

# Becoming a **Quality** Student Art Teacher

## **Pam Stephens**

In Ernest Boyer's list of human commonalities, he states that we all have the ability to seek purpose and meaning in our lives. There is little doubt that you have set a goal for yourself—to be a teacher of art; however, have you given thought to *why* you have chosen this path?

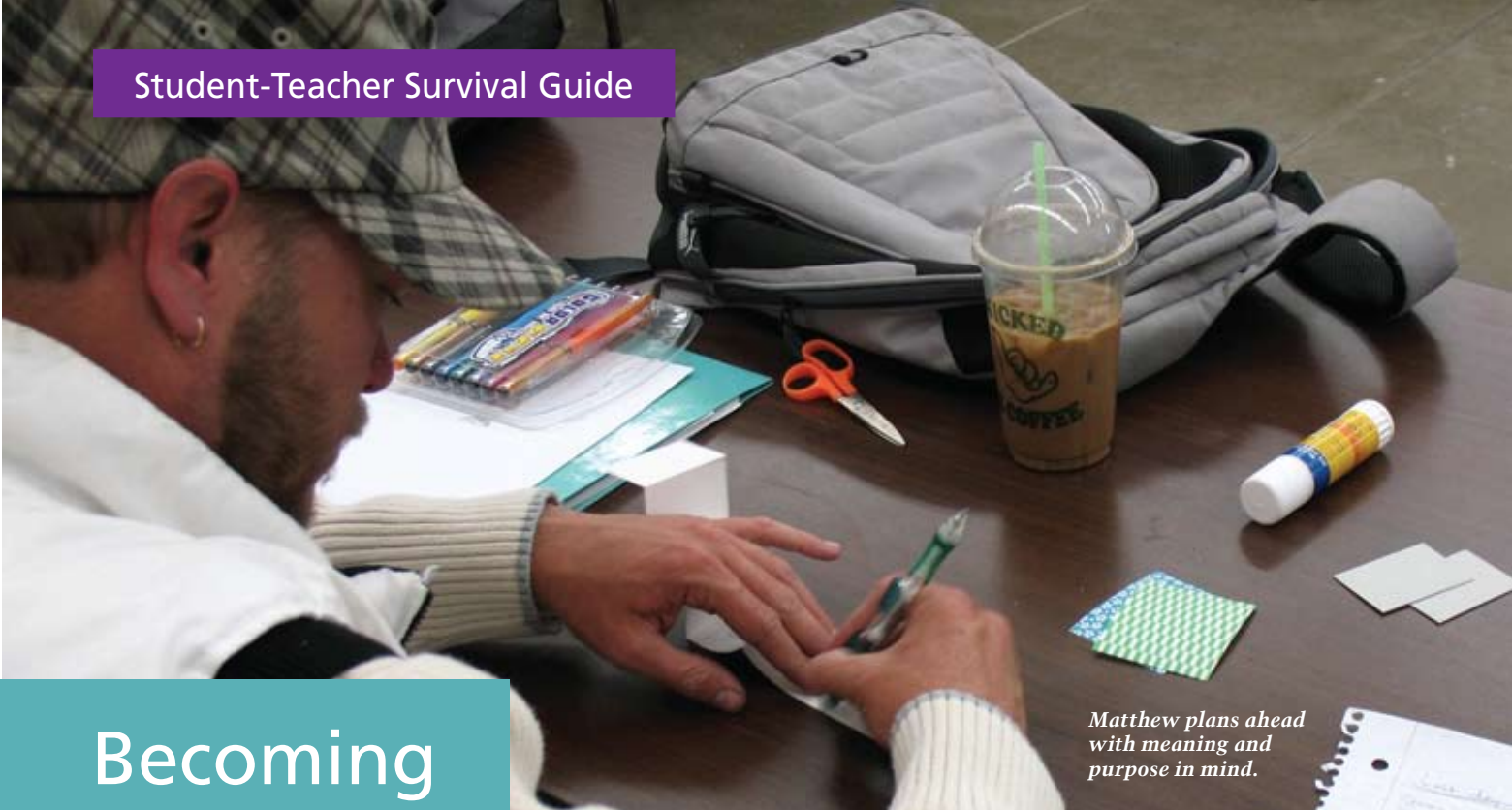
In finding your personal answers, you will discover a path that will guide you toward your goal. This article offers some questions to consider as you create your path towards being a quality student art teacher, a circumstance that can undoubtedly lead to being a quality professional art teacher.

1. When you first decided to become an art teacher, what or who influenced you? What did you think becoming an art teacher would entail? Now that you are student

teaching, how has your perception of art teaching changed?

2. Consider the phrase "student art teacher." What image comes to mind? Now consider the phrase "quality student art teacher." How is this image different than the first? What will you need to do in order to progress from student art teacher to quality student art teacher?
3. What do you see as the most difficult aspect of student teaching in art? How will you address this difficulty? What is the easiest aspect? How will you handle the easy part of student teaching? How will these characteristics inform your development into a professional art educator?
4. What challenges do you expect to encounter while student teaching? How will you prepare to meet those challenges? How will you resolve them?
5. Read the five national standards for the visual arts ([www.mcrel.org/compendium/SubjectTopics.asp?SubjectID=13](http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/SubjectTopics.asp?SubjectID=13)). As you think about art lessons that you plan to teach, does one standard recur more often than the others? How will you incorporate all five standards on an equal basis? Consider
6. that "equal" does not necessarily mean "the same amount of time."
6. Read Eliot Eisner's Ten Lessons the Arts Teach ([naea-reston.org/tenlessons.html](http://naea-reston.org/tenlessons.html)). Can you write at least one idea for an art-based activity that addresses each lesson? How can these activities and Eisner's lessons help you to advance towards becoming a quality student art teacher?
7. If you have not already created your own written philosophy of art teaching, do so before you complete your student-teaching experience. Locate some examples of teaching philosophies. Notice the length (usually one page), content (non-technical), style, and verbiage (no jargon). Make note of the best parts of each philosophy and then write your own. The philosophy should be a clearly articulated statement that expresses your own ideas related to teaching and learning. Most of all, it should express that you have accepted art teaching as a life choice; a choice that brings meaning and purpose to you as well as to your students. ☺

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*Matthew plans ahead with meaning and purpose in mind.*