

RECOGNIZING YOUR BIAS

The SPARK program content – the individual stories about artists and their work - may at times challenge your own personal conception of what defines “art.” This is in fact, one of the goals for the project. However, in so being, you may find the words “*That’s not art*” enter your mind or leave your lips as you watch the stories. All of us, even teachers, have personal biases about art and what we think defines it.

Use the encounter with your biases in the arts as opportunity for you to join your students in exploring a new concept or approach to art. Students are faced with confronting their biases everyday, and SPARK provides a venue for both you and your students to join together to make informed judgments on a wide diversity of artists’ work.



The Visual and Performing Arts Content Standard: Visual Art 4.0 - Aesthetic Valuing - Grades 9 – 12 - Advanced provides the way into this process of considering your own bias:

Make Informed Judgments

4.4 Apply various art-related theoretical perspectives to their own works of art and the work of others in classroom critiques.

4.5 Construct a rationale for the validity of a specific work of art that falls outside their conceptions of art.

4.6 Develop written criteria for the selection of a body of work from their portfolios that represents significant achievements.

This aspect of arts education – confronting one’s own bias and conceptions about art - is one of the cornerstones of deriving **meaning** from works of art beginning in pre-kindergarten and continuing throughout our lives.

SPARK can provide the ideal vehicle for this **exploration** for both teachers and students. We encourage you when you hear “*That isn’t art*” in your head to take the challenge and explore together with your students to develop informed judgments through a positive and appreciative process based on exploration and learning.