

We believe ... In celebrating children's uniqueness and possibilities.

Creative experiences engage learners of all ages in original thought and strengthen their social, literacy, cognitive and motor skills.

Creative Experiences Promote Young Children's Development

Physical Skills	Sensory Awareness	Communication and Literacy	Cognitive Growth	Social/Emotional Development
Eye-hand coordination	Auditory awareness and vocal stimulation	Nonverbal, symbolic expression of emotions	Experience cause and effect based on choices	Independent sense of self
Fine motor coordination	Tactile stimulation	Verbally and nonverbally connect to others	Plan and organize	Social cooperation and sharing
Dexterity with tools	Observe color, detail, shape and line	Vocabulary to describe ideas and creative process	Decision-making	Pride and sense of accomplishment
Large motor/body coordination	Multi-sensory awareness	Reflect and communicate on process and outcome	Problem solve	Using artistic process to express feelings

Children learn in many different ways

Howard Gardner has identified eight types of learning styles. Creative learning experiences enable children to more fully develop a wide range of skills and understandings. Some students are motivated and receptive to learning when lessons are adapted to their preferred learning style or "type of intelligence."

- **Linguistic intelligence** involves sensitivity to spoken and written language, the ability to learn languages, and the capacity to use language to accomplish certain goals.
- **Logical-mathematical intelligence** consists of the capacity to analyze problems logically, carry out mathematical operations, and investigate issues scientifically.
- **Musical intelligence** involves skills in the performance, composition, and appreciation of musical patterns.
- **Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence** entails the potential of using one's whole body or parts of the body to solve problems.
- **Spatial intelligence** involves the potential to recognize and use the patterns of wide space and more confined areas.
- **Interpersonal intelligence** is concerned with the capacity to understand the intentions, motivations, and desires of other people. It allows people to work effectively with others.
- **Intrapersonal intelligence** entails the capacity to understand oneself, to appreciate one's feelings, fears, and motivations.
- **Naturalist intelligence** enables human beings to recognize, categorize, and draw upon certain features of the environment. (Gardner, 1999: pp. 41-43, 52)

Exhibit Student Work

Children's creativity is energized when they see their work exhibited. Valuing student explorations, original thinking and creative output is vital in affirming them. Exhibiting what students create reinforces how we celebrate their untamed originality in a public way. Here are some tips for assuring that exhibits are valuable learning experiences for both students and viewers:

- Choose locations that have a lot of traffic. Think outside of your school building. Exhibit in school board, or city offices, community centers and public libraries. Investigate community businesses for unlikely exhibit spaces.
- Compose exhibits so viewers can understand how projects relate to the curriculum. Ask students to write about their thinking. Clearly label with standards, including visual arts. Consider including your lesson objectives and reflection with students' ideas and explanations.
- Include and celebrate every student's work, if possible, or a representative sample that shows a variety of interpretations.
- Be creative in your exhibition style. Ask students to help design the space and take part in the planning. Think beyond bulletin boards and exhibition panels. Use ceilings, stairwells, newsletters, bags and T-shirts to celebrate their work creatively.

We believe ... Creative thinking expands learning.



"It's cool how far away the planets are from the Sun because in pictures they look really close. They're really millions of miles away. I liked creating them the way I wanted. I wonder how the moon and stars are formed. There are other solar systems. I wonder whether they have life on them. Would they be different from me?"

- Sheamus H., Grade 3

Children have a natural curiosity about everything. Their enormous capacity for creative thinking is ignited when they experience hands-on learning. Knowledge soars to greater heights. New ideas are born. New experiments are launched. Supporting these amazing original thinkers is our goal. Join us in leading the mission to a creative future.



We believe ... Children are empowered by creative leaders.

An Advocate's Guide

Ten tips to strengthen and sustain creative, arts-infused learning in schools.

- 1. Be an active advocate.** Be a voice for your students' original thinking while invigorating your own passion for creativity. Tell everyone success stories that illustrate what students need to prepare for the 21st century. Put creative learning on the forefront in your community.
- 2. Stay informed.** Keep up with research pertaining to creativity and interdisciplinary learning. Find out what is happening nationwide, statewide, and locally. Learn about Board of Education and Superintendent decisions regarding arts-infused learning in your school district. Showcase strong models.
- 3. Join coalitions and organizations** that advocate for the arts and creative learning. Invite their leaders to speak at school and district meetings.
- 4. Know and understand the structure and resources of your district.** Review budget allocations, staffing, programs and research opportunities.
- 5. Spread the word.** Communicate with your local government. Create formal presentations for the Board of Education and community leaders. Meet with local and state officials to share your arts-infused education successes and needs. Share students' success stories.
- 6. Create an Advocacy e-mail list.** Distribute information and updates on a regular basis. Include information about research and activities that support creative, arts-infused learning and the importance of creativity.
- 7. Meet with parents** and community members. Ask for support in the public funding process. Invite them to be advocates for arts-infused education with their voices and their votes.
- 8. Invite the press.** Talk to the media about your arts-infused education successes and inform them of students' needs for creativity as a 21st century skill.
- 9. Invite elected officials** and key community members to school performances and exhibitions. Introduce students and their work.
- 10. Establish a parent-teacher arts advocacy group.** Make the arts and creative thinking a vital part of the regular parent-teacher meetings. Leverage parents' advocacy power as important partners in schools.

"When students find joy in their creative outlets, there is a positive carryover to school in general. Emotion, interest and motivation promote learning and memory. Brain research shows the brain produces at least three pleasure chemicals when joy is present: endorphins, dopamine, and serotonin.

These chemicals account for the emotional states produced by self-satisfaction, positive self-image, passion for one's art, and joy in learning."

Diane Watanabe and **Richard Sjolseth**
Co-directors of the Institute of Learning,
Teaching and Human Brain



Communities Make a Difference

Identify and utilize resources in your community. Be open to unusual ideas. Leverage areas of common ground and aligned goals.

People

- **Survey parents and grandparents** to find their creative talents, interests and advocacy skills. Perhaps some could help you with public relations or the media. Others might know finance and help with proposed budget requests. Showcase the artistic leadership of adults in your community.
- **Meet with groups** to find people who are willing to donate time. Many artists give demonstrations and workshops to inspire young talent.
- **Be open to chance meetings.** Speak to people throughout your day about your project. An artist encountered at the airport or grocery store could be an ally in your community.
- **Inspire people** to feel a sense of shared ownership for your project and passions. Being a part of something greater motivates people. When something is created, something bigger happens.
- **Have an open door policy.** Invite individuals who are new to your community to see your arts program in person. Visitors can become valued resources.

Arts and Cultural Organizations

- **Arts and cultural groups are natural allies.** Contact program staff of large initiatives and meet with smaller arts groups. Tell them about your project and ask for ideas. They can provide valuable advice and space, and recommend additional sources for materials.
- **Contact your state arts council** about their programs. Visit their Web site or request literature.

Businesses

- **Make a list of businesses** in your community who would be likely allies for the arts. Learn about their leaders' interests and their business needs for creative employees in the future. Look for ways your message is aligned with theirs.
- **Read business news** to learn about new businesses, commerce leaders, and economic interests.
- **Look around your community** to identify specific places to exhibit students' artwork such as banks, auto dealers, the airport, restaurants, and stores as possible venues or partners.

Libraries and Children's Community Programs

- **Establish a collaborative relationship** with libraries in your school and community. Link literacy to the arts.
- **Meet with staff at community centers, recreation programs and youth facilities** to discuss after-school programs and arts-infused projects.

Schools

- **Visit a school that has championed the arts and creativity.** Learn about their process and ask for guidance.
- **Partner with a school.** Collaborate on larger projects. Have students become arts mentors for another grade.
- **Showcase students' work** at school board meetings.
- **Create a district wide project.** Partner with other teachers to create thematic exhibits.

Children's original thinking is enriched by creative hands-on learning experiences. They build:

- understanding of cause and effect
- motor control and sensory awareness
- appreciation for beauty and diversity
- articulation and reflection skills
- independence
- cooperation and sharing
- ability to make informed choices
- communication skills
- creative and flexible thinking
- problem solving with materials and people
- awareness of own and others' interests and skills
- determination to stick with a project until it is complete.



For more creative ideas,
visit Crayola.com/educators