
Mentor's Introduction

ENID ZIMMERMAN
Indiana University

Paul Engle's background as an art teacher at Peru High School brings insight to this account of the history and educational uses of the Thompson Art Collection at Peru High School in Peru, Indiana. Engle's argument about the value of using original works of art for classroom construction seems logical, but how many art teachers actually heed his advice? The role of art teacher as curator, suggested by Engle, is rare yet could be developed as modest collections of art works are gathered for use in art classrooms.

In Engle's paper, the history of how a school art collection was acquired and used both in art classrooms and in community settings provides one model. The lack of care for the collection in the recent past demonstrates the need for all art teachers to be educated to initiate, maintain, and use collections of original works of art for educational purposes.

Engle indicates that the history of other school art collections might prove valuable and should be researched further. In depth interviews with people instrumental in forming school art collections could provide valuable information not always available through records and public accounts found in newspaper and press releases. When other models of acquiring and curating school art collections are gathered, suggestions for successful uses of school art collections could be established. The issue of school art collections, in respect to their history and current uses in art classrooms, needs to be further researched. Engle has opened the door to further inquiry in this area.