

ADJUDICATED ARTWORKS: EFFECTIVE TEACHING UNDER RESTRICTED CIRCUMSTANCES

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A portrait of Lyndsay Rose, a woman with long brown hair, smiling. Behind her is a bulletin board with various items, including a sign that says "I TEACH".

The logo for the Professional Art Educators Association (PAEA), featuring a stylized 'e' and 'a' in blue and orange.

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A photograph of the Lancaster County Youth Intervention Center, a large brick building with a red roof and a central entrance, with an American flag in front.

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Lyndsay Rose, Professional Concerns Chair

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Lyndsay Rose is the PAEA Professional Concerns Chair. She teaches at the Lancaster County Youth Intervention Center to students ages 11-18.

Adjudicated Artworks: Effective Teaching Under Restricted Circumstances



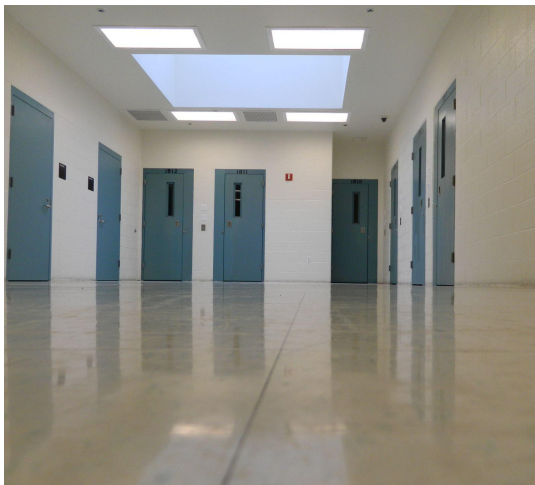
When I inform educators where I work, most often the response I get is “*That must be really challenging.*” While that sentence is true, the population I teach is the least challenging aspect of the job. In fact, they are the reason I love teaching so much.

The intervention center I teach at is a residential facility for students between the ages of 10-18. The adjudicated youth, or youth convicted by a court’s ruling, may spend a week, a month, or a year in the facility before being released to similar placements for rehabilitation, safe care, or an incarcerated facility. Each student’s case is unique to

their circumstances and must be taken into consideration while planning lessons. In this blog, I will share with you some typical challenges I face and how to effectively plan your lessons around them.

The first major restriction educators in this setting may face is material use. Your cart of materials may be labeled and counted with each number of each material. This is done to ensure that every art material that is taken must be given back. Students are searched before they leave the room. Contributing to the safety of the students and staff by keeping materials accounted for is required in this setting.

Another material restriction is what the students are allowed to use on a given day. For example, when there is a student who is exhibiting self-injurious behaviors, the student is not allowed to use any material that is sharp or may be taken apart. When this happens, it is critical to make sure all scissors, pencils, and rulers are not available for use by any student during the lesson. This ensures that all students are safe and there is no temptation around the student in restriction. Students may use oil and chalk pastels, tear rather than cut paper, or bring out some clay for a soft tangible. Try not to think of this as a modification but rather a change in material exploration. Remember, students love choices of materials!



Lastly, flexibility is a key skill that must be present at all times. When teaching in a facility that has students potentially rotating on a daily basis, staying positive and flexible will be your two best assets. While there are classrooms for students, the actual class may be in a different space, specifically teaching “*on unit*” which is where the students reside.

When this is the case, there is no technology, sink, or even enough chairs or tables for students to sit at. Make sure you have a poster and some visuals of the lesson printed and ready for students to use. Also, ensure that you use the space to offer alternative methods of material use or create art standing using tape to attach to the wall. This is the time to use your creativity and determination!

When teaching in any youth facility, safety and flexibility are the two main skills to maintain at all times. Furthermore, a positive attitude and your love for teaching will drive your lessons through no matter the circumstances. While this can seem daunting or overwhelming, once you adhere to teaching with these values your teaching strategies will have changed permanently.

For more information regarding alternative settings or professional concerns, email professionalconcerns@paea.org.