

Abstract

Art is a universal medium that provides a way to explore and discuss complex emotions—such as anxiety, frustration, joy, and the process of learning itself. Imagine a classroom where students use metaphors to express their thoughts, ideas, and fears about learning. Art, in this context, offers a safe, non-threatening space for students to connect and reflect on their feelings.

Creativity is one of the most valuable skills we can develop, particularly for teachers, and it holds special importance for elementary pre-service teachers, who often feel uncertain about teaching subjects like mathematics. In an activity conducted within an elementary methods course, using art to express and communicate these emotions allowed future teachers to engage with their fears and concerns, leading them to discover strategies for teaching math. As the activity was used more often, it became a method for researchers to investigate thoughts and ideas. The metaphor-driven conversations helped create an opportunity for preservice teachers to safely explore their feelings, while also giving the professor an opportunity to inform their instruction to better prepare pre-service teachers for their future classrooms.

Key Words: *elementary pre-service teachers, multiliteracy, art, mathematics, metaphor*