

Summary of Key Findings
Feasibility Study of the Joy2Learn Foundation's Education e-Presentations
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- The Joy2Learn programs are a rich, interactive resource that can be used for instruction in the arts, particularly study of artists, artworks, artistic concepts and vocabulary, and historical contexts. They are also effective for linking artistic concepts with teaching in other academic areas, such as English writing arts (vocabulary, writing, oral presentations), social studies (related history, study of cultures) and research skills.
- A large majority of the teachers that used the programs strongly believed that they were a valuable and unique resource for teaching about music and theater. They were easy to use and children clearly enjoyed them. Students were able to freely negotiate the programs, moving between sections with ease.
- Teachers were far more likely to use the programs when they were given a clear signal by their administration that it was important and desirable, and when they had adequate time to prepare strategies for integrating their content into their ongoing curricula. Teachers were less likely to use the programs when they encountered the program on their own without a system of administrative or structural support.
- Teachers that were most successful at using the Joy2Learn programs had these characteristics:
 1. Teachers put in planning time, developing their own lessons or curriculum links.
 2. Teachers put their own stamp on the lessons, giving them ownership of the teaching process.
 3. Teachers did not allow technical limitations to get in the way of using the program, but found creative applications using the available equipment.
 4. Teachers developed teaching strategies that more fully engaged students in thinking deeply about the artworks and the related curriculum. Successful teachers went beyond rote teaching and learning and developed activities supporting higher order thinking.
 5. Teachers connected the Joy2Learn content to the students' own prior experiences.
 6. Teachers connected the Joy2Learn content with other arts activities or other academic areas.
- Challenges to full participation by teachers included: (1) time constraints and competing curricula; (2) lack of institutional or administrative support; (3) a need for teacher professional development on using the program effectively; (4) a need for additional resources, such as lesson plans, a teacher's guide, and background material.
- Students responded positively to the programs. They enjoyed the interactivity, and the ability to move between sections on their own. The children were particularly engaged when the teacher used the programs effectively, interweaving viewing the program with instruction linked to an overall curriculum.

Recommendations

- The Joy2Learn e-presentations have notable strengths, such as ease-of-use, technical sophistication, interactivity, artistic content, and participation by leading artists. The e-presentations can be used by arts specialist teachers or generalist teachers exploring connections between the arts and academic areas. However, incorporating the programs into effective, sequential class instruction – within the arts or related academic areas – will require teacher planning and professional development.

- A benefit of the online format is that the programs can be adjusted over time, in response to this study and subsequent evaluations. The Joy2Learn Foundation should continue its developing trend to emphasize higher-order thinking skills within the programs, as opposed to rote tasks. More expansive assessment strategies should be incorporated, either within the programs or within a teacher's guide.
- The most effective applications we observed occurred when teachers used the programs as jumping off points for more extended research or other assignments. There are many possibilities for research reports, performance observation reports, creative arts activities, classroom presentations, and so on. Suggestions for some of these activities could be in a teacher's guide.
- Hyperlinks can be inserted into the program to connect with resources for research or other activities. There are some links within the dance program, but these are generally to state standards which will be of little interest to the students. The content of the programs (including hyperlinks) should be for students, and resources for using the programs should be in a teacher's guide.
- The programs can be expanded to include materials for different ages, or for beginning or advanced students. A teacher's guide could explain how to use the programs with different ages or levels.
- Teachers would benefit from the availability of teacher's guides for each program. The guides could have an overview of the program, connections to arts and academic standards, and overall suggestions for classroom use. The guide could also include sample curriculum units (and how the program could fit in), sample lesson plans, homework or research assignments, and assessment strategies.
- The Joy2Learn Foundation should develop a strategy for professional development of a core group of teachers that will implement the programs in a comprehensive manner. The professional development program should go beyond a workshop presentation. It should support teachers to develop curriculum or lessons that are applicable to their own teaching contexts. Teachers must develop a sense of ownership of the process and believe that it is directly applicable to their own development and teaching situation. This will likely take facilitation by expert practitioners.
- A network of a core group of teachers that use the programs should be developed over time, so that they may share teaching strategies and means for coping with specific challenges. The Joy2Learn website would be the logical host for sample lessons and suggestions for use.
- Additional thought should be given on how to develop a network of Joy2Learn users. Teachers and districts will be far more likely to use the programs if they see themselves connected to, and supported by, a larger group. Possibilities include an online newsletter or users' forum, participation in educational conferences (such as MENC) or collaborations with other initiatives.
- Teachers should not rely on the programs to teach for them. It is important to develop lesson plans and fit instruction within a larger curriculum context. Teachers should be active, not passive, users of the programs to take full advantage of the rich artistic content.
- Teachers were more likely to use the programs when they had explicit support from principals, evidenced by adequate planning time for professional and curriculum development.