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 they experience hands-on activities with tools.

**Creative Experiences Promote Young Children’s Development**

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

**Children’s creativity is energized when they see their work exhibited. Valuing student explorations, original thinking and creative output is vital in affirming 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 visual impact.
- Select exhibits that have a variety of interpretations.
- Include and celebrate every student’s work, if possible, or a representative sample that connects 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 student’s ideas and explorations.
- Encourage students to create multiple pieces, if possible, to show their development and progression.
- Emphasize the importance of originality and creativity in the area of art exhibitions.

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 ... Creative thinking expands learning.

Exhibit Student Work

- **Physical Skills**
  - Auditory awareness and vocal stimulation
  - Tactile stimulation
  - Observe color, detail, shape and line
  - Multi-sensory awareness

- **Sensory Awareness**
  - Auditory
  - Tactile
  - Visual

- **Communication and Literacy**
  - Nonverbal, symbolic expression of emotions
  - Verbally and nonverbally connect to others
  - Vocabulary to describe ideas and creative process

- **Cognitive Growth**
  - Experience cause and effect based on choices
  - Plan and organize
  - Decision-making

- **Social/ Emotional Development**
  - Independent sense of self
  - Social cooperation and sharing
  - Pride and sense of accomplishment

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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 Superinten-dent intentions 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.

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

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.