

The Development and Practice of Crafts Education Lesson Using “Echizen Washi” in the International Baccalaureate MYP Art Programme

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Abstract

This study reports on the practice of teaching Arts (visual arts) to students in the Middle Years Programme (MYP) of the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum in Japan. In 2018, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) in Japan established the MEXT IB Education Promotion Consortium, focusing on expanding the introduction of IB education. Teachers in IB-accredited schools design and implement units based on "backwards planning" (Wiggins and McTighe, 2015) and are also "Teachers as Learners" who learn alongside their students through instruction. The MYP curriculum allows schools to meet national, state, provincial or other subject-specific curricular requirements while fulfilling the IB mission and implementing IB philosophy (IBO, 2022, p.4). In Japan, crafts education has been delivered from the secondary education curriculum, emphasizing various significances such as connections with life and community, tradition and creativity, the balance between utility as tools and aesthetics, and the meaning of materials (Koike, 2021; Sato, 1996). However, there are few reports on crafts education practiced within the framework of MYP curriculum, which differs from the Japanese education system.

This study reports on the unit design and teaching practice at Tokyo Gakugei University International Secondary School (TGUSS), an IB-accredited school, using Echizen Washi, a Japanese traditional craft, as a subject. How did students perceive Japanese traditional crafts through learning within the IB curriculum? Specifically, what conceptual understanding and global context did students acquire through the knowledge and understanding of the times and culture conveyed through materials and the production process? Additionally, as a "Teacher as Learner" in IB education, what learning did the author experience in designing the crafts as arts unit?

To address these questions, the unit design and teaching practice overview were considered along with the text mining results of the students' written responses to the 'Inquiry Questions'.

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