

Roles of Arts Specialists and Classroom Teachers

Arts specialists are teachers hired specifically to teach a particular art discipline (dance, music, theatre, or visual art).

In elementary schools with comprehensive arts education programs, the responsibilities and priorities of arts specialists expand:

- In addition to their role as discipline experts, specialists become valuable resources and facilitators for classroom teachers.
- Instead of operating independently as itinerant teachers, specialists necessarily interact with classroom teachers, serving as resource experts.
- In their planning, specialists have to be creative, inventing solutions and gathering information that accommodates the needs of students and of classroom teachers involved in thematic units of study.

Comprehensive arts education also transforms the role of the classroom teacher.

- Necessarily, classroom teachers are involved with the entire curriculum and are familiar with the goals and objectives for all subjects their students are required to master.
- With experience, classroom teachers are able to meaningfully integrate the arts into the non-arts goals and objectives for these other subjects.

Arts specialists also are able to integrate non-arts subjects into their classes effectively. Collaboration of this type ensures that the arts no longer are isolated but become part of the total school curriculum.

For more perspectives on the roles of arts specialists and classroom teachers, see *The Arts in Every Classroom* video library programs:

- Expanding the Role of the Arts Specialist
- Teaching Dance
- Teaching Music
- Teaching Theatre
- Teaching Visual Art