

**Re-Framing Traditional Arts in the Classroom:  
Creative Process and Culturally Responsive Learning**

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Abstract

In many ways, traditional arts in schools bear the bruises of the early years of multicultural education, and the failed practices that created what has been termed a tourist curriculum, comprised of the superficial study of folktales, festivals, foods, and facts. Consequently, art forms of cultures are often approached with caution by teachers, or avoided altogether.

This thesis re-frames the use of traditional arts in the classroom through current research and knowledge, defining their efficacy and role in today's classroom. Traditional arts are examined through the lenses of culturally responsive pedagogical practice, creative processes, and the educational, political and cultural expectations for their use. Multiple case studies were employed, including Maori visual arts and dance in New Zealand, chant, hula, and plant craft in Hawai'i, and social dance and song of the Oneida tribe of Wisconsin, USA.