

# Workshop 2

## Why Integrate the Arts?

This workshop session explores how integrating the arts with other subjects can benefit middle school students. The program shows teachers working together to increase student engagement, address diverse learning styles, and give students alternative ways to communicate.

### Learning Goals

The goals of this workshop are for you to:

- Identify the benefits of arts integration for early adolescents
- Communicate using various art forms, and reflect on their differences for you as a learner

### Featured Classroom Examples

- A dance specialist teaching ballet collaborates with a seventh-grade science teacher whose students are learning about the anatomy of frogs.
- Eighth-graders show their understanding of a novel by creating place settings that reflect the inner journeys of the characters.
- An instructional team engages students in exploring the play *Our Town* through social studies, visual art, theatre, and music.
- A visual art teacher and a social studies teacher work with a class of eighth-graders studying the architecture and history of their neighborhood.
- A visual art teacher talks with a student about his artwork dealing with the Holocaust.

# Workshop Session (On-Site)

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## Get Ready

**Read and discuss the following statement:** (10 minutes)

“There are seven key developmental needs that characterize early adolescence:

- Positive social interaction with adults and peers
- Structure and clear limits
- Physical activity
- Creative expression
- Competence and achievement
- Meaningful participation in families, school, and community
- Opportunities for self-definition.”

—P.C. Scales, *A Portrait of Young Adolescents in the 1990s: Implications for Promoting Healthy Growth and Development*, 1991

**Think about a unit you teach that does not typically include the arts, and discuss these questions:**

- Which of these adolescent needs are met through your unit?
- How might integrating the arts allow more adolescent needs to be met?

## Watch the Workshop Program (60 minutes)

Consider the following questions as you watch the program—they will appear as discussion prompts on the screen. If you are part of a professional development group, consider stopping the video to discuss each question with your colleagues.

- How can you engage students physically, mentally, and emotionally?
- Why is it useful for your students to explore curriculum content in many ways?
- How can you help students connect learning with their emotions and interests?
- How can you help your students connect to the world outside of school?
- Why is it important for your students to explore multiple means of communication?

## Activities and Discussion

### **Activity: Communicating Using Different Art Forms**

**Set up.** (5 minutes)

Form pairs or small groups. Randomly distribute cards to each group, so that each group has one of the four Mode of Communication Cards (dance, music, visual arts, theatre) and one of the 20 Topic Cards (e.g., conflict, competition, or freedom). You will find these cards at the end of this chapter.

# Workshop Session, cont'd.

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## **Develop a group product.** (10-15 minutes)

Give the groups 10 minutes, more or less, to develop a dramatic, visual, musical, or choreographic product that communicates the idea shown on their Topic Card. Groups should use only the art form they were given, and no extra words of explanation.

Note: The visual art group will need the following basic set of materials:

- large paper or poster boards
- markers
- glue
- pencils
- scissors
- construction paper
- crayons

## **Perform and discuss the productions.** (5-10 minutes per group)

Have each group take a turn performing its production. Afterwards discuss:

- How did the different tasks either challenge or support the learning styles in each group?
- How might similar activities either challenge or support your students' learning styles?
- What teaching strategies could be used in social studies, language arts, math, or science to reach additional learning styles?

# Between Sessions (On Your Own)

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## Online Activity: Meeting the Needs of Students

After participating in this workshop session you may want to find integrated teaching ideas in your own discipline that address adolescents' needs. Try the interactive exercise called "Meeting the Needs of Students," available on the Web site that accompanies *Connecting With the Arts: A Workshop for Middle Grades Teachers* ([www.learner.org/channel/workshops/connectingwitharts](http://www.learner.org/channel/workshops/connectingwitharts)). You can review dozens of creative ideas for integrated teaching, and decide which ones best serve your students' needs. When you are finished, print out and take with you the ideas you most want to pursue.

## Additional Resources

### Web Resources

Curriculum Integration: Middle School Educators Meeting the Needs of Young Adolescents  
<http://www.ncsu.edu/chass/extension/ci/index.html>

A Web site on curriculum integration including concise overviews of major developmental and applied theorists

Living With and Teaching Young Adolescents: A Teacher's Perspective  
[http://www.nmsa.org/moya/new2002/pk\\_related\\_teaching.html](http://www.nmsa.org/moya/new2002/pk_related_teaching.html)

An article from the National Middle School Association on characteristics of adolescents

### Print Resources

Applebee, Arthur. *Curriculum as Conversation: Transforming Traditions of Teaching and Learning*. Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1996. ISBN: 0-22602-123-8

This book suggests that curricula should be seen as ongoing conversations, with teaching and learning as processes through which students become active participants in those conversations.

Barrett, Janet, McCoy, Claire, & Veblen, Kari. *Sound Ways of Knowing: Music in the Interdisciplinary Classroom*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 1997. ISBN: 0-53425-088-2

The book presents ideas for music educators who want to connect music with other areas of the curriculum in valid and imaginative ways.

Belcher, Sharon, & Jaffee, Kathy. *Weaving in the Arts: Widening the Learning Circle*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1998. ISBN: 0-32500-032-8

Drawing on the work of Howard Gardner and Elliot Eisner, the book looks at a curriculum where the arts are viewed as a "methodology" for helping students interpret what they know and understand.

# Between Sessions, cont'd.

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Cornett, Claudia E. *Creating Meaning Through Literature and the Arts: An Integration Resource for Classroom Teachers* (2nd ed). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002. ISBN: 0-13097-777-2

Here are dozens of daily routine ideas, integrated unit ideas, and adaptable classroom structures that set forth solid, dependable "how to's" for using the arts throughout the curriculum.

Hammel Garland, Trudi, & Vaughn Kahn, Charity. *Math and Music: Harmonious Connections*. Palo Alto, CA: Dale Seymour, 1995. ISBN: 0-86651-829-0

Proportions, patterns, Fibonacci numbers, geometric transformations, trigonometric functions, fractals, and other mathematical concepts are all inherent in music. This is a valuable resource for teachers who want their students to understand the connections music has with math, nature, science, history, and art.

## Mode of Communication Cards

**dance**

**music**

**visual art**

**theatre**

## Topic Cards

<b>calm</b>	<b>community</b>	<b>conflict</b>
<b>danger</b>	<b>dominance</b>	<b>evolution</b>
<b>freedom</b>	<b>friendship</b>	<b>happiness</b>
<b>hero</b>	<b>justice</b>	<b>noise</b>
<b>patriotism</b>	<b>peace</b>	<b>peer pressure</b>
<b>progress</b>	<b>responsibility</b>	<b>survival</b>
<b>time</b>	<b>truth</b>	

# Notes

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