

## **Arts in Education**

*By Sylvia Tavetian*

In many classrooms, there has been a decrease in the importance of arts taught to students. While some may think that it is more important to focus on the other core subjects, I believe that a teacher can incorporate art into these other subjects. In an article in the Americans for the Arts website, it says, “Research has also shown impressive benefits of arts education on entire school culture—especially student motivation, attitudes, and attendance. Numerous reports discuss the ways that increased access and involvement in arts education encourage students to stay in school, succeed in school, succeed in life, and succeed in work” (<https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-topic/arts-education>).

This article says that not only will having the arts used in the classes benefit individual students, but it will also motivate the school as a whole. Some students learn more when they see the information visually or when there are pictures in the lesson. There are many ways to use art when teaching a lesson. For example, in a science lesson, the students can use images to show the scientific process or draw images of plants and label the different parts of the cells. By adding color and detail, the students learn and remember the lesson more and they are more motivated. Music and dance are also arts that can be used to teach. When learning math formulas, songs are great to remember the complicated letters and numbers. Dance and movement is great for remembering vocabulary words or learning about rhythm in literature. The idea that the students are making meaning with the lessons is important and helps them to understand why they are learning the formulas or vocabulary words.

In an Edutopia article, Fran Smith says, “Involvement in the arts is associated with gains in math, reading, cognitive ability, critical thinking, and verbal skill. Arts learning can also improve motivation, concentration, confidence, and teamwork” (<https://www.edutopia.org/artsmusic-curriculum-child-development>). Similarly to the other article, this one says how important the arts are for developing skills in many disciplines.

The importance of the arts is obvious. Arts bring students together, help them understand, and build skills. However, the arts are not valued as much. Many teachers feel the pressure of standardized tests and making sure that the students pass the tests. They do not think that they have time for arts because they have to follow certain standards and curriculum so the students can do well on the test. I think that the teachers can learn how to use arts to teach the students skills they need to pass the tests. This might even help students improve their scores. Budget cuts in the arts are another problem that teachers have. They do not have the materials to bring the arts to the classroom. However, there are ways to bring in arts that do not cost a lot of money. For example, learn songs and movements to teach difficult ideas, use paper to make sculptures, or use materials such as glue, cornstarch, and water to make slime. The teacher also can play music on a computer in the classroom to help the students concentrate on their schoolwork and to teach about music.

I think that we need to value the arts more. This does not mean that we value another subject less; it means that we value different learning styles and we want to teach students in a

way that is more meaningful. Teachers can get more involved in adding the arts to the class by looking at websites for ideas and by encouraging the school community to also value the arts more. To do this, teachers can educate others on how the arts can really help students learn important skills and motivate them to participate. Arts let the students be creative with their education and let the students express themselves.

#### References

Poulin, Jeff. "Arts Education." *Americans for the Arts*, 6 Apr. 2018, [www.americansforthearts.org/by-topic/arts-education](http://www.americansforthearts.org/by-topic/arts-education).

Smith, Fran. "Why Arts Education Is Crucial, and Who's Doing It Best." *Edutopia*, [www.edutopia.org/arts-music-curriculum-child-development](http://www.edutopia.org/arts-music-curriculum-child-development).