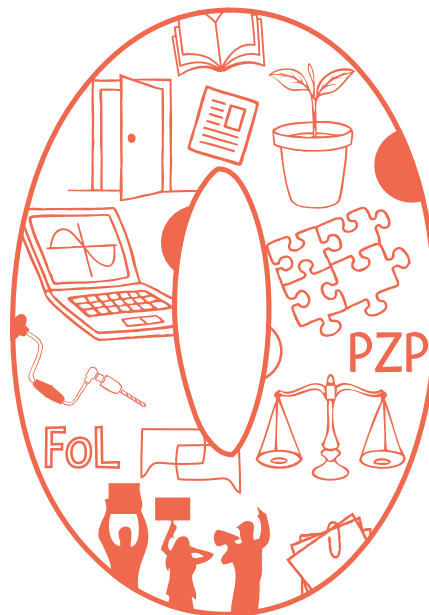


# Perspectives on “The Arts” from Project Zero’s First 50 Years



**PROJECT ZERO**  
**FIFTY YEARS**  
**HARVARD GRADUATE  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**



At the beginning, PZ’s research focused on investigating cognitive processing in the arts. This seminal work led researchers to expand to broader aspects of human potential including learning, critical thinking, creativity, and intelligence. In the recent decades, PZ research built on these rich traditions by exploring further fundamental questions of human potential as they relate to contemporary issues facing an array of educational settings—schools, families, museums, and businesses. To celebrate 50 years, PZers looked across the vast body of research and developed an organizing framework that includes nine research areas representative of many facets of the five decades of work. These nine areas include: The Arts, Assessment, Character and Ethics, Civic Agency, Creativity, Developing Understanding, Global Competencies, Intelligences, and Thinking. PZ created a brief overview of each of the 9 areas as stand-alone “booklets.” Each of the four-page booklets describes PZ’s research in the area along with a set of “PZ perspectives,” notes some big questions that are launching PZ into the future, lists key PZ projects, highlights important PZ quotes, offers a sample of notable PZ publications, and visualizes the main frameworks and ideas.

*The artwork and graphic elements featured on these pages was created by our collaborators, dpict, a local graphic facilitation and design firm, along with Matt Riecken, PZ’s digital learning specialist.*

# THE ARTS

The story of PZ's influences in arts & education is at the core of the story of PZ itself. The role of the arts in education and the nature of learning in and through the arts – from PZ's conception to current-day projects, including Arts Propel, Artful Thinking, collaborations with the Silk Road Ensemble, and more – have been central to PZ's research.

## BIG QUESTIONS

How can encounters with works of art help us discover and articulate compelling questions?

What questions catalyzed major strands of research at Project Zero over the last 50 years?

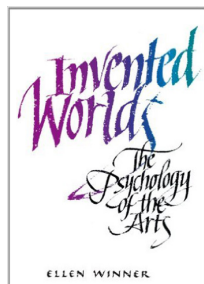
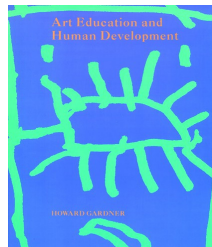
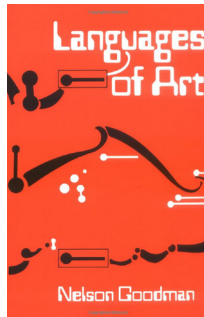
What questions inspire us as learners, teachers, artists, and researchers—and how might we pursue them, artistically or otherwise?

## PZ PERSPECTIVES

Curiosity and questions are linked to the human needs to survive and to make meaning. Indeed, they are the genesis of all learning.

Works of art are designed to engage people in consideration of the deep complexities of human experience. They have the power to provoke curiosity and the desire to come to deeper understandings.

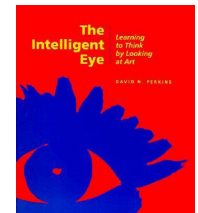
The work of artists is to inquire and explore through making. In a sense, they make their learning visible in their products. In turn, their works catalyze curiosity and inquiry in others. Cycles of inquiry, research, and learning are inherent in all serious artistic experiences.



## KEY PROJECTS

Figurative Language (1974 – 1988)	ArtWorks for Schools (1996-2001)
Arts PROPEL (1986 – 1992)	Studio Thinking Project (2001-2004)
Project Co-Arts (1991 – 1996)	ArtWorks for Schools (1996-2001)
Project MUSE (1994 – 1996)	The Qualities of Quality (2006-2009)

*"The liberal borders of art help us to carry good thinking dispositions nurtured in the context of art to the wider world. Art is an extrovert. Art connects because artists make it connect, because artists strive to express not just the anatomy of bodies but the anatomy of the human condition and of the universe that impinges on it. If most disciplines build moats, art builds bridges."* – David Perkins



*"Crafted by artists, these havens are works of art in progress in a world in which the arts, like many of the individuals these centers serve, are devalued. There are safe havens, then, for art and culture as well as for the communities served. These are safe havens for the artists who daily reflect upon and revise their on-going works in progress, crafting their own versions of educational effectiveness and broadening the definition of learning through art as it can realize a myriad of goals."* – Jessica Davis



*"In the arts, there are levels of development, as well as stages of expertise, and these should form a backdrop for any educational regimen. And yet, it is my belief that artistic forms of knowledge and expression are less sequential, more holistic and organic, than other forms of knowing and that to attempt to fragment them and to break them into separate concepts or subdisciplines is especially risky. . . We must be careful not to sacrifice this special nature of the arts – indeed, we might do well to allow this form of understanding to infiltrate other areas of the curriculum."* – Howard Gardner



# the ARTS

WHAT QUESTIONS  
CATALYZED MAJOR  
STRANDS of RESEARCH  
@PROJECT ZERO  
OVER the LAST 50 YEARS?

HOW CAN  
ENCOUNTERS  
with WORKS of ART  
HELP US DISCOVER  
and ARTICULATE  
COMPELLING  
QUESTIONS?

WHAT QUESTIONS  
INSPIRE US as  
LEARNERS TEACHERS  
ARTISTS RESEARCHERS  
and HOW MIGHT WE  
PURSUE THEM,  
ARTISTICALLY or OTHER  
WISE?

CATALYZE  
CURIOSITY  
and  
INQUIRY

MAKE  
LEARNING  
VISIBLE

CURIOSITY  
and  
QUESTIONS

ARE LINKED to the  
HUMAN NEEDS to

SURVIVE and MAKE  
MEANING

LEARNING INQUIRY  
RESEARCH

## NOTABLE PZ PROJECTS

ARTS PROPEL  
FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE  
PROJECT CO-ARTS  
PROJECT MUSE  
ARTWORKS FOR SCHOOLS  
STUDIO THINKING PROJECT  
ARTFUL THINKING  
THE QUALITIES OF QUALITY

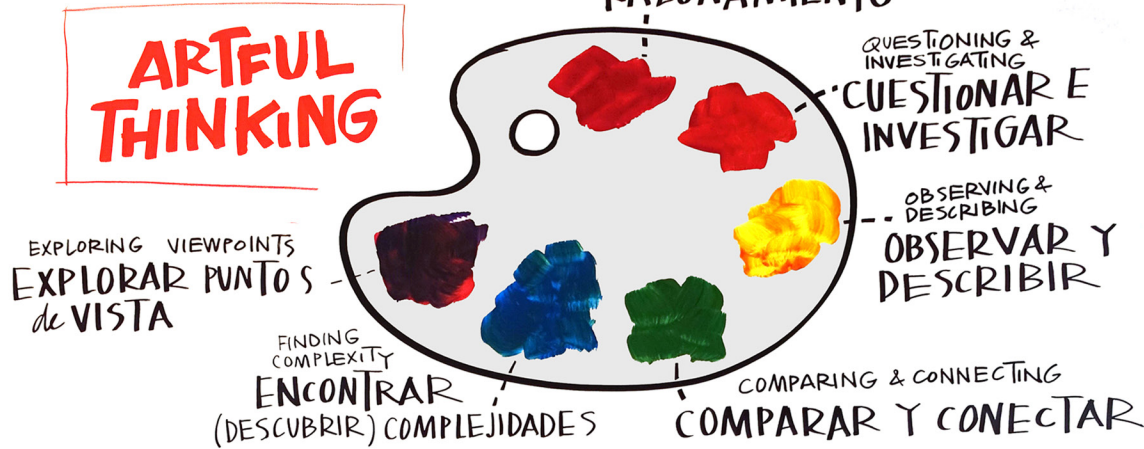
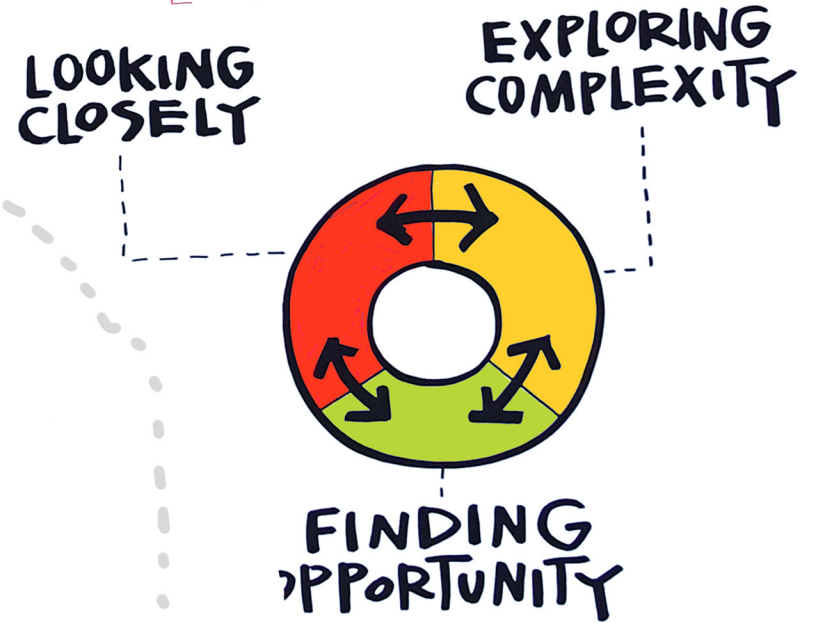
The LIBERAL BORDERS of ART HELP US to CARRY  
GOOD THINKING DISPOSITIONS NURTURED in the CONTEXT of ART  
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IF MOST DISCIPLINES BUILD MOATS, ART BUILDS BRIDGES.

— David Perkins, *The Intelligent Eye*



# KEY FRAMEWORKS

## AGENCY BY DESIGN



## QUALITIES & QUALITY

