

The Development and Use of Local Art Resources in the Senior Secondary Art Curriculum--The Dazu Rock Carvings as an Example

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Abstract: Located in Dazu County, Chongqing, China, the Dazu Rock Carvings, an iconic work of late Chinese cave art, are rare in the world for their magnitude, artistic mastery and richness, and were inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in December 1999. Its outstanding aesthetic significance is closely linked to the potential of local art curriculum resources. This study takes a theoretical and practical approach, focusing on exploring the organic links between the Dazu Stone Carvings and high school art curriculum resources, seeking to develop them as another important source of art teaching and ultimately applying them to high school art classroom teaching.

Keywords: Dazu stone carvings; Local art resources; High school art; Curriculum development and utilization.

We are in an era of rapid development of the Internet, where the depth and breadth of information proliferation is increasing day by day, and the amount of information that students are exposed to has expanded to a level that the traditional “conformist teacher” teaching model cannot meet. “The shift from ‘conformist’ to ‘pioneering’ requires teachers to move up the educational chain from the downstream (i.e. users of educational resources) to the upstream (i.e. developers of educational resources). The Art Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2022 Edition) (Figure 1、2) mentions in its recommendations for the development and utilisation of curriculum resources: “Make extensive and targeted use of local and social cultural resources, such as distinctive natural and humanistic landscapes, cultural landscapes, cultural heritages and relics, and various types of traditional arts, to discover the Chinese cultural spirit and core values they contain, and guide students to enhance their understanding of saffron The curriculum is designed to help students enhance their understanding of and identification with the culture and build cultural confidence. This shows that the development and use of local art curriculum resources is of certain importance and necessity.



目 录

一、课程性质	1
二、课程理念	2
三、设计思路	3
四、课程目标	5
(一) 核心素养内涵	5
(二) 总目标	6
(三) 学段目标	7
五、课程内容	14
(一) 音乐	15
(二) 美术	48
(三) 舞蹈	74
(四) 戏剧 (含戏曲)	82
(五) 影视 (含数字媒体艺术)	91
六、学业质量	100
(一) 学业质量内涵	100
(二) 音乐学业质量描述	101
(三) 美术学业质量描述	104
(四) 舞蹈学业质量描述	107

Figure 1、2 Art Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2022 Edition)

1. Development and use of local art resources

The development and utilisation of local art curriculum resources must, on a macro level, identify the current situation and development of local art resources, combine the curriculum and students' needs, take the inheritance and promotion of traditional culture as the basic guideline, explore local educational resources in a scientific, rational and sustainable manner through the steps of scenario analysis, resource discovery, subject selection, teaching structure, example organisation and follow-up evaluation, and strive to break the rigid thinking and incorporate the pulse of the times. We aim to break the rigidity of thinking and incorporate the pulse of the times into the science of education of traditional culture.

2. Dazu Stone Carvings A Study on the Application Strategies as Local Art Resources in the High School Art Curriculum

The Dazu stone carvings, which began in the Tang Dynasty and flourished in the Song Dynasty, cover the three realms of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, and reflect the relevance of the integration of ethnic and religious culture into a higher stage of social development on the basis of a blend of artistry and religion. With 75 stone statues, over 100,000 figures and over 100,000 inscriptions, the carving techniques are exceptionally rich and remarkable, and the aesthetic features are diverse and multi-period in nature, with considerable artistic and aesthetic value (Figure 3、4). Teachers should dig deeper into its connotations to explain it to their students in order to enable them to understand it more thoroughly and to master the methods of appreciating religious sculpture.



Figure 3、4 Parental graciousness through change

Through the study of the Dazu Rock Carvings and the new curriculum, I have found that the Dazu Rock Carvings are compatible with a number of modules in the high school art curriculum, and have tried to explore the links between the Dazu Rock Carvings and the high school art curriculum through the 'adoption of teaching in the form of in-class appreciation and out-of-class investigation' and the 'development of the new high school art curriculum'. This is a dual strategy to explore the links between Dazu Rock Carvings and the high school art curriculum.

Strategy 1: Adopt the form of in-class appreciation outside the classroom to teach

In-class:

Combined with high school art appreciation, the unit delves into the connotations related to Dazu stone carvings and summarises



Figure 5 Exterior view of Dazu Rock Carving

them from different perspectives. Knowledge of Dazu stone carvings can be organically combined with units on ancient Chinese sculpture, ethnic folk art and folk art.

Extracurricular:

(1) Adopt on-site teaching mode. Leading students to visit Dazu stone carvings in person during the line lesson and employing experts from the Stone Carving Museum to highlight them for the students to further experience the charm of Dazu stone carvings (Figure 5);

(2) Using national holidays and students' summer holidays, students are organised to carry out research activities in small groups on the theme of "exploring art in their hometown", through fieldwork, data collection, visits and other ways of research (Figure 6). Each group is required to submit a research report or essay related to the Dazu Rock Carvings, with illustrations and texts, and to make a highly detailed analysis of the knowledge gained, so as to enhance their art appreciation ability and humanistic qualities, and to inspire in students a love of beauty and a sense of pride in their hometown and motherland.



Figure 6 Interior view of the Dazu Rock Carvings "The Cave of the Round Gnosis"

Strategy 2: Develop with the new high school art curriculum 1. Fine Art

(1) Appreciation:

Through various forms of Dazu stone carving art appreciation activities, such as PPT, video and on-site observation, students will be able to systematically explore the art language through group inquiry, so that they can master the basic methods of appreciating stone carving sculptures, understand the cultural and artistic value of Dazu stone carving and build up cultural confidence.

(2) Painting - Sculpture:

Painting module teaching: Based on the appreciation of the Dazu stone carvings, students are organised to take photographs or sketch on site and select images that interest them, using a variety of painting techniques and forms (Figure 7).

Sculpture module: Based on an appreciation of the Dazu stone carvings, students are led to create sculptures using plastic clay.

(3) Design-craft:

Design modules: visual communication design can be used to promote the Dazu Rock Carvings as a theme and design posters and logos; environmental art design can focus on the environmental protection of the rock carving area and consider design solutions that are conducive to the conservation of the Dazu Rock Carvings (Figure 8).

Craft module: Based on a broad understanding of the various forms of folk art in their hometown, students are guided to learn folk art techniques such as printing and dyeing, weaving, embroidery, pottery, pasting, inlaying, batik, tie-dyeing, leaching standing thread and decorative painting, and to select Dazu stone carvings as the subject matter for creative practice.

(4) Calligraphy - Seal Carving:

Calligraphy Module Teaching: After understanding the basic development trajectory of our calligraphy and the relationship between traditional culture, students can be organised to selectively appreciate and copy the outstanding works of inscriptions from the Dazu Stone Carvings. For example, the calligraphic treasures of Beishan, such as the Divine Principality of Zhao Yi Jian Stele and the Ancient Text of the Filial Piety Sutra. Or select relevant poems and ode to Dazu by ancient and modern celebrities and guide students in the practice of calligraphy. Seal Carving Module: In this module, students are allowed to create seal carvings based on their interests by choosing text or pattern content related to Dazu stone carvings.

(5) Modern Media Arts:

Photography/videography module teaching: practical photography or videography activities around Dazu stone carvings, new landscape of hometown, humanities and natural landscape. Various thematic photography demonstrations and video creation exchange

activities are often held (Figure 9).

Computer drawing/design module teaching: using ps to teach computer design on the theme of Dazu stone carving, holding an exhibition of students’ works.



Figure 7 Dazu Stone Carving Painting

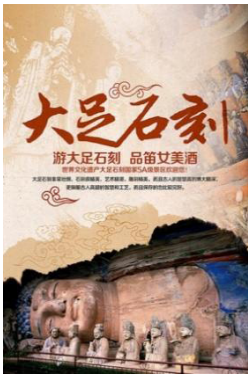


Figure 8 Dazu Stone Carving Poster Design



Figure 9 Dazu Rock Carvings Photography

3. Implementation and evaluation of the curriculum

3.1 Curriculum Implementation (Art Appreciation Module Lesson Example)

3.1.1 Analysis of the teaching audience:

Senior students already have a good understanding, learning ability, some cultural knowledge accumulation and aesthetic and imaginative ability. Most students have some understanding of the Dazu Rock Carvings in Chongqing, but only at the surface level of a tourist visit, and not many have an in-depth understanding from the perspective of art appreciation.

3.1.2 Course Objectives:

Knowledge and skills objectives: to understand the basic overview of the Dazu rock carvings, grasp the content of their subject matter, technical features, aesthetic features, and recognise their unique artistic achievements; through the appreciation of the Dazu rock carvings, the initial mastery of the method of appreciation of cave art.

Process and Methodological Objectives: Through multimedia immersion teaching, students are guided to observe and appreciate, and improve their ability to observe and analyse problems and aesthetic skills ; discussion-based teaching is used to develop students’ ability to cooperate and investigate.


Emotional and value objectives: Dazu stone carvings are an outstanding achievement, and learning about the art related to Dazu stone carvings can stimulate students’ patriotism to a certain extent; through the learning of the content of this lesson, the initial establishment of the awareness of caring for cultural relics and monuments.



3.1.3 Teaching Priorities and Difficulties:

Teaching focus: The subject matter, technical features and aesthetic characteristics of Dazu stone carvings.

Teaching difficulties: Through the study of the content of the subject matter, technical features and aesthetic features, students will understand the characteristics of the times reflected in the Dazu stone carvings and master the aesthetic approach to the art of religious carving.

3.1.4 Teaching process

Teachers’ activities	Student Activities	Design Intent
Showing the Dazu Rock Carvings micro-video.	Watch the Dazu Rock Carvings micro-video	Generating student interest and quick introduction
Guided tours of the Dazu stone carvings (1. Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism; 2. Tantric spirituality) 	Listening and interacting	Leading students through the content of Dazu stone carvings

<p>Conducting guided tours to teach the characteristics of Dazhu stone carving techniques (1. the combination of art with technology and environment; 2. the design characteristics of the motifs; 3. the strong characteristics of contrast between the real and the imaginary, the complicated and simple, the dynamic and static, the sublime and the mundane)</p> 	<p>Listening and interacting</p>	<p>Leading students through the characteristics of Dazhu stone carving techniques</p>
<p>Guided teaching on the aesthetic characteristics of Dazhu stone carvings (1. the subtle expression of human beauty; 2. the extreme expression of human beauty; 3. the vivid presentation of the beauty of life; 4. the variety and roundedness of aesthetic styles)</p> 	<p>Students listening and interacting</p>	<p>Leading students through the aesthetic characteristics of Dazhu stone carvings</p>
<p>Provide six pictures of Dazhu stone carvings, divide students into six groups and ask them to appreciate one of the pictures in terms of subject matter, technical features and aesthetic features, and ask them to demonstrate</p>	<p>Choose any picture of a stone carving and complete the teacher's stone carving appreciation sheet in small groups in terms of subject matter, technical features and aesthetic features, and select a representative to present a report</p>	<p>The activities deepen students' learning impressions and give them a preliminary understanding of how to appreciate the art of religious sculpture and enable them to do so on their own.</p>
<p>Conduct an end-of-lesson summary, urging students to love traditional culture and protect heritage sites.</p>	<p>Feel the resonance</p>	<p>Ending, sublimating the theme</p>

3.2 Course evaluation:

A combination of process and outcome based assessment is used.

Summary and Reflection

The development and utilisation of art curriculum resources is not only closely related to the reform and development of the art curriculum, but is also an important means of improving the professional ability of art educators and an important channel for meeting students' needs for curriculum resources. The exploitable nature of the Dazhu Rock Carvings as a local high school art curriculum resource is of some positive significance in terms of enriching art curriculum resources, improving the overall quality of students, exercising the author's own professional ability and passing on the outstanding culture of the nation. At the same time, due to the author's limited ability, there are still many limitations and confusions in the research, which inevitably lead to omissions and superficialities in the exposition of the text. The development and use of art curriculum resources cannot be achieved overnight. Whether it is the Dazhu stone carvings or other potential art curriculum resources, teachers need to constantly reflect and study them in depth in order to achieve the effective development and use of art curriculum resources.

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