



CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

Program Notes

Program Title: Creating Educational Materials: Tips for Developing Engaging Programs

Location: California Academy of Sciences

Date: October 10, 2001

Presenters: Bert Bower, Teachers Curriculum Institute (TCI)
Carol Thurston and Elaine Connell, Asian Art Museum Docents

Program Overview:

1) Carol and Elaine introduced the Asian Art Museum's interactive school program called "Body Language," through which students explore body language communication in Asian sculptures. This program was developed with Bert Bowers of TCI, and engages students in group looking activities in the galleries and a re-enactment of the statue's body language in a sort of *tableau vivant* in the classroom.

2) Bert discussed strategies for curriculum development—incorporating various activities for various learning styles as identified by Howard Gardner (linguistic, mathematical/logical, bodily/kinesthetic, visual/spatial, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal). The goal of curriculum is to cater to multiple learning styles so all children have opportunities to engage.

3) Characteristics of the Asian's Body Language program (1 and one half hours):

- Concept of body language introduced in the classroom with a slide of the Indian goddess Durga
- Students are divided into groups of 10 with one docent. They work in pairs in galleries using study sheets. They have 20 minutes to work on one piece, they present their findings to the other pairs and move to a new gallery
- Study sheets include several looking/discovery questions and fill in the blank drawings
- Gallery activity utilizes five of the seven intelligences
- Students then re-convene in the classroom and wrap up with more slides talking about body language

See "Body Language Docent Script" under Handouts.

Activities:

Program participants took on the role of children and experienced the Body Language program using slides in place of the objects. The group discussed strategies for engaging students in their programs.

Handouts / Recommended Reading:

Teachers' Curriculum Institute Web Site: <http://www.historyalive.com/>

Handout: Teachers' Curriculum Institute, "History Alive! Learning Theory: The Three Premises Behind *History Alive!*" 5 pages.

Carol Thurston, "Body Language Spoken Here," *The Docent Educator* (Winter 1998-99): pp. 14-16.

[Asian Art Museum, "Body Language Docent Script."](#)