and the audience.

Aitken (2005 in Aitken, 2007) writes in detail of the relationship between theatre makers (performers) and audience members within a performance space and context. He suggests that for a performance to 'work', a number of shared understandings are required between theatre maker and audience member, including those related to accessing the aesthetic. Both parties require a loosely shared sense of how the performance will be read and what will be valued, or considered of 'good' quality. These can alter in different circumstances of course, but ultimately, the control of the terms of the performance lie with the theatre maker. They must have an understanding of audience expectation in their construction of a piece and must consider the level of interaction or direction called for from the audience. It is always the theatre makers, as the relationship managers, who are in control in a successful performance (2005 in Aitken, 2007).

A particular power relationship between actor and audience is present in during an assessed performance. The theatre makers are still required to dictate the terms of the performance to the audience. The student is the theatre maker, but the teacher (who may also be the assessor) must maintain some degree of control over the performance environment. Although the theatre maker maintains a degree of autonomy over the terms of the performance, the teacher will probably have initially dictated the boundaries in which the theatre makers are to work within, such as the theatrical style or subject matter being dealt with. Additionally, the teacher may halt a performance which is deemed to be inappropriate or unsafe.

An assessor is more active than an audience member. An assessor is required to make judgments about the quality of the work and physically notate their thoughts in relation to the given criteria. While an audience is expected to make subjective judgments about the piece, the assessor aims to make informed judgments, which may result in marks or grades being recorded. Haynes (2008) and Ross et al. (1993) describe traditional assessment as being 'objectivity-focused' (p. 9) whereby assessors are expected to discard their own feelings in favour of strictly set criteria where interpretations are not required. Arts teachers have had to develop skills and expertise in assessing the outcome of the aesthetic process or the manifestation of the individual aesthetic experience. The product is viewed from a number of perspectives and informed judgments are made by the 'expert' assessor based on the set criteria and the quality of what was produced (Ross et al., 1993). A sense of objectivity is present in that a teacher's tastes and preferences must not unduly influence the final assessment of a piece of work. However, it must be noted that subjective judgment can never

be divorced from the assessment of dramatic works. In fact, personal responses from both the assessor and the student invariably widen the possibilities for interpretation. Both parties hence should be aware that personal taste and preference are a natural response, as they are rooted in "culturally authorized criteria" for judgment of the level of achievement (Ross et al., 1993, p. 164).

To assist the assessor to make informed judgments that access the aesthetic, Ross et al. (1993) suggests that grading of creative tasks should be criterion referenced related, rather than based on normative structures. Tierney and Marielle (2004) suggest that criteria must be explicitly stated; the attributes for each performance criterion must be explicitly stated; and the attributes are consistently addressed from one level to the next on a progressive scale. However, assessment of creative elements must move beyond simple competency based tasks, to a level where originality and innovation are valued, within the confines of the curriculum at hand. For this reason Pritchard (2004) favours the use of criteria and set standards and Ross et al. (1993) suggest that grading should be accompanied by a rich, descriptive profile of each student's achievement.

As with all learning areas, it is vital that assessment of aesthetics follows the guiding principles of 'good' assessment that are similar to that of other testing methods. Griffin and Nix (1991) state that "The same principles that apply to development of objective essay and affective assessment tasks also apply to the development of performance or practical tasks." (p. 71). 'Good assessment' is fair and ethical, it uses multiple methods, it is valid and feasible and it enhances instruction (McMillan, 2000). In addition to these qualities aesthetic assessment must address the links between the creation, criticism and presentation of the aesthetic, often using methods that allow the use of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1993). Arts education currently provides some examples of some of the possibilities in this area as Ross et al. (1993) illustrates, "arts education encourages individual creative responses and needs an appropriate assessment methodology that genuinely reflects the expressive and creative dimensions of art" (p. 9). Furthermore it is essential that assessment tools allow students the scope to be able to utilize aesthetic modes of learning and discovery, as described by Ross (1994), rather than push students into over-defined moulds where outcomes are predictable. Gale (2005) similarly reminds us that assessment of aesthetic literacy must be sensitive to variations across disciplines, and must suit the subjects at hand. Having said this, aesthetic assessment tools and criteria are culturally constructed and can be

subjective in the context of their time and place. It can be argued that artistic pioneers, such as artist Pablo Picasso, composer John Cage or playwright Samuel Beckett, would have attained poor results if assessed by the criteria of their contemporaries because their experimental ideas were largely unheard of at the time. Their groundbreaking art contrasted strongly with the celebrated art of their day and while we acknowledge their artistic contributions today, at the time of their release they provoked strong, often negative reactions. Having said this, aesthetic assessment requires students to show creativity, but it's not necessary to create a new movement of art. Marking criteria should be able promote creative aims while generalising the level of student achievement.

Designing aesthetic assessment

Earlier this paper mentioned the possibility of aesthetic literacy being perceived as 'soft' in learning environments that traditionally value rational thinking modes. It must be noted that, as with any assessable task, a range of students will produce responses of differing qualities. Like all tasks, some students will excel while others will struggle to grasp concepts. Again, the assessment must focus on skills that can be learned, developed and assessed. Similarly, a task cannot simply require a student to state if they liked or disliked a particular aesthetic element. Work produced with aesthetic qualities must be grounded with content knowledge of what is being produced. The student applies the content knowledge together with creative skills to address the task (Pritchard, 2004). Divergent responses are permissible and in some cases, encouraged.

It would be remiss of this paper not to make mention of how these modes of assessment can be incorporated into the current curriculum structures which are currently under review. As has been established, various modes of gathering evidence are more suitable to aesthetic engagement than others. Howie (2004) makes strong statements about the inadequacy of traditional written exams when assessing aesthetic learning. Howie describes a "systematised and systematic reduction of students' experience of the aesthetic...to the demands of a particular examination question..." as being a poor tool to aid the transportation of minds into aesthetic realms. It is for this reason that Sawyer (2008) favours an approach which departs from having students replicate pre-existing texts. Sawyer (2008) was referring to the study of English when he suggested that tasks should enable students to act on and produce their own texts, which may include combining forms in inventive ways. Other common assessment methods used currently include holistic tasks and projects, videotapes and audiotapes,

journals, observations and checklists, student exhibitions, performances and teach-reteach cooperative learning methods” (Willoughby et al., 1995). It is vital that assessment tools are varied and diverse, as they additionally contribute to the successful assessment of multiple intelligences, as outlined in Gardner’s theory (1993). In this way, practical assessment tools provide us with examples that allow students to experience transportation to aesthetic realms and personal transformation as a result of the process. Having said this, care must be taken when designing tasks of this nature, for example, Griffin and Nix (1991) advise that practical assessment tools require a greater amount of information and instruction than other types of cognitive or affective testing. The challenges do not mean that standards are unable to be maintained in aesthetic learning. On the contrary, the need for assessment procedures that use carefully constructed criteria is heightened to avoid the perceptions that aesthetic literacy is impossible to assess, containing too many variables or differing scenarios.

Continuing the conversation

The area may seem riddled with challenges, but in our current climate of educational change it is timely that policy developers, researchers and classroom teachers engage in a dialogue about the place of aesthetic education in the curriculum. We can be encouraged by the knowledge that some curriculum areas have faced similar challenges and regularly deal with the issues of aesthetic learning each day. Furthermore, we must remind ourselves that the challenges of aesthetic learning are similar to those that all people deal with as part of the human experience, as explained by Eisner (1998) who states

“The problems of life are much more like the problems encountered in the arts. They are problems that seldom have a single correct solution; they are problems that are often subtle, occasionally ambiguous, and sometimes dilemma-like.... Life outside of school is seldom like school assignments--and hardly ever like a multiple-choice test.” (p. 84).

Gale (2005) adds to this by asserting that “Aesthetic literacy is not an answer to a question or a solution to a problem, but it is a vital capacity and skill with which to observe, imagine, and engage with all that surrounds.” It is appropriate that we address concepts of subtlety, choice, interpretation, observation, ambiguity and creative thinking in our curriculum; Not just as an added component for relaxation or ‘artistic appreciation’, but as a core mode of thinking in which students regularly engage. Aesthetic literacy provides students with another tool, skill or another way of seeing the world, their culture and own lives (Gale, 2005) which are vitally

important skills for students living in the 21st century. A students' experience of a discipline area can be enhanced if they see its connection to expression of the human experience.

Likewise, simply providing aesthetic experiences is not enough. For them to be truly meaningful, evaluation must take place so that students might continue to grow in their aesthetic development. While the challenges of aesthetic assessment described in this paper are numerous, they are not an excuse for doing nothing. To do nothing perpetuates the myth that aesthetic literacy and aesthetic awareness cannot be developed, giving permission for it to be excused from the curriculum. To do so would be a tragedy. Dewey (in Gale, 2005) once pointed out that the opposite of aesthetic is anaesthetic. To anaesthetise our students to the world of aesthetic education would certainly be a failure that we cannot be responsible for.

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