Global Interdependence and Art Education: Where Hexagons Make the Connection

“Where once nations depended on sovereignty alone to secure their destinies, today they depend on one another. In a world where the poverty of some imperils the wealth of others, none are safer than the least safe. Interdependence is not a strategy of idealists, but a realistic necessity.”

Dr. Benjamin Barber
Co-Founder, Interdependence Day
Global Interdependence and Art Education: Where Hexagons Make the Connection

“As educators, it is not important to fill our students’ heads with facts about democracy, but to give young people the joy, anxieties and responsibilities of democratic life. In a democratic society we want to raise individuals

• Who perceive fully – who can see and analyze the persons and conditions that surround them.
• Who can consciously combine what they see into thoughts and ideas that are complex and
• Regularly act on the basis of what we understand and are aware of.”

Olivia Gude: 2009 Lowewnfeld Lecture
The International Interdependence Hexagon Project
NAEA Seattle 2011

A Social Justice Art Education Model

Beth Burkhauser, Keystone College, LaPlume, PA

www.interdependencedaynepa.org
What is Social Justice Art Education?

Marit Dewhurst, Art Education Journal, September 2010

“Shares a commitment to create art that

• draws attention to
• mobilizes action towards
• attempts to intervene in systems of inequality or injustice”
Must it involve overtly political or controversial issues?

Not necessarily BUT should “offer participants a way to construct knowledge, critically analyze an idea and take action in the world.” Dewhurst
Hexagon Project

Soft? → Medium? → Hard?

Social Justice
Art Education
What is the Interdependence Hexagon Project?
• Students choose a relevant theme and do research
  • Students create in any media, using a downloadable hexagonal template or multiple templates.
  • They can work collaboratively or alone on one or multiple hexagons.
• Deadline for Participation for 2011 is June 30, 2011 for September exhibit in Scranton, PA and...
• On-line registration begins May 1, 2011
Interdependence Day History

Interdependence Day was launched in Philadelphia on September 12, 2003 as a post 9/11 symbol of regeneration, as a time to reflect on the tragedy of the incidents of terror, not only in the United States, but all over the world, and to ask ourselves, “What next?”

It seemed critically important to acknowledge the inevitability and significance of interdependence in our time, and set out to build constructively, and civilly, and culturally, a global civil society.

Co-Founders:

Sondra Myers, Senior Fellow for International Civic and Cultural Projects at the University of Scranton

Dr. Benjamin Barber, Walt Whitman Professor of Political Science Emeritus, Rutgers University.
WHY the HEXAGON?

is a composition of complex relationships, interdependent lines, like bonds of human connection, strengthened in multiples into an infinite network of connections.

Maintains its own presence as a shape, symbol of light and life, yet, structurally, destined to be part of a whole - a splendid architectural element, infinitely expandable.

...a metaphor for our interconnectedness
The ARTIST: synthesizes, makes conclusions, takes a stand, must come to terms with content and materials, collaborates.

... can change the World!!

...and so, too, the student artist...

By Student from Lackawanna Trail H. S.
The Hexagon Project Is…
Ripe for Formulating Essential Questions, Big Ideas,
Overarching Themes
Encourages and fosters INTERDISCIPLINARY strategies
Resources:

• Website: [http://www.interdependencedaynepa.org](http://www.interdependencedaynepa.org)

• **The Interdependence Handbook**  
  Looking Back, Living the Present, Choosing the Future  
  Edited by Sondra Myers and Benjamin R. Barber

• essays, discussion questions  
• prospectus  
• declarations of interdependence  
• research bibliography  
• prospectus  
• Templates  
• Facebook  Twitter  WordPress
Exhibit Opening
And Recognition Event
plus Music, Dance, Hands-on Workshops

Scranton

Butwal, Nepal
T-Shirt Stamping Workshop for Nepali Translation of the book “Sold” by Patricia McCormick

Sara Dibble, Blue Ridge Middle School

Stamp a T-Shirt - Save a Girl!
Interdependence
Hexagon Project

Themes

DIVERSITY
Free spaces for religious, ethnic, sexual, cultural, racial identities
Personal and group dignity

HUMAN RIGHTS of every person
We are one human family: Examine
Consumerism vs. having enough
Being more not having more

COMMOMALITIES
Policies protecting and expressing human commonality
Linking the personal, local with the global
Empathy

Interdependence
Goals:
1. To see as citizens of one civilized world, recognizing responsibilities to the common goods and liberties of humankind as a whole.
2. To explore these themes through “activist” art-making

CHILDREN
Protect their rights and goods
Health
Education

ENVIRONMENT
Safe, sustainable global environment
We are one earth community
We only have one earth to win or lose

GOVERNANCE
Understand Democratic forms
Realize common rights
Common needs
HUMAN RIGHTS of every person
  • We are one human family

  • Examine Consumerism vs. having enough
  • Being more not having more
  • Exploring Visual Culture and Identity
  • WHERE DO I FIT IN?

By Students from Union Endicott High School, NY
HUMAN RIGHTS
of every person
• We are one
human family

• Examine
Consumerism vs.
having enough

• Being more not
having more
• Exploring Visual
Culture and
Identity
• WHERE DO I FIT
IN?

By Students from
Leo Baeck
School
Toronto, Canada
and
Lackawanna Trail
HS, PA
DIVERSITY
• Free spaces for religious, ethnic, cultural identities
• Personal and group dignity

By Students from Migrant Education Summer Program

Nepalese Student
ENVIRONMENT
Safe, sustainable global environment
We are one earth community
We only have one earth to win or lose

Alberta, Canada
St Maximilian Kolb Middle School, PA
ENVIRONMENT

Riverside HS, PA

Safe, sustainable global environment
We are one earth community
We only have one earth to win or lose

Provo HS, Utah

Novato Charter, CA
GOVERNANCE
Democratic Forms
Realize common Rights
Common needs

“FOR TO BE **free** IS NOT MERELY TO CAST OFF ONE’S CHAINS, BUT TO LIVE IN A WAY THAT RESPECTS AND ENHANCES THE FREEDOM OF OTHERS.”

New York

Nepal
GOVERNANCE
Democratic Forms

Realize common Rights

Common needs

Alberta, Canada

Nepal
COMMONALITIES
Policies protecting and expressing human commonality

Linking the local with the global

Empathy

Riverside HS, PA

Tunkhannock HS, PA
CHILDREN
Protect their rights and goods
Health and Education

Nepal
Alberta, Canada
What Teachers have to Say
“…we will be having our own Hexagon Gallery Night, to show the students’ work to the community.” Grade 5

Farragut Elementary School
Culver, California
Debra Bianculli, Art Teacher
“My students thoroughly enjoyed the process of learning about I-Day and the Concept of Interdependence.”
The Leo Baeck Day
School and
Interdependence
“… the notion of being a global citizen is incorporated into every discipline we teach.

The hexagons ... helped students to forge cognitive links between the subjects of the hexagons and the major issues in their own lives and the lives of other students around the world. Each shares the common values of health, education and human rights. This exercise reinforced the notion of collective responsibility and exposed students to the common experiences of humankind as a whole.”

Gene Teeger, Art Teacher
Union-Endicott High School
Endicott, NY
Cindy Henry, Art Teacher, AP Art Student
Assignment

“I find that many teenagers really do have concerns about the world in which they live and they value the opportunity to have a voice. Because the theme is broad enough, they were able to adapt it to their own personal concerns.”
You must be the change you wish to see in the world. - Gandhi

Union-Endicott HS Student, NY
The Project “could be adapted to any medium, but still makes it possible to teach elements and principles of design while at the same time retain one of the most important aspects of art—creating meaning.”
Dan Demora, Lackawanna Trail High School, Factoryville, PA
Yearly Connections:
ART into ACTION

2007 - Environmental Installation by Pittsburgh Artist, Cindy Snodgrass

2008 - Lackawanna Prison and Scranton High School, Scranton State School for the Deaf

2009 - Diane Paparo, NYC Interior Designer/Child Labor-free Rug Designs hand-made made in Nepal

2010 - Nepal & Haitian /Pennsylvanian Connection of the Heart
Workshop/Presentation at Hexagon Opening, Scranton

Climate Balance Hexagons at MIT
Diane Paparo

A NEPA native, she is locally grown, but a citizen of the world.

Her work takes her all over the world, but her heart and her resolve lie close to home.

She remains on the Board of Trustees of her alma mater Keystone College and is active on the board of Scranton’s Everhart Museum of Natural History, Art and Science. She is a member of the National Council of Women’s Business Enterprise.
Diane’s LOTUS SILK RUG, in design and manufacture, is emblematic of her connectedness to the world. Woven in Nepal, it is inspired by an Asian aesthetic, but it rests on a grid of honeycombed hexagons – a universal symbol – in all different sizes – and all linked. It is hand-knotted by experienced craftsmen who bring old-world tradition and originality to this contemporary rug. No two will be exactly the same, but all will be beautiful.
Interdependence Hexagon
Project Visits Partners in Nepal

Where Energy Springs from the Deep Desire to Live in a Civil Democratic Society

...exploring ways to coexist creatively and collaboratively
Two Lap-tops and LCD Projector delivered to Interdependence Hexagon partners in Naharpur School, Butwal, Nepal January 2010
We began with a little challenge: the students had to move a large bucket of water from one end of the hall to the other without dropping or spilling it – and everyone had to participate. This was successful, broke the ice and we all cheered when it was accomplished.
After that we gave out our hexagon templates [good thing we pre-cut 100!] to all participants. Beth asked them to format their hexagons with a border that explained the following:

- Three personal talents, abilities and/or strengths and
- Three personal hopes/plans for the future.
- Then, they were to create a symbol for themselves in the center of the hexagons. They were given markers, pencils to do this.
After this, we re-grouped the students heterogeneously, so they were with students from other schools, ages, sexes.
At this point, we asked them to share and explain their hexagons with each other.
We asked them to role-play. They were to each take on one of the occupations from their three hope/plans section; e.g., if one was hoping to be an engineer, then they would play that role in the group.

Students completing and sharing about hexagons
• They also placed their hexagons together on the floor in front of them, creating flowerlike circle of connected hexagons.
• Then we asked them to brainstorm issues in their lives – from concerns about their own school community, their city, region and country.
• We wrote down the list, which included items like lack of electric power [there are only 12 hours – or less – of electricity per day in Nepal], pollution and litter, poverty, poor government and inadequate educational opportunities for children.
• We placed these concerns in a box and had each group [there were 11 groups of six] choose one.

Students re-grouped and getting ready brainstorming issues for role-play
ROAD Conditions
Then, we gave them a larger hexagon to be placed in the center of their circle. On this we asked them to write down at least six items that identified the problem, analyzed it and developed solutions that were specific to the “mix of citizens” in the group of six.

The Solution, through Interdependent listening, thinking, planning and visualizing, for better internet access in Nepal.
Hexagon Exchange with Haiti

Tunkhannock HS students create and send hexagons of hope and encouragement with Keystone College Professor Dave Porter
Haitians Give Back
Tunkhannock Students Respond
Hexagons of the Heart - The Haitian Exchange
From Tunkhannock, PA to Haiti and Back Again
Haitian Kites, Commonalities and…

The Keystone College PAEA Student Chapter

Fund-Raiser for Haiti
For
OneBigBoost:
One Gift
One Time
To Benefit Many
In Philippines... Perhaps a teacher in US could work with his/her students from now until June - and then send ideas and materials to you in June - for your students to respond to. This could take place at the very beginning of your trimester - in the beginning of June - when our teachers are ending the school year. There would be about a two week overlap when, if possible, you could arrange a Skype [or some kind] video conference!. I will have an interested teacher contact you!

Jared Akama Ondieki   CENTER FOR PARTNERSHIP AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT TRUST (CEPACET) Nairobi, Kenya

Is the Hexagon Project Social Justice Art Education?

“Shares a commitment to create art that

• draws attention to

• mobilizes action towards

• attempts to intervene in

systems of inequality or injustice”
Does it “offer participants a way to construct knowledge, critically analyze an idea and take action in the world?” Dewhurst

If so, please join us in September 2011
How to get involved:

• Download your Hexagon Packet and read it.

• Engage support from administration and other disciplines

• Log on to www.interdependencedaynepa.org for updates, resources

• Download or Purchase an Interdependence Handbook and gather ideas and understanding

• Communicate with contact persons: bbukhauser@msn.com, or gbarbolish@hotmail.com

• Launch project during the winter/spring and have entries ready by end of June, 2011!