

Arts-based adult education: Focus on pedagogy

In this series of meetings, we will read Canadian scholarship that explores arts as community-based adult pedagogy. Creative expression in educational contexts plays a significant role in empowering those adult learners who are situated on the fringes of mainstream society by amplifying their voices and ensuring they are listened to. The four articles were chosen to speak to a range of learning contexts and pedagogical approaches. PDFs of the articles will be provided in advance. Each session will be 90 minutes long.

General rules for the journal club

1. Speak from a place of curiosity and a genuine desire to explore and expand upon the ideas presented. Ask questions that contribute to a deeper understanding rather than confirming existing biases.
2. It's encouraged to question ideas and interpretations as a means of deepening discussion. However, aim to do so in a manner that builds up rather than seeks to tear down or discredit others' contributions.
3. Personal attacks or disrespectful comments are not acceptable and detract from the goal of collaborative learning and understanding.

General guiding questions for discussions:

1. What are the key arguments of this paper, and how do they contribute to your understanding of adult education as professional practice?
2. Could you identify any passages or quotes from the paper that particularly stand out or raise questions?
3. Is there anything in this paper that didn't seem clear or didn't quite 'square' with your understanding of adult education?
4. In what ways can the insights from this paper be applied to your specific context or practice? Are there any challenges or barriers to this application?

Session one: Program design (general arts)

- Balyasnikova, N., & Gillard, S. (2021). "They gave me back my power": Strengthening older immigrants' language learning through arts-based activities. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 53(2), 220-237.

Session two: Community groups (poetry)

- Balyasnikova, N., & James, K. (2020). PhoneMe poetry: Mapping community in the digital age. *Engaged Scholar Journal*, 6(2), 107-134.

Session three: Decolonization (theatre)

- Butterwick, S., & Selman, J. (2012). Embodied knowledge and decolonization: Walking with theater's powerful and risky pedagogy. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2012(134), 61-69.

Session four: Multiculturalism (quilting and murals)

- Clover, D. E. (2006). Culture and antiracisms in adult education: An exploration of the contributions of arts-based learning. *Adult education quarterly*, 57(1), 46-61.